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**Morphology of the jaw-closing musculature in sciuriform, hystricomorph and myomorph rodents**

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3 **Morphology of the jaw-closing musculature in sciurormorph,**  
4 **hystricomorph and myomorph rodents**  
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32 **Running Title:** Rodent masticatory muscles  
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## ABSTRACT

Rodents are frequently separated into three non-monophyletic groups - the sciuriform, hystricomorph and myomorph forms - based on the morphology of their masticatory muscles. Yet there still exists in the literature a degree of controversy as to the exact morphology and internal architecture of the rodent jaw-closing musculature, particularly with regard to the masseter. This study examined the muscles of mastication in a typical member of each of these groups: a grey squirrel, domesticated guinea pig and brown rat, respectively. Three dimensional reconstructions of the skull, mandible and masticatory muscles of each of these rodents were generated from contrast-enhanced microCT images. The temporalis and pterygoid muscles were found to be broadly similar in all three specimens, although separation of the temporalis into anterior and posterior parts was only evident in the rat and squirrel. The three layers of the masseter - superficial, deep and zygomatico-mandibularis - showed the most variation in morphology. The guinea pig had an enlarged superficial masseter and reduced deep masseter compared to the rat and squirrel. The deep masseter was greatly enlarged in the squirrel and rat, and had expanded forward to take an origin on the rostrum. The deep masseter was also separated into anterior and posterior parts, but no such division could be seen in the guinea pig. The zygomatico-mandibularis was split into anterior and posterior parts in all three specimens by the masseteric nerve, and in the rat and guinea pig it had an additional expansion through the infraorbital foramen on to the rostrum. This infraorbital part of the muscle was particularly well-developed in the guinea pig. The results here give valuable origin, insertion and muscle volume data that will be used in future biomechanical studies of the rodent masticatory apparatus.

Keywords: rodent: sciuriform; hystricomorph; myomorph; masticatory muscles

## INTRODUCTION

The rodents are defined by their masticatory apparatus. The teeth are the diagnostic feature of the order – a pair of enlarged, self-sharpening, ever-growing incisors in both

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3 the upper and lower jaws separated from the cheek teeth by a long diastema (indicating  
4 the lost canines and first premolars). In addition, the masticatory muscles of rodents are  
5 just as distinctive. The masseter is by far the dominant jaw-closing muscle in the  
6 Rodentia, comprising between 60 and 80% of the entire masticatory muscle mass  
7 (Turnbull, 1970). In contrast, the temporalis is markedly reduced and forms a similar  
8 proportion of the masticatory complex to the pterygoid muscles. Furthermore, the  
9 musculature has become specialised to accomplish not only gnawing at the incisors and  
10 chewing at the molars, but also propalinal movement of the lower jaw between these two  
11 feeding modes (Becht, 1953). These movements are necessary in rodents, because the  
12 incisors and cheek teeth cannot both be in occlusion at the same time, and thus incision  
13 and mastication have become mutually exclusive activities (Hiimae & Ardran, 1968).  
14 Given the unique demands on the masticatory apparatus, it is perhaps unsurprising that  
15 the morphology of the jaw-closing muscles, in particular the masseter, has long been used  
16 to classify the rodents into subgroups.  
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30 It was Brandt (1855) who first used features primarily from the masticatory apparatus to  
31 group rodents into squirrel-like (Sciuromorpha), mouse-like (Myomorpha) and  
32 porcupine-like (Hystricomorpha) forms (Brandt's fourth group Lagomorpha, the rabbits,  
33 hares and pikas, now occupy a separate, albeit closely related, order). These three  
34 suborders were largely retained with only minor revisions by most workers for the next  
35 century (e.g. Thomas, 1896; Miller & Gidley, 1918), and indeed were still the basis for  
36 rodent taxonomy in George Gaylord Simpson's monumental classification of the  
37 mammals in 1945. It should be noted, however, that Simpson alludes to a growing  
38 dissatisfaction with the three suborders (Simpson, 1945, p.198), but retains them in his  
39 work owing to a lack of a better alternative at that time. The problem with the three  
40 suborder arrangement can clearly be seen in Simpson's classification: there are a number  
41 of rodent families that do not neatly fit into the Sciuromorpha, Myomorpha or  
42 Hystricomorpha. In particular, the Anomaluridae (scaly-tailed squirrels), Pedetidae  
43 (springhare), Dipodidae (jerboas, jumping mice and birchmice), Bathyergidae (mole-rats)  
44 and Ctenodactylidae (gundis) have all posed problems to various workers in the past. A  
45 competing classification of rodents, first proposed by Tullberg (1899), split the Rodentia  
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3 into two suborders (Sciurognathi and Hystricognathi) based on the morphology of the  
4 angular process of the mandible. This system overlaps with the masseter-based  
5 classification in some respects, for instance, the fact that all hystricognaths have a  
6 hystricomorph muscle arrangement (Lavocat, 1974, Wood 1974); but has notable  
7 differences as well, e.g. sciurognaths can possess any of the three masticatory muscle  
8 morphologies (Offermans & De Vree 1989).  
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16 Neither of the two classifications outlined above has stood the test of time. Although  
17 evidence points towards a monophyletic Hystricognathi, the Sciurognathi is almost  
18 certainly a paraphyletic grouping, and the idea that the three suborders of Brandt (1855)  
19 and Simpson (1945) represent monophyletic groups of rodents is now generally  
20 discredited (Adkins et al., 2001; Huchon et al., 2002; Adkins et al., 2003; Blanga-Kanfi et  
21 al., 2009). However, the use of the terms sciuiromorph, myomorph and hystricomorph as  
22 adjectives describing particular arrangements of jaw-closing muscles has persisted,  
23 largely thanks to Wood (1965). In his work, Wood describes the primitive arrangement of  
24 rodent masticatory muscles (the 'protrogomorph' condition, found in most pre-Oligocene  
25 fossil rodents, and also in the extant mountain beaver, *Aplodontia rufa*), and the three  
26 arrangements derived from it. In the sciuiromorph condition, part of the masseter has  
27 expanded antero-dorsally to take its origin from the rostrum and the widened root of the  
28 zygomatic arch. This arrangement is seen in the Sciuridae (squirrels), Castoridae  
29 (beavers) and Geomyoidea (pocket gophers, and kangaroo rats and mice). In the  
30 hystricomorph masticatory apparatus, a deeper part of the masseter has extended  
31 forwards, through the orbit and the grossly enlarged infraorbital foramen to take an origin  
32 on the snout. This morphology is found in the Caviomorpha (South American rodents),  
33 Phiomorpha (African mole-rats, cane rats and the dassie rat) and Hystricidae (old world  
34 porcupines) as well as the previously mentioned Pedetidae, Anomaluridae, Dipodidae and  
35 Ctenodactylidae. Lastly, the myomorphs combine sciuiromorph and hystricomorph  
36 features with the origins of both parts of the masseter having migrated on to the rostrum.  
37 This condition is seen in the Muroidea (mice and rats) and the Gliridae (dormice).  
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3 The above morphological descriptions have been greatly complicated by the complete  
4 lack of consensus on the nomenclature of rodent masticatory muscles, with particular  
5 regard to the masseter (hence the lack of specific muscle nomenclature in the previous  
6 paragraph). Part of the confusion arises due to the uncertainty of how many layers the  
7 masseter divides into, and whether all of these layers should be referred to as the masseter  
8 or as entirely separate muscles. The situation is further confounded by the difficulty in  
9 identifying homologous muscles in all three groups, and across mammals as a whole.  
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18 In most works, the masseter is split into three layers (although not all, see Hiiemae &  
19 Houston, 1971). The outermost layer is the least controversial and is almost universally  
20 named the *masseter superficialis*, or superficial masseter. Immediately medial to the  
21 superficial masseter is the middle layer. This muscle has the most confusing  
22 nomenclature, because it has been referred to using two seemingly contradictory terms.  
23 Wood (1965), Woods & Howlands (1979), Woods & Hermanson (1985), Olivares et al.,  
24 (2004), Satoh & Iwaku (2004, 2006, 2009) and Druzinsky (2010) refer to it as the  
25 *masseter lateralis* or lateral masseter, because it is lateral to the layer underneath.  
26 However, Yoshikawa & Suzuki (1969), Turnbull (1970), Hiiemae & Houston (1971),  
27 Weijs (1973), Offermans & De Vree (1989), Ball & Roth (1995), Thorington & Darrow  
28 (1996) and Satoh (1997, 1998, 1999) name it the *masseter profundus* or deep masseter,  
29 because it is deep compared to the superficial masseter. Woods (1972), following Hill  
30 (1937) and Bryant (1945), combines the two nomenclatures and calls this muscle the  
31 '*masseter lateralis profundus*'. Similarly, in their anatomy of the guinea pig, Cooper &  
32 Schiller (1975) refer to the 'deep lateral masseter'. However, the text and illustrations of  
33 this work do not have matching nomenclatures, and the figure labels read simply 'deep  
34 masseter'. Neither name for this muscle layer is entirely satisfactory, though 'deep  
35 masseter' has the advantage of being consistent with the nomenclature used in most other  
36 mammalian orders (e.g. Storch, 1968; Turnbull, 1970; Coldiron, 1977; Janis, 1983).  
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53 The dichotomy in nomenclature seen in the middle layer of the masseter persists into the  
54 innermost layer. Those workers that refer to the lateral masseter generally label this  
55 muscle the *masseter medialis*, or medial masseter (Hill, 1937; Woods, 1972; Cooper &  
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3 Schiller, 1975; Woods & Howlands, 1979; Woods & Hermanson, 1985; Olivares et al.,  
4 2004. Wood [1965] also calls this muscle the *masseter medialis* in the text of his paper,  
5 but confusingly labels it the *masseter profundus* in all the figures). In contrast, most other  
6 anatomists who use the name deep masseter for the middle layer, term the innermost  
7 layer the zygomatico-mandibularis in reference to its origin and insertion (e.g.  
8 Schumacher & Rehmer, 1962; Yoshikawa & Suzuki, 1969; Turnbull, 1970; Weijs, 1973;  
9 Offermans & De Vree, 1989; Ball & Roth, 1995; Thorington & Darrow, 1996). However,  
10 the other possible combinations of nomenclatures also exist. Satoh & Iwaku (2004, 2006,  
11 2009) name the three masseteric layers as superficial, deep and medial. Conversely, for  
12 specific reasons outlined in detail in his study, Druzinsky (2010) refers to the lateral  
13 masseter and the zygomatico-mandibularis. Strangely, Hiemae & Houston (1971) do not  
14 mention the deepest layer of the masseter at all – it is suspected that they felt it to be  
15 indistinguishable from the deep masseter and thus did not treat it separately. This scheme  
16 was also followed in the earlier works of Satoh (1997, 1998, 1999).

