



Photo: BadgerHero

The badger has been around in Britain for thousands of years.

They are quite large animals, growing up to about 90 cm in length and weighing up to 10 kg. Badgers have a black and white striped head, small eyes and ears and a little tail. Their legs are also quite short, but powerful.

Their favourite food is earthworms; they might eat over 200 a day, using their very good sense of smell to find them. As well as worms they also like insects, small mammals and fruit and berries. Occasionally they might eat small reptiles and amphibians.

You would be very lucky to spot a live badger in the countryside as they are nocturnal creatures, only coming out of their homes when it is dark.

Badgers live underground, in woods or farmland close to trees and hedges. Their homes are called setts and have many tunnels with several entrances. These are often dug in sandy soil, which is easier to dig through. Several families may live in one sett and share the jobs that need doing. Badgers are very clean animals and have separate areas for toilets as well as for eating.

Babies are born in the early part of the year, usually between January and March. They are blind at birth and the eyes do not open for about 5 weeks. During this time the babies rely on their mother to provide milk.

Man is the main enemy of the badger and many are killed on the road.

Interesting facts about badgers:

In 1976 a tunnel was built under the M5 motorway in Somerset so that the badgers could cross the road safely.

Badger hair is used to make the finest shaving brushes.



Questions:

1. Describe a badger using the words in brackets to help. (head, black, white, eyes, ears, tail, legs)

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2. What is a badgers favourite food?

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3. What is a badgers home called?

4. Draw a picture to show what a badger's sett might look like.

5. Name one of the jobs that a badger might have to do in the sett.

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6. What can a badger start to do when it is about 5 weeks old?

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7. Use a dictionary to help find the meanings of the following words as used in the passage:

occasionally:

nocturnal:

Name:



Answers

1. A description of a badger using the words given.
2. A badgers favourite food is earthworms.
3. A badgers home is called a sett.
4. A picture that shows lots of tunnels and entrances.
5. One of the jobs a badger might do in the sett is (possibilities are: digging and cleaning).
6. A baby badger can start to see when it is about five weeks old.
7. occasionally: every now and then, sometimes
nocturnal: active at night