

The Badger's Year

JANUARY

S Badgers are less active and spend more time underground due to the colder weather and less food being available.
M
T Sows are pregnant and some give birth. Bedding may be
W aired outside
Th the sett
F entrances.
S



FEBRUARY

S Most pregnant females give birth to two or three cubs.
M There is more mating and
T boar badgers travel over
W their own and neighbouring
Th group territories looking for
F females.
S



MARCH

S Badgers are more active as the weather warms up and more food is available.
M There is a large increase in
T the numbers of badgers
W killed on the roads in the
Th spring months.
F Cubs still depend
S completely on
their mothers.



APRIL

S Spring is in full swing and food, particularly the badgers' favourite earthworms, is plentiful. Badger cubs explore the sett entrances and may emerge, tempted by the new scents and sounds outside. The sow protects her cubs and makes sure they stay close to the sett.
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MAY

S May is a good time to start watching badgers. The weather is warmer and they are beginning to emerge in daylight. Cubs are now three to four months old and come above ground to explore around the sett and to play with other badgers.
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W
Th



JUNE

S By the end of June many cubs are weaned and know their way about their territory. They are confident enough to forage with other members of their group or alone. In June badgers may sleep in day nests above ground.
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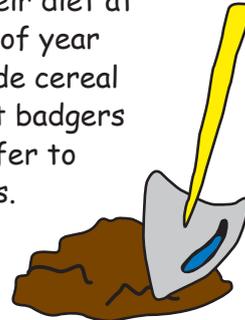
JULY

S Prolonged dry weather
M can have a serious impact
T on badgers and may even
W cause starvation. Hungry
Th badgers may be seen
F foraging in the daytime.
S Cubs are half
the weight of their
parents and should
be growing fast.



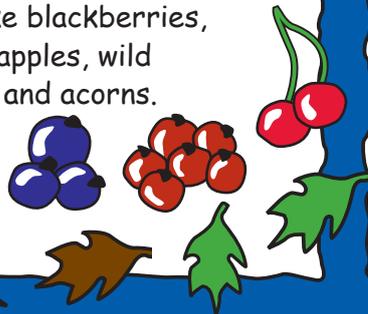
AUGUST

S Badgers spend a lot of time
M digging and extending their
T setts. Their diet at
W this time of year
Th may include cereal
F crops, but badgers
S much prefer to
eat worms.



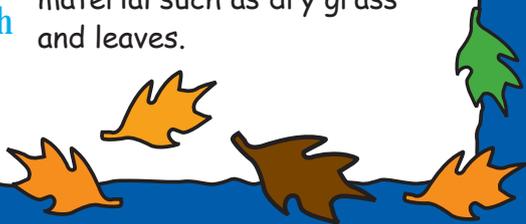
SEPTEMBER

S Late summer and autumn bring
M extra food sources such as
T the wasp grubs (taken from
W the nests), insect larvae and
Th fruits like blackberries,
F windfall apples, wild
S cherries and acorns.



OCTOBER

S Badgers feast on fruits and
M other food to put on fat
T reserves for the winter.
W They also prepare their setts
Th by excavating tunnels and by
F bringing in fresh bedding
S material such as dry grass
and leaves.



NOVEMBER

S From November badger
M watching can get more
T difficult as the times when
W badgers emerge from their
Th setts can change from night
F to night.
S Although badgers do not
hibernate they become less
active and sleep more as food
becomes harder to find.

DECEMBER

S Badgers sleep longer and
M deeper. This inactivity
T coincides with an important
W phase in the badger's
Th breeding cycle. Sows
F mate at any time of the
S year, but fertilised
eggs don't implant in the
womb and develop until
winter. This is called delayed
implantation.



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