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30 The antero-dorsal expansion of the innermost layer of the masseter on to the rostrum in  
31 myomorphs and hystricomorphs is generally referred to as the infraorbital part of the  
32 zygomatico-mandibularis (Weijs, 1973) or medial masseter (Wood, 1965; Woods &  
33 Howland, 1979; Olivares et al., 2004; Satoh & Iwaku 2004, 2006, 2009) depending on  
34 what the rest of the muscle has been termed. However, a number of authors describe it as  
35 a separate entity, named the maxillo-mandibularis (Becht, 1953; Schumacher & Rehmer,  
36 1962; Yoshikawa & Suzuki, 1969; Turnbull, 1970; Offermans & De Vree, 1989). In  
37 those studies in which the zygomatico-mandibularis is undescribed (Hiemae & Houston,  
38 1971; Satoh, 1998), this part of the muscle is generally referred to as the infraorbital part  
39 of the anterior deep masseter.

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49 The other jaw-closing muscle groups, the temporalis and pterygoids, also have competing  
50 nomenclatures. The temporalis is often divided into two parts, called the medial and  
51 lateral (Ball & Roth, 1995; Thorington & Darrow, 1996), anterior medial and anterior  
52 lateral (Weijs, 1973), main part and orbital part (Woods, 1972), *pars posterior* and *pars*  
53 *orbitalis* (Woods & Howlands, 1979) or posterior and anterior (Druzinsky, 2010). It  
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3 should be noted that the posterior temporalis of Woods & Howlands (1979) and  
4 Druzinsky (2010) is not the same as the posterior temporalis of Woods (1972) and Weijjs  
5 (1973). The latter two works use posterior temporalis to refer to a small ventral part of  
6 the temporalis arising from the dorsal surface of the zygomatic process of the squamosal.  
7 Druzinsky (2010) refers to this muscle as the suprazygomatic part of the temporalis. The  
8 two pterygoid muscles are usually termed internal and external (Wood, 1965; Woods,  
9 1972; Weijjs, 1973; Woods & Howland, 1979; Satoh & Iwaku, 2004; Druzinsky, 2010),  
10 but are also known as medial and lateral (Schumacher & Rehmer, 1962; Offermans & De  
11 Vree, 1989; Ball & Roth, 1995; Thorington & Darrow, 1996).

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21 The aim of the current paper is to diminish the current confusion in rodent masticatory  
22 muscle morphology by providing thorough descriptions of the masseter, temporalis and  
23 pterygoid muscles of a typical representative of the sciurormorph, hystricomorph and  
24 myomorph forms. All these muscles will be investigated using current imaging  
25 techniques, and the results will be compared to and contrasted with previous  
26 investigations.

## 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

### 34 35 36 37 **Sample**

38 Three rodent species were chosen to represent the sciurormorph, hystricomorph and  
39 myomorph morphologies. These were, respectively, the Eastern grey squirrel (*Sciurus*  
40 *carolinensis*), the domesticated guinea pig (*Cavia porcellus*), and the brown rat (*Rattus*  
41 *norvegicus*). These species were selected as they have all been well-studied previously,  
42 and each represents a typical member of its feeding type (i.e. none is anomalously  
43 specialised).

