

Contacts



Derbyshire

Wildlife Trust



Derbyshire Wildlife Trust

East Mill
Bridge Foot
Belper
Derbyshire DE56 1XH

01773 881188

www.derbyshirewildlifetrust.org.uk

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust is a registered charity with more than 8000 members supporting its work to protect the county's wildlife.

To find out how to join, visit our website or phone 01773 881188.

Derbyshire Wildlife Liaison Officer

PC 250 Wise
Derbyshire Constabulary
The Police Office
Midland Street
Long Eaton
Nottingham NG10 1NY

01773 570100

National Federation of Badger Groups

2B Inworth Street
London
SW11 3EP

020 7228 6444

enquiries@nfbg.org.uk

www.nfbg.org.uk

Further Information

Clark (1994) *Badgers*. Whittet Books, Suffolk

Neal & Cheeseman (1996) *Badgers*. Academic Press, London

The following websites contain useful information:

www.badgers.org.uk

www.derbyshiremammalgroup.com

www.abdn.ac.uk/mammal/badger.htm

The black and white striped face of the badger makes it one of our most familiar mammals, yet its nocturnal and secretive habits mean that very few people have been lucky enough to see one in the wild.

Badgers prefer broad-leaved woodland close to permanent pasture, but will also come into gardens to feed. For many people, the nocturnal visits of a badger would be a source of great excitement. But they can also cause damage, particularly to lawns and vegetable beds, and may even break fences in their determination to enter the garden.

living with badgers



Photograph by Dafin Smith

living with badgers

Badgers in the garden

Badgers usually visit gardens in their search for food. Most of the time they will be searching for earthworms, leather jackets and other invertebrate larvae, which are particularly easy to find in lawns and flower beds. They will also eat bulbs, fruit and vegetables.

The most obvious signs of badgers in the garden will be small holes dug into the lawn in their search for leatherjackets and bulbs dug up in the flower beds. Other holes may be dug to use as a latrine, a small pit about 15cm deep in which they deposit their dung. Badgers are animals of habit, so there will probably also be an obvious point of entry to the garden, often a well worn path under a fence or through a hedge.

Encouraging badgers

If you find signs that badgers are in the area, they can be encouraged to visit your garden more frequently by putting out food and water. They will readily eat peanuts, raisins and bread, either soaked in water or spread with peanut butter. Specially formulated badger food is also available commercially from many bird food stockists.

Sweet foods such as honey, jam and cakes are loved by badgers, but can cause tooth decay and so should only be given very occasionally.

Deterring badgers

There are occasions when badgers may cause damage or nuisance in our gardens. In these situations, physical barriers, chemical deterrents or ultrasonic devices may help to deter the badgers from visiting.

In these situations, the first thing to do would be to contact your local badger group for advice. Many badger groups have a lot of experience in dealing with problems caused by badgers and they will be able to give you the most up to date information. In particular, the legislation that protects badgers and their setts needs to be clearly understood to avoid well intentioned but illegal action. You could, for example, block up the place where badgers get into your garden, but if this prevented a badger getting to or from its sett, this could be an offence.

Badgers and the Law

Badgers are fully protected by law under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. This makes it illegal to trap, injure or disturb a badger, or to cause harm to a sett. Under certain circumstances, licences may be issued for activities that may adversely affect badgers. Such circumstances are very specific and include the control of foxes, the improvement of water courses, disease prevention and situations where badgers may cause serious damage to a building, property or forestry.



Badger watching

Sometimes, if you are very lucky, it is possible to watch badgers in the wild, as they emerge from their sett at the start of the evening. If you would like to watch badgers in the wild, here are a few tips:

- Arrive just before dusk and settle yourself downwind of the sett, so they can not smell you.
- Wear warm dark clothing that will not rustle as you move.
- If badgers have become aware of your presence, leave the site. They will not forage when they think a human is watching.
- Be patient! It will be worth the wait.
- Contact your local badger group to find out about organised badger watching events in your area.