



Badger



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Latin: *Meles meles*

Irish: *Broc*

Size: Badgers grow to about 80cm in length, and have a short tail of about 15cm. They can weigh up to about 18kg.

Months seen: All year

Habitat: Undisturbed woodlands and hedgerows, although they have also spread to urban areas

Home: Badgers live in groups under the ground in their sett, or den. Within the sett are a number of different 'chambers' with straw, bracken, grasses and leaves for bedding. Some of these setts can stay in place for centuries.

Food: Badgers will eat almost anything, from rabbits, frogs and other small mammals to eggs and vegetables. Earthworms, mice and bluebell bulbs are a favourite part of their diet and they will even raid a bee's nest for honey.



Features: Badgers are very widespread in Ireland and are essentially nocturnal. They are instantly recognisable by their grey coat and white face with vertical black stripes running across eyes and ears to the back of the neck. The badger is a member of the stoat, otter and mink family.

Badgers are very shy, harmless and meticulously clean mammals. Much of their time is spent changing their bedding for fresh leaves and grass, and grooming themselves. They also dig special latrines away from the entrance of the sett.

Badgers have very powerful front paws which they use for digging their sett underground. The name 'badger' originates from the French word 'becheur', which means 'digger'.