### 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 **Imaging**

52 To visualize the muscle tissues as well as the bone in a non-destructive manner, a  
53 formalin-fixed specimen of each species was imaged using contrast-enhanced microCT  
54 (Jeffery et al., 2010). The enhancement uses a solution of iodine (I<sub>2</sub>KI) to increase the  
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3 differential attenuation of X-rays among soft-tissues and has been shown to demonstrate  
4 patterns of muscle fibres and fascicles against the connective tissues (see Fig. 1 and  
5 Jeffery et al., 2010). Specimens were fixed in phosphate buffered formal saline (PBFS)  
6 solution (polymerized formaldehyde dissolved as a 4% solution in phosphate buffered  
7 saline allowing for long term storage with limited tissue shrinkage) and then placed in  
8 I<sub>2</sub>KI contrast agent for a period of two months. This incubation time was insufficient for  
9 passive diffusion throughout the larger *Sciurus* and *Cavia* specimens. Small volumes of  
10 the contrast agent were therefore injected into the body of the muscles with a fine grade  
11 needle. After further incubation the specimens were imaged with the Metris X-Tek  
12 custom 320kV bay system at the EPSRC funded Henry Moseley X-ray Imaging Facility,  
13 University of Manchester. Imaging parameters were optimised for each specimen to  
14 maximise spatial and contrast resolution as well as data handling. Voxel resolutions  
15 varied from 0.033mm to 0.040mm.  
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### 28 **Reconstruction and observations**

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30 Three-dimensional reconstructions of all the jaw-closing muscles were created for each  
31 specimen using the volume rendering function of Amira 5.2 (Mercury Systems Inc.,  
32 Chelmsford, MA, USA). Reconstructions of the skull and mandible were also created to  
33 facilitate visualisation of the origins and insertions of each muscle. As can be seen from  
34 Fig. 1, the difference in contrast between muscle and bone was not sufficient to allow the  
35 models to be generated using the threshold function. Hence, the muscle and bone  
36 reconstructions were built by manually painting the object of interest in a number of  
37 slices and interpolating between them. A smoothing function was used to reduce the  
38 blocky appearance of the reconstructions. Amira 5.2 was also able to output the volume  
39 of each muscle in each reconstruction, and these are reported in the results section.  
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### 49 **RESULTS**

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53 In the following descriptions, the three layers of the masseter are referred to as the  
54 superficial masseter, the deep masseter and the zygomatico-mandibularis. It is felt that,  
55 although all the nomenclatures currently in use have their advantages, the one used here  
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3 is at least consistent with the nomenclature used in most other mammalian groups. The  
4 rostral expansion of the innermost layer in myomorphs and hystricomorphs is termed the  
5 infraorbital part of the zygomatico-mandibularis. Where the temporalis has been split into  
6 two parts, they are named the medial and lateral parts, as this is felt to reflect more  
7 accurately their anatomical relationship to one another. The pterygoids are referred to as  
8 internal and external in reference to their origin in and on the pterygoid fossa.  
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### 16 **Superficial Masseter**

17 Fig. 1 demonstrates the enhanced microCT imaging of the muscles in the squirrel.  
18 Regions of light (high x-ray attenuation) represent groups of muscle fibres (see Jeffery et  
19 al., 2010). Darker bands represent the epimysium and perimysium that separate muscles  
20 and fascicles. There is a clear dark band distinguishing the superficial masseter from the  
21 posterior deep masseter. From the reconstructions (Fig. 2) it can be seen that the  
22 superficial masseter exhibits a fairly consistent morphology across the three specimens.  
23 This muscle takes a small origin from a flattened tendon attached to a small tubercle or  
24 process just below the infraorbital foramen. The postero-dorsal muscle fascicles then run  
25 to the back of the mandible to insert into a small region on the postero-lateral surface of  
26 the angle of the jaw ramus. Some of the muscle fascicles on the dorsal edge of this  
27 muscle also insert on to the aponeurosis of the lower masseteric layer, making the  
28 separation of these two parts of the masseter frequently difficult. The antero-ventral  
29 fascicles of the superficial masseter run under the mandible to insert on the medial  
30 surface of the jaw in a fossa just ventral to the insertion of the internal pterygoid. In the  
31 guinea pig and, to a lesser degree, in the rat, there is also a dorsal elongation of the  
32 reflected part of the superficial masseter anterior to the internal pterygoid, so that it  
33 inserts on the medial condyloid process. This is termed the '*pars reflexa*' by some  
34 workers (e.g. Turnbull, 1970; Woods, 1972; Weijs 1973). It can be seen from Table 1 that  
35 the superficial masseter is relatively larger in the guinea pig (Fig. 2a) than in the rat or  
36 squirrel (Fig. 2b,c), forming almost half of the jaw-closing musculature. Its dorsal edge is  
37 at the level of the zygomatic arch, almost completely obscuring the deeper layers in  
38 lateral view. In contrast, the superficial masseter of the rat and squirrel is much more  
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3 restricted dorsally, its margin running diagonally from the origin at the front of the  
4 zygomatic arch to the tip of the angle, thus revealing the deep masseter behind.  
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### 8 9 **Deep Masseter**

10 This muscle layer, immediately behind the superficial masseter, takes its origin from the  
11 ventro-lateral surface of the zygomatic arch. In the squirrel and rat (Fig. 3a,b), the muscle  
12 has also spread anteriorly on to the rostrum to originate from the masseteric fossa and the  
13 widened inferior root of the zygomatic process of the maxilla. In the rat, the origin of the  
14 deep masseter extends as far as the anterior margin of the maxilla, and in the squirrel,  
15 beyond this point on to the premaxilla. In the guinea pig (Fig. 3c), this muscle is  
16 restricted to the zygomatic arch by the large infraorbital foramen. The deep masseter  
17 inserts on the lateral surface of the mandible all along the masseteric ridge from beneath  
18 the second molar to the angular process. The microCT images show that this muscle layer  
19 clearly divides into two sections in the squirrel and rat (Fig. 4a,b), based on variation in  
20 the fascicle direction. There is an anterior part that originates from the rostrum and inserts  
21 on the anterior portion of the masseteric ridge, and a posterior part that originates further  
22 back on the zygomatic arch and inserts on the mandibular angle. This separation is  
23 particularly obvious in the microCT images of the squirrel. No such division is seen in  
24 the guinea pig where there is no rostral expansion of the deep masseter. In this species,  
25 the deep masseter has been reconstructed as a single muscle. The deep masseter is a  
26 relatively much smaller muscle in the guinea pig than in the rat and squirrel, where it  
27 forms well over 30% of the masticatory muscle volume (see Table 1).  
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### 44 **Zygomatico-mandibularis**

