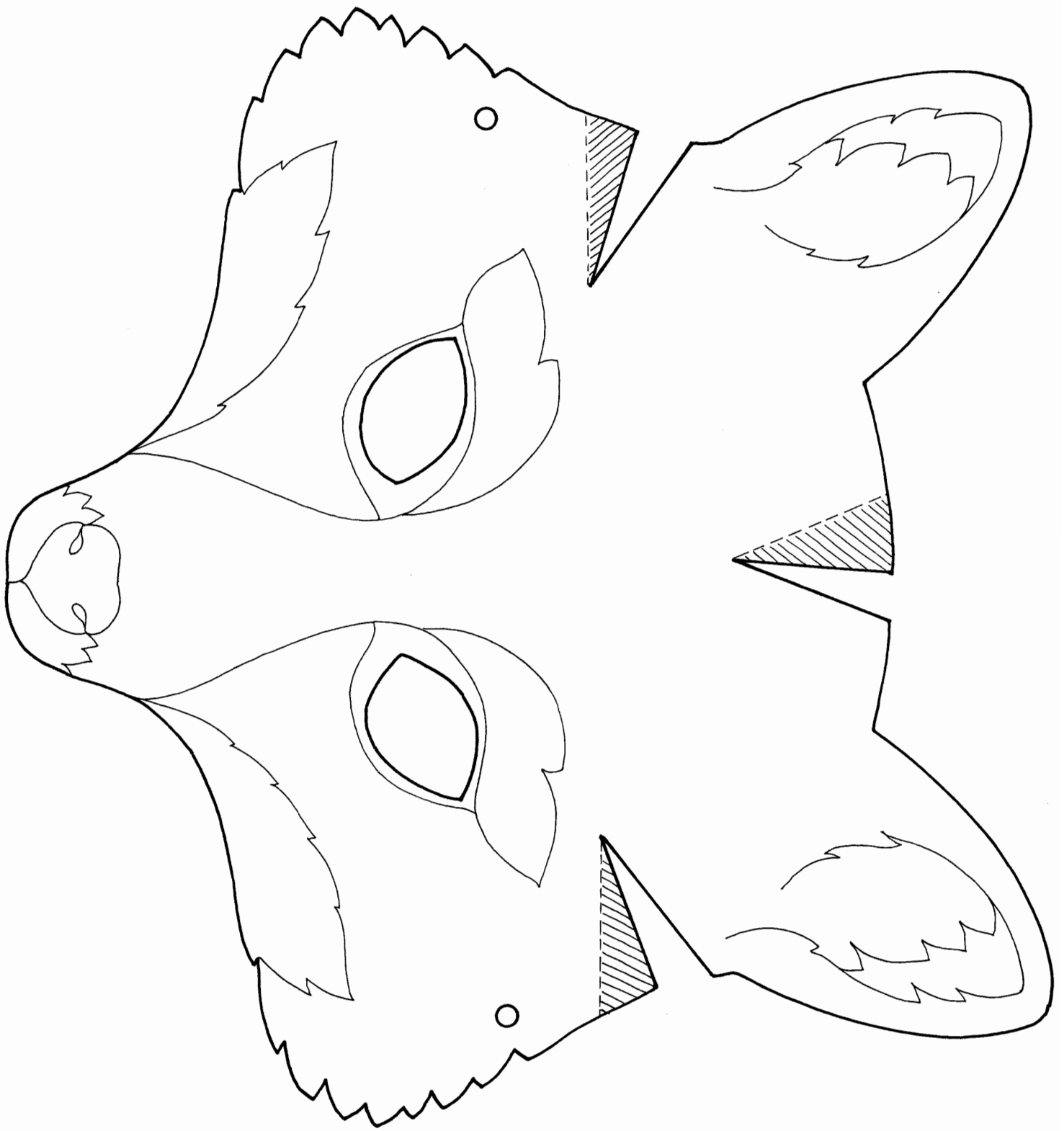


— How to make your fox mask —

This mask can be made using basic materials that most of you will have at home. Printing the template onto thin card will give you the best result, but plain printer paper will also work.

1. Cut around the outside edge of your mask shape. Do not cut off the shaded triangles.
2. Cut out the eyes and loop holes – you might need an adult to help as these bits can be a little tricky.
3. Colour and decorate your fox using anything you choose – paints, pens, coloured pencils, collage; whatever you have available, anything goes! Don't colour over the shaded triangles. If you've used lots of wet materials, let your fox dry before moving on.
4. Lay your mask flat on the table and fold the fox's ears forwards, about half-way (not flat).
5. Loosely roll the tips of the fox's fluffy cheeks around a pen or pencil – to make them curl forwards.
6. Starting with the 'V' shape on the top of the head, bring the two sides together and overlap them, so that the shaded triangle is hidden underneath. Secure in place, you could use double sided tape, staples, strong glue or sticky tape. Repeat on the other two 'V' shapes.
7. By now you should have a 3D mask. Tie a length of ribbon or string (roughly 40cm long) through the loop hole on one side of your mask, repeat with a second piece of ribbon or string on the other side.

TA-DAAA, your Darwin's Fox mask is complete!



— Helping the theory of evolution —

Darwin's Fox

When HMS *Beagle* landed on Chiloé Island off Chile in 1834, twenty-five-year-old Charles Darwin was keen to see a fox that lived there, different to those on the mainland, with a broader head, shorter legs and a darker coat. He discovered it sitting on the rocks above the *Beagle*, watching the mariners aboard the ship.

Darwin claimed it to be a new species, and this was confirmed in 1996 when the fox's DNA was studied: the foxes had diverged from a common ancestor some 275,000 years ago, and are actually related to wolves and jackals, but have evolved to resemble a fox.

We are still trying to learn more about the sweet-natured Darwin's fox – a challenge due to their low numbers – the last estimate was 227 on the mainland and 412 on the island; a minimum total of just 639.

Foxes are extremely resourceful and adaptable, found across the world in almost every habitat, from the freezing Arctic to arid desert plains, but Darwin's foxes can be found in just this one corner of the world. Recently, however, there have been rare sightings further away, an exciting discovery: perhaps the population is bigger than previously thought?

