

Badger

Meles meles

Mammal · Here all year · less active in midwinter



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A heavy, low-slung, powerfully built mustelid with a grizzled grey body, short legs and the unmistakable black-and-white striped face. Badgers live in social groups in setts — extensive tunnel systems dug into well-drained banks and woodland slopes — across the farmland and woodland around Dumfries. They are strictly nocturnal, so most evidence is the sett itself, well-worn paths, and snuffle holes in pasture.

BEHAVIOUR

Badgers are omnivores but earthworms are the staple, which is why they are most active on mild, damp nights and why pasture matters to them. They also take beetles, cereals, fruit and small mammals. A sett may be used continuously for generations, with each clan enlarging it, and they dig latrine pits at the territory boundary. They do not hibernate but become far less active in the coldest weeks.

WHEN TO SEE IT

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QUICK FACTS

FAMILY	Mustelids (Mustelidae)
SIZE	Body 60–90 cm · weighs 8–12 kg
UK STATUS	Badgers and their setts are protected by law

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