45 The innermost layer of the masseter runs between the zygomatic arch and the dorsal part  
46 of the mandible. More specifically, it originates from the medial surface of the zygomatic  
47 arch (largely on the jugal, but also on parts of the maxilla and squamosal), and inserts on  
48 the lateral surface of the lower jaw. In squirrels (Fig. 5a), the insertion is in the masseteric  
49 fossa, just posterior to the toothrow, ventral and anterior to the mandibular condyle. In  
50 rats and guinea pigs (Fig. 5b,c) the zygomatico-mandibularis inserts on the lateral crest  
51 below the second and third molars and on to the coronoid process. As in the previous  
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3 layer, the microCT images provide good evidence to justify splitting this muscle into  
4 anterior and posterior parts. The anterior part runs ventrally from the medial surface of  
5 the jugal to the lateral crest, whereas the posterior part originates on the ventral and  
6 medial surface of the zygomatic process of the squamosal and runs antero-ventrally to the  
7 coronoid process of the mandible. As well as showing different orientations of their  
8 muscle fascicles, the two parts are also clearly separated by the masseteric nerve (Fig. 6).  
9 In the rat and the guinea pig, there is an antero-dorsal expansion of the anterior part of this  
10 muscle into the orbit and through the infraorbital foramen to take an origin from the  
11 rostrum (Fig. 5b,c). The rostral origin is relatively small in the rat, restricted to the area of  
12 the maxilla dorsal to the masseteric fossa (the origin of the anterior deep masseter).  
13 However, the expansion of this muscle is much greater in guinea pig, extending through  
14 the grossly enlarged infraorbital foramen to take a large origin on the premaxilla as well  
15 as on the maxilla. In both the rat and guinea pig, the infraorbital part of the zygomatico-  
16 mandibularis inserts into a fossa at the anterior end of the lateral crest, ventro-lateral to  
17 the first cheek tooth. Overall, the zygomatico-mandibularis makes up a small part of the  
18 masticatory musculature - less than 10% in the rat and squirrel (see Table 1). It is slightly  
19 greater in the guinea pig (15%) owing to the large infraorbital portion in this species.  
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### 35 **Temporalis**

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37 The temporalis muscle, which dominates the masticatory musculature in many other  
38 mammals, is greatly reduced in comparison to the masseter in all rodents (see Table 1).  
39 The medial temporalis takes its origin from the lateral surface of the cranium, extending  
40 rostro-caudally from the frontal-parietal suture to the lambdoid crest, and dorso-ventrally  
41 from the temporal ridge to the external auditory meatus and zygomatic process of the  
42 squamosal. The muscle fascicles from this wide origin converge to a small region on the  
43 medial surface of the mandible between the retromolar fossa and the coronoid process. In  
44 the squirrel and rat, a separate smaller part, the lateral temporalis, is visible (Fig. 2b,c).  
45 This takes its origin from the anterior half of the fascia overlying the medial temporalis  
46 and inserts on the coronoid process. This division between medial and lateral was not  
47 visible in the guinea pig microCT images and so the temporalis has been reconstructed as  
48 a single muscle in this specimen (Fig. 2a).  
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### **Internal pterygoid**

This muscle is well-developed in rodents, and has a similar morphology in all three species in this study. It is particularly notable in the guinea pig in which it accounts for almost a fifth of the jaw-closing musculature (see Table 1 and Fig. 7). It originates in the pterygoid fossa posterior to the molar toothrow. In squirrels, it also has an origin on the lateral surface of the pterygoid process. From here, the internal pterygoid runs ventro-laterally and fans out to make a wide insertion on the medial surface of the angular process, dorsal to the reflected insertion of the superficial masseter.

### **External pterygoid**

This muscle, like the internal pterygoid, varies little in its morphology between the three rodents. However, it is a much smaller muscle compared to its internal counterpart, forming just 3-4% of the jaw-closing musculature (see Table 1 and Fig. 7). It originates along the ventral margin of the skull in the orbito-temporal region on the alisphenoid bone and lateral pterygoid process. It runs postero-dorsally to insert on the medial condyloid process, just below the condyle.

## **DISCUSSION**

The morphology of the rodent masticatory musculature has been the source of considerable controversy in the scientific literature for a number of years. Much of this controversy may be attributed to the difficulty of dissection owing to the small size of the specimens and the need to remove outer muscle layers, and in some cases bone, to reveal the deeper layers. The contrast-enhanced micro CT technique used in the present study has enabled visualisation of the masticatory muscles without the serial destruction of the skull necessary in gross dissection. These images have revealed a sufficient level of detail to allow accurate three-dimensional reconstructions of both the bone and muscle to be created.

