

Burrowing badger unearths Roman-era treasure in Spain

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The coins were likely dug up by a badger searching for food during the vast snowstorm which paralysed Spain in January 2021.

A treasure trove of some 200 Roman-era coins was discovered in northwestern Spain thanks to the apparent efforts of a hungry badger

hunting for food, archaeologists have said.

Described as "an exceptional find", the coins were discovered in April 2021 in La Cuesta cave in Bercio in the Asturias region, with details outlined in the Journal of Prehistory and Archaeology published last month by Madrid's Autonomous University.

The coins were likely dug up by a badger searching for food during the vast snowstorm which paralysed Spain in January 2021.

At that time, many creatures struggled to find berries, worms or insects to eat, with this luckless mammal only unearthing a handful of inedible metal discs that were later spotted by a local.

"On the floor of the cave... in the sand likely dug up by badger at the entrance to its sett, we found the coins with more inside," the archaeologists wrote after finding 209 coins dating back to between the 3rd and the 5th century AD.

Most of these late Roman era coins "originate from the north and eastern Mediterranean" from Antioch, Constantinople, Thessaloniki which later passed through Rome and Arles and Lyon in southern France, although at least one [coin](#) came from London, they wrote.

"The quantity of coins recovered, as well as the undoubted archaeological interest of the transition to the early medieval period, make the hoard discovered at Bercio an exceptional find," they wrote.

The researchers said the coins had likely been moved there in the "context of political instability" linked in particular to the invasion of the Suebians, a Germanic people, who pushed into the northwestern part of the Iberian peninsula in the 5th century.

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