

Learning in the Leaves

Identification- Meles meles – Badger



Photo: Badgers foraging at sunset (© 2008 G. Bradley)

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Distinguishing Features

- They can be easily recognised by their two black facial stripes running from the nose, across the eyes and ears, to the back of the neck. There are some variations, such as albino badgers, which are all white, and erythristic badger which have a pinkish-red tint to their fur and skin, but these are fairly rare.
- Badgers have stocky bodies and powerful front paws which they use for digging their underground homes. The name 'badger' comes from the French word 'becheur', which means digger.

Interesting Facts

- They often live in large family groups of 10 or more, and the setts are used by successive generations of badgers. If undisturbed a sett can remain in the same location for centuries.
- An old English name for the badger is 'brock' and some villages, like 'Brockenhurst' and 'Brockhampton' reflect this word in their name, indicating their ancient associations with badgers.
- It's been estimated that a badgers sense of smell is around 800 times better than ours. If you want to watch badgers you need to be downwind of them so they're not able to detect your scent.
- [information collated from the UK Safari Website: www.uksafari.com]