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3 In all three specimens, the masseter has been shown to divide into three distinct layers:  
4 the superficial masseter, the deep masseter and the zygomatico-mandibularis. The  
5 superficial masseter runs from a small origin on the maxilla ventral to the infraorbital  
6 foramen and inserts on the margin and the medial surface of the angular process of the  
7 mandible. Some workers have divided this muscle into two parts based on the two  
8 insertion areas on the lateral and medial surfaces of the mandible (Greene, 1935;  
9 Yoshikawa & Suzuki, 1969; Woods, 1972; Woods & Howland, 1979; Woods &  
10 Hermanson, 1985). However, this study, along with many others (e.g. Wood, 1965;  
11 Weijs, 1973; Ball & Roth, 1995; Thorington & Darrow, 1996; Druzinsky, 2010), retains  
12 it as a single muscle mass as there is no clear separation seen in the contrast-enhanced  
13 microCT images.  
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24 The deep masseter originates on the lateral surface of the zygomatic arch and inserts on  
25 the ventral part of the lateral surface of the mandible. In the guinea pig, it is a single  
26 entity, restricted to the zygomatic arch, but in the squirrel and rat it has expanded forward  
27 on to the rostrum and is divided into anterior and posterior parts. The division into  
28 anterior and posterior parts seen in this study is also made by certain other researchers,  
29 generally working on sciuriforms and myomorphs (Yoshikawa & Suzuki, 1969; Weijs,  
30 1973; Ball & Roth, 1995; Thorington & Darrow, 1996; Druzinsky, 2010). This is less  
31 common in studies of the hystricomorphs where there is no expansion of the muscle on to  
32 the rostrum. Woods (1972) splits his *masseter lateralis profundus* into anterior and  
33 posterior parts, but this study does not support such a split. Indeed, the *pars posterior*  
34 appears to be an amalgamation of the superficial masseter and the deep zygomatico-  
35 mandibularis.  
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48 The zygomatico-mandibularis runs from the medial surface of the zygomatic arch to the  
49 coronoid process and lateral crest of the mandible. It is split into anterior and posterior  
50 parts separated by the masseteric nerve in all three species. In the rat and guinea pig, a  
51 third division of the zygomatico-mandibularis exists (the infraorbital part) which extends  
52 through the lower part of the orbit and the enlarged infraorbital foramen to attach to the  
53 rostrum. A number of authors (Woods, 1972; Weijs, 1973; Woods & Howland, 1979;  
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3 Ball & Roth, 1995; Satoh & Iwaku, 2004, 2006, 2009) have divided the zygomatico-  
4 mandibularis into anterior and posterior parts, separated by the masseteric nerve, as has  
5 been done in this study. In a few studies on hystricomorph rodents, a third part of this  
6 muscle is distinguished running almost horizontally from the lateral jugal fossa of the  
7 zygomatic arch to the post-condyloid process on the mandible. Woods (1972) and Wood  
8 (1974) refer to it as the '*masseter lateralis profundus, pars posterior*, deep division';  
9 subsequent studies (Woods & Howlands, 1979; Woods & Hermanson, 1985; Offermans  
10 & De Vree, 1989; Olivares et al., 2004) use the less cumbersome 'posterior masseter'.  
11 Druzinsky (2010) describes the posterior masseter in *Aplodontia rufa* and a sciuriform,  
12 but notes that, owing to its more vertical course in these rodents, it is very difficult to  
13 separate it from the posterior zygomatico-mandibularis. No evidence of a separate  
14 posterior masseter was found in any of the contrast-enhanced microCT images used in  
15 this study, and it is suspected that the 'posterior masseter' reported by the above authors  
16 is simply part or all of the posterior zygomatico-mandibularis.  
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30 The temporalis muscle runs from a wide origin on the lateral surface of the cranium to a  
31 relatively small insertion on the medial surface of the coronoid process of the mandible.  
32 In the squirrel and rat, it is divided into a large medial temporalis and a smaller lateral  
33 temporalis which overlays the anterior half of the medial layer. This division could not be  
34 seen in the guinea pig images. The division of the temporalis into two parts has been  
35 made by a number of authors (Weijs, 1973; Ball & Roth, 1995; Thorington & Darrow,  
36 1996; Druzinsky 2010), including some working on hystricomorphs (Woods, 1972;  
37 Woods & Howlands, 1979). A number of authors (Woods, 1972; Weijs, 1973) separate  
38 the ventralmost fibres of the temporalis to create a third division, the posterior temporalis  
39 (called the suprazygomatic by Druzinsky, 2010). This usually consists of those fibres  
40 originating from the caudal region of the squamosal (Weijs, 1973), or in some cases, just  
41 those fibres taking origin from the zygomatic process of the squamosal (Woods, 1972;  
42 Druzinsky, 2010). This division was not clearly separable in any of the three species  
43 under study here.  
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3 The morphology of the pterygoid musculature showed little variation between the three  
4 rodents. The internal pterygoid runs from the pterygoid fossa to insert on the medial  
5 surface of the angular process of the mandible. The external pterygoid originates on the  
6 ventral surface of the alisphenoid and the lateral pterygoid process and inserts on the  
7 medial condyloid process of the mandible. This morphology has also been noted by other  
8 researchers in sciurormorphs (Ball & Roth, 1995; Thorington & Darrow, 1996),  
9 hystricomorphs (Woods, 1972; Offermans & De Vree , 1989) and myomorphs (Hiimae  
10 & Houston, 1971; Weijs, 1973).  
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19 From the descriptions and the muscle volumes in Table 1, the similarities and differences  
20 between the three rodents can be highlighted. The superficial masseter is a much larger  
21 component in the guinea pig, forming approximately 45% of the masticatory  
22 musculature, compared to about 30% in the squirrel and rat. This is partly due to the  
23 morphology of the deep masseter in the hystricomorph arrangement. In sciurormorphs and  
24 myomorphs, the extension of the deep masseter on to the rostrum appears to restrict the  
25 superficial masseter dorsally. In hystricomorphs, where no such extension exists, the  
26 superficial masseter is free to enlarge to the height of the zygomatic arch so that it almost  
27 completely covers the more medial layers. Conversely, the deep masseter is a much more  
28 important component of the musculature in the squirrel and rat (~35%) than it is in the  
29 guinea pig (>10%), largely owing to the lack of rostral expansion in the latter species.  
30 Overall, the zygomatico-mandibularis plays a much more prominent role in the guinea  
31 pig (15%) than it does in the squirrel and rat (6-9%). This is largely attributable to the  
32 large infraorbital part in hystricomorphs which, although present, is not so greatly  
33 developed in myomorphs and is completely absent in sciurormorphs. Regarding the  
34 temporalis, it is the squirrel and guinea pig that are the most similar, with this muscle  
35 being relatively small (10-12%). In contrast, the rat has a much larger temporalis,  
36 accounting for just over a quarter of the masticatory musculature. Lastly, it is the guinea  
37 pig that stands out once again when examining the pterygoid muscles. All three species  
38 have a fairly similar sized external pterygoid, but the internal pterygoid is substantially  
39 larger in the guinea pig, forming almost 20% of the masticatory musculature, compared  
40 to approximately 10% in the squirrel and rat.  
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5 Comparison with previous work on rodents shows a high degree of correspondence in the  
6 relative proportions of the masticatory muscles. The relative volumes of the muscles of  
7 the guinea pig calculated here (see Table 1), match closely those given by Schumacher &  
8 Rehmer (1962). Although the values for the temporalis differ by 10%, the values for all  
9 the other muscles correspond to within 5%. Similarly, the percentage values for the  
10 masseter, temporalis, internal pterygoid and external pterygoid of the squirrel are very  
11 similar to those measured by Ball & Roth (1995). Unfortunately, the correspondence in  
12 percentage mass of the component layers of the masseter cannot be checked as Ball &  
13 Roth (1995) do not give these values. There is also a close match of the muscular  
14 proportions of squirrel measured in this study with the values given by Turnbull (1970),  
15 except for a somewhat reduced superficial masseter and increased temporalis. However,  
16 this discrepancy may be attributable to the use of *Sciurus niger* rather than *Sciurus*  
17 *carolinensis* in the latter study. The percentage muscle volumes measured for the rat  
18 correspond very closely to the percentage masses given in both Schumacher & Rehmer  
19 (1962) and Hiiemae (1971), assuming that the 'deep masseter' of Hiiemae (1971)  
20 encompasses both the deep masseter and zygomatico-mandibularis as defined in this  
21 work. The one notable difference between these works and the current study is the  
22 infraorbital part of the zygomatico-mandibularis which Schumacher & Rehmer (1962)  
23 measure to be 14% of the masticatory musculature, compared to 3.6% in this study. The  
24 former figure seems incredibly unlikely, especially as the value stated for the same  
25 muscle in the guinea pig in the same paper is only 6%. It is probable that Schumacher and  
26 Rehmer (1962) have misattributed part of the deep masseter to the infraorbital part of the  
27 zygomatico-mandibularis, and so their value is erroneously high.  
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47 The functional consequences of the variation in rodent masticatory muscle morphology  
48 have been widely debated in the literature. Thorington & Darrow (1996) suggest that the  
49 expansion of the anterior deep masseter forward on to the maxilla and premaxilla in  
50 sciuriforms results in an increase in strength of the incisor bite. Woods (1972), building  
51 on Maynard Smith & Savage (1959), proposes that the function of the zygomatico-  
52 mandibularis is to stabilise the mandible during chewing, and that the infraorbital  
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3 expansion of this muscle in hystricomorphs serves to increase this stability. Wood (1965)  
4 postulates that the myomorph arrangement, with its combination of sciuriform and  
5 hystricomorph characters, gives the greatest antero-posterior component of any of the  
6 rodent musculature arrangements, and may be a contributing factor to the overwhelming  
7 success of the Muroidea. These ideas and others will be tested in further work, using the  
8 results of this study, which will examine the biomechanical consequences of the  
9 sciuriform, hystricomorph and myomorph musculature arrangements.  
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# Morphology of the jaw-closing musculature in sciuriform, hystricomorph and myomorph rodents

Philip G. Cox & Nathan Jeffery

## TABLES

Table 1. Volumes (mm<sup>3</sup>) and percentages of jaw-closing muscles.

Muscle	Squirrel		Guinea pig		Rat	
	Volume	%	Volume	%	Volume	%
Superficial masseter	116.50	27.37	207.13	45.35	60.85	20.42
Deep masseter	153.41	36.04	34.60	7.57	102.32	34.34
Anterior	93.50	21.96			44.43	14.91
Posterior	59.91	14.07			57.90	19.43
Zygomatoco-mandibularis	37.04	8.70	67.36	14.75	20.15	6.76
Anterior	28.82	6.77	27.16	5.95	4.73	1.59
Posterior	8.22	1.93	6.04	1.32	2.80	0.94
Infraorbital			34.17	7.48	12.62	4.24
Temporalis	51.21	12.03	48.62	10.65	80.05	26.86
Lateral	5.98	1.40			23.02	7.73
Medial	45.23	10.63			57.02	19.14
Pterygoid	67.54	15.87	99.03	21.68	34.62	11.62
External	18.33	4.30	13.70	3.00	9.93	3.33
Internal	49.22	11.56	85.33	18.68	24.69	8.29
Total	425.70	100.00	456.75	100.00	297.99	100.00



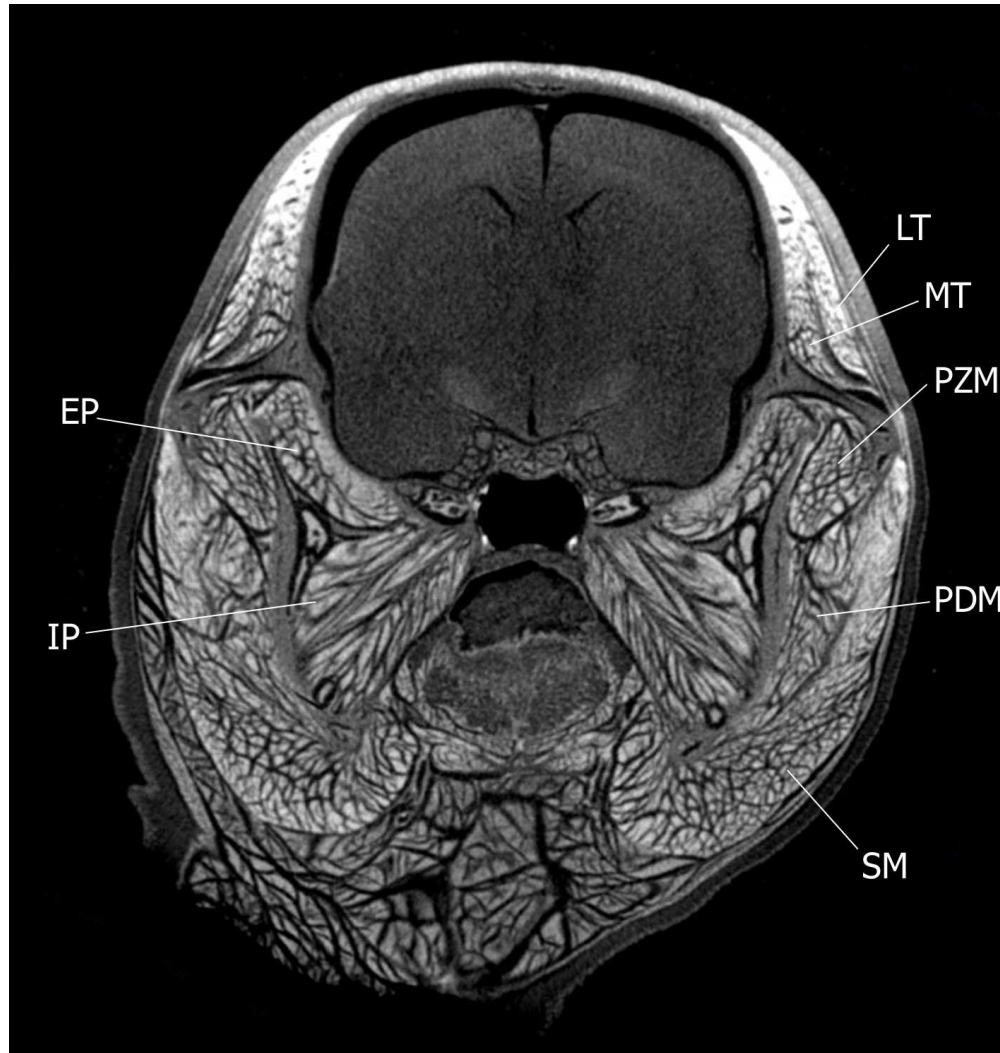


Fig. 1. Enhanced-contrast microCT image of a squirrel in coronal view. EP, external pterygoid; IP, internal pterygoid; LT, lateral temporalis; MT, medial temporalis; PDM, posterior deep masseter; PZM, posterior zygomatico-mandibularis; SM, superficial masseter.  
59x62mm (600 x 600 DPI)

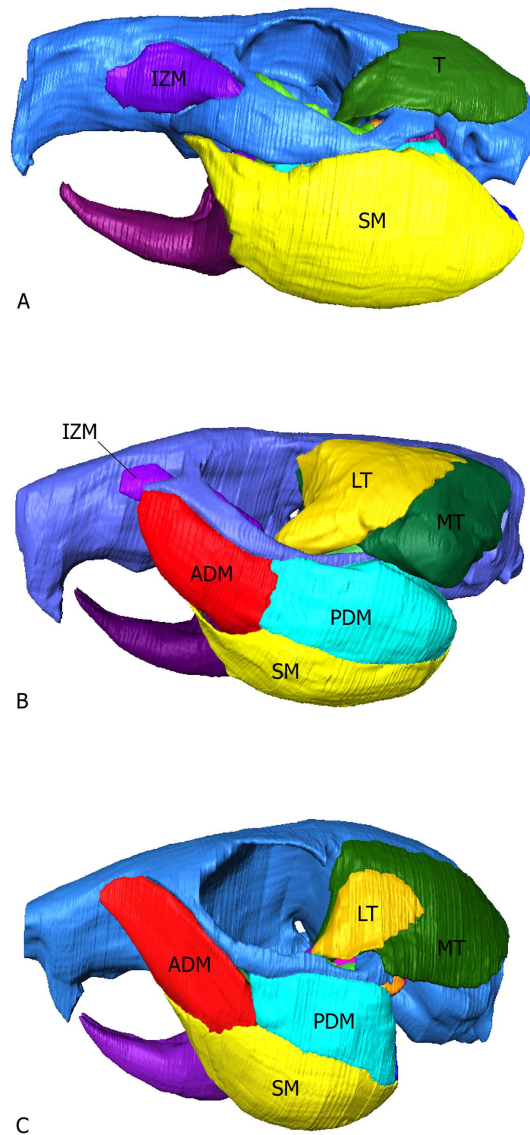


Fig. 2. Left lateral view of 3D reconstructions of the skull, mandible and masticatory muscles of: a) guinea pig; b) rat; c) squirrel. ADM, anterior deep masseter; IZM, infraorbital part of the zygomatico-mandibularis; LT, lateral temporalis; MT, medial temporalis; PDM, posterior deep masseter; SM, superficial masseter; T, temporalis.  
59x120mm (600 x 600 DPI)



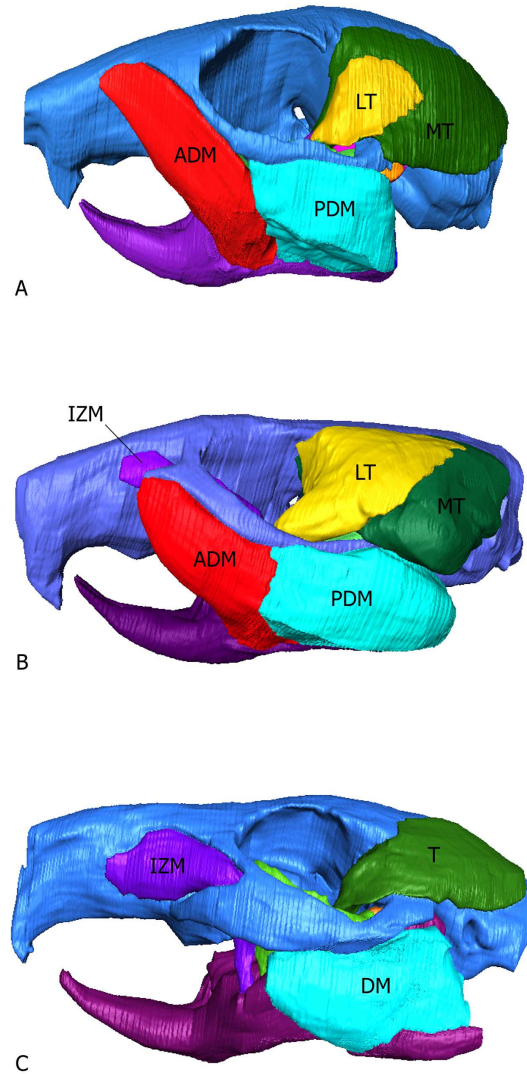


Fig. 3. Left lateral view of 3D reconstructions of the skull, mandible and masticatory muscles of: a) squirrel; b) rat; c) guinea pig. ADM, anterior deep masseter; DM, deep masseter; IZM, infraorbital part of the zygomatico-mandibularis; LT, lateral temporalis; MT, medial temporalis; PDM, posterior deep masseter; T, temporalis.  
59x120mm (600 x 600 DPI)

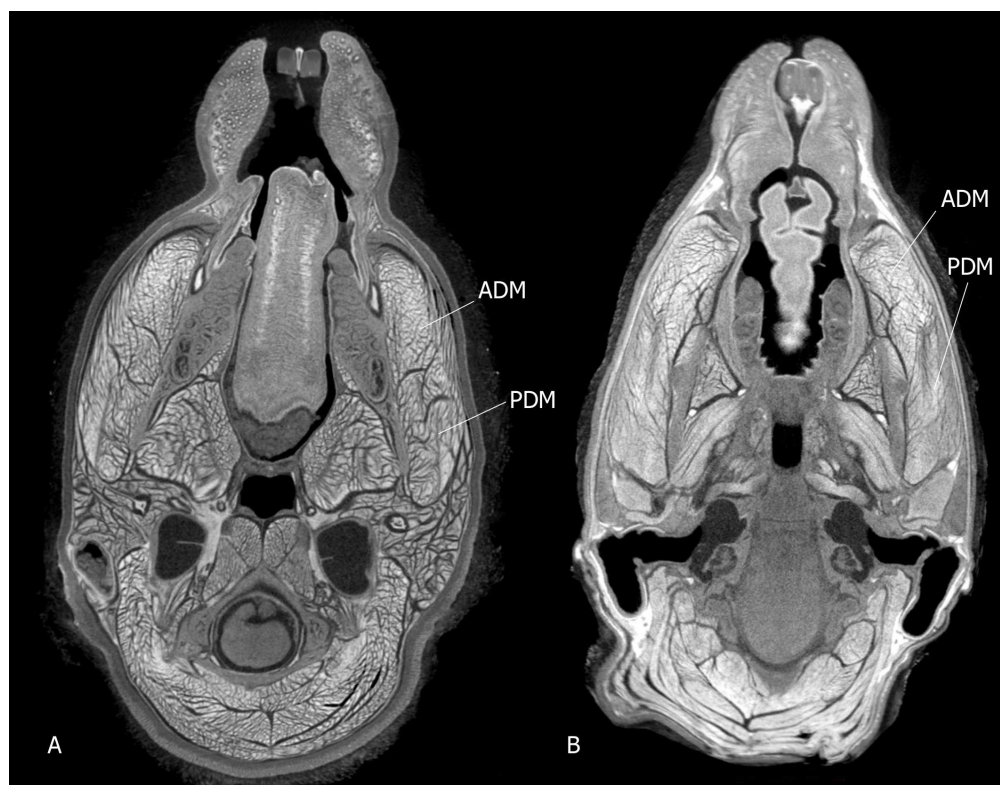


Fig. 4. Axial microCT images of a) squirrel and b) rat showing division between anterior deep masseter (ADM) and posterior deep masseter (PDM).  
90x70mm (600 x 600 DPI)

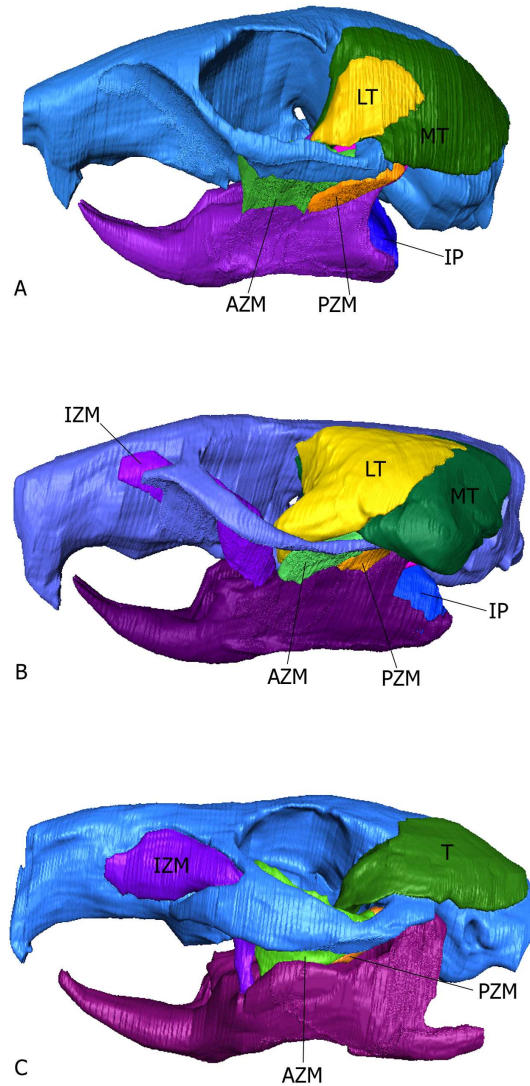


Fig. 5. Left lateral view of 3D reconstructions of the skull, mandible and masticatory muscles of: a) squirrel; b) rat; c) guinea pig. AZM, anterior zygomatico-mandibularis; IP, internal pterygoid; IZM, infraorbital part of the zygomatico-mandibularis; LT, lateral temporalis; MT, medial temporalis; PZM, posterior zygomatico-mandibularis.  
60x120mm (600 x 600 DPI)

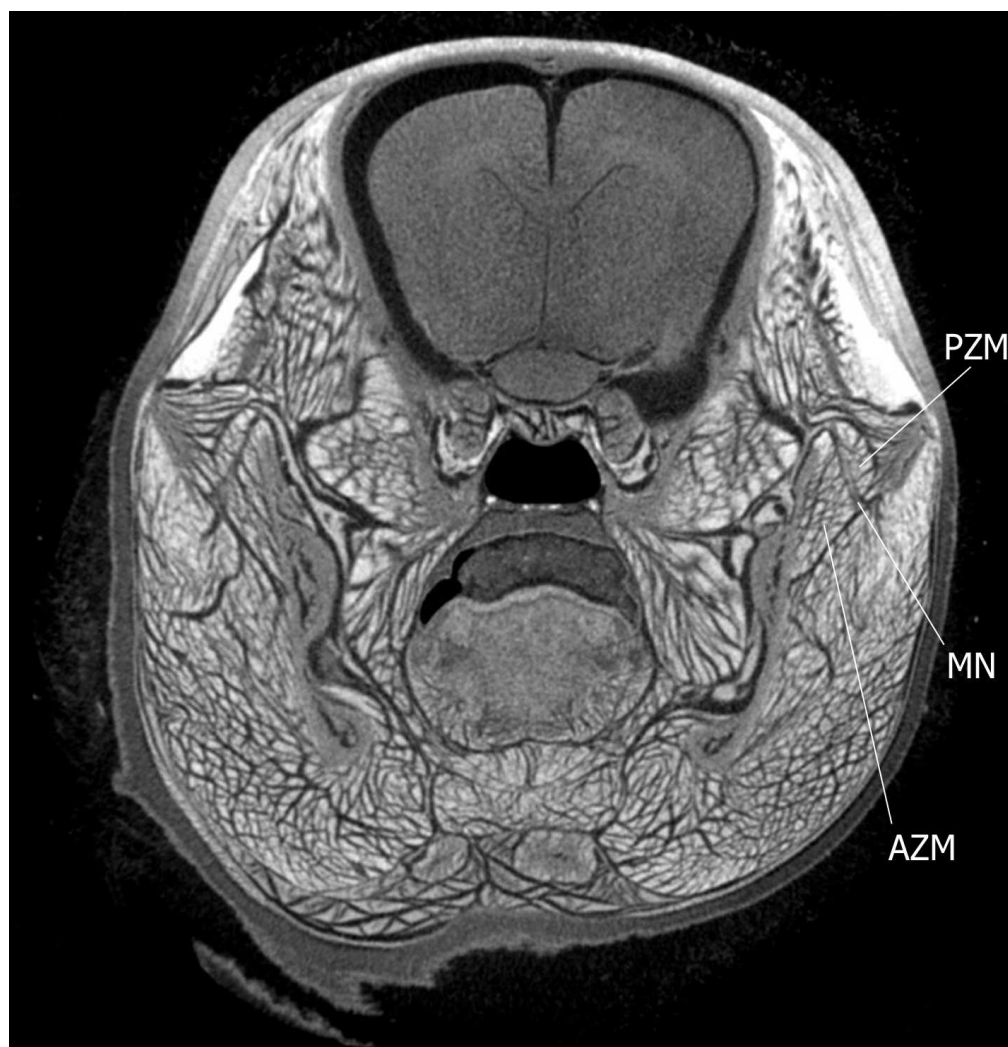


Fig. 6. Coronal microCT image of squirrel showing division of zygomatico-mandibularis into anterior and posterior parts (AZM and PZM) by masseteric nerve (MN).  
59x62mm (600 x 600 DPI)

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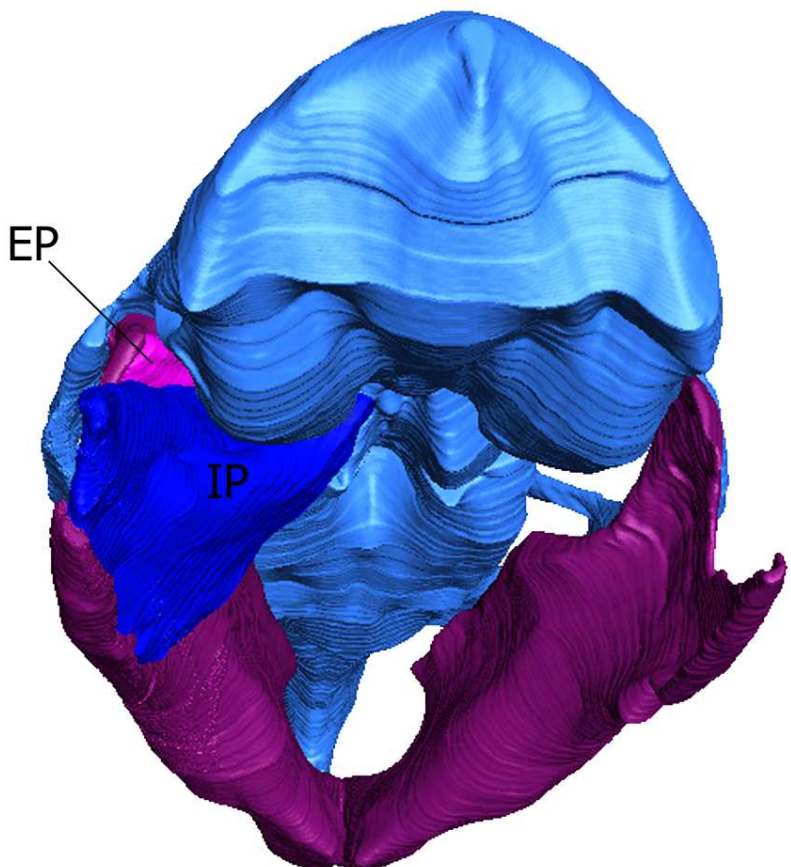


Fig. 7. Postero-ventral view of 3D reconstruction of guinea pig showing pterygoid muscles. EP, external pterygoid; IP internal pterygoid. 45x50mm (600 x 600 DPI)