

SCOTTISH BADGER DISTRIBUTION SURVEY



FACTSHEET



The Scottish Badger Distribution Survey is a three year project to determine badger distribution and density in Scotland. The Heritage Lottery Fund and the Scottish Executive are funding the project. The survey will be conducted by volunteers from across Scotland and will provide a baseline from which future changes can be measured.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 🐾 To find density and distribution of badger main setts, and the types of habitat in which they are most often found.
- 🐾 To involve local communities in survey work, raising awareness of badgers amongst the general public.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

- 🐾 We aim to survey at least one thousand 1x1km squares selected at random across Scotland, approximately 1% of the land mass.
- 🐾 We will not be including land above 500 metres or boggy areas.
- 🐾 We will only be surveying mainland Scotland, with the exception of Arran, where badgers are known to be present.

WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

- 🐾 We are surveying for the presence or absence of badger setts and signs, and evidence of human disturbance to setts.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE VOLUNTEER SURVEYOR?

Volunteer Badger Surveyors will be allocated one or more of the randomly selected survey squares, depending on their individual time commitment. They will be given a square(s) in their local area, so they should not have to travel far. They will check the square(s) for badger setts, signs and disturbance, and then record their findings on the Recording Sheet. They will also record the type of habitat that they find in their square(s) e.g. deciduous woodland, pasture etc. They will then send their Recording Sheet back to us, to be added to our central database.

WHAT SKILLS WILL VOLUNTEER SURVEYORS REQUIRE?

As we will provide a free briefing session to all volunteers, the survey is suitable for beginners. You should be enthusiastic and fit and healthy enough to work out in the field. As we are surveying for badger setts and signs, not the badgers themselves, all survey work can be carried out during daylight hours.

WHAT IS THE TIMESCALE OF THE PROJECT?

- 🐾 Briefing sessions will take place in the Winter of 2006/2007. The survey will commence Winter 2007/2008.

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WHAT DOES THE BRIEFING SESSION INVOLVE?

The briefing sessions will cover:

- 🐾 **Map reading skills:** how to find 'your square', how to work out where you are in 'your square' at any time, how to work out the grid reference of any setts or signs you come across.
- 🐾 **General badger biology and ecology**
- 🐾 **Identifying setts:** identifying a badger sett, finding out if it is in use, deciding if it is a main sett or an outlier.
- 🐾 **Identifying signs:** learn how to recognise a badger path, dung pit, latrine, badger hairs and prints, foraging holes, bedding balls etc.
- 🐾 **Recording your findings:** how to use our standard recording sheets
- 🐾 **Signs of other mammals:** to avoid confusion when carrying out your survey!
- 🐾 **Health and Safety:** keeping yourself safe in the field

The briefing session will include a classroom based session and a guided trip to a local sett to test out your new skills!

WHAT WILL BE DONE WITH THE DATA COLLECTED?

- 🐾 The data will be gathered together and used to extrapolate likely density and distribution across Scotland.
- 🐾 The survey should be repeated every five to ten years. The baseline data provided by this survey will be critical in measuring changes in distribution and density in the future.

HOW DO I BECOME A VOLUNTEER BADGER SURVEYOR?

This is a great opportunity to learn new skills and to contribute to badger conservation in Scotland. It is easy to grasp the basics of badger surveying and one square should only take a day to survey.

If you are interested in becoming a Volunteer Badger Surveyor, please contact us now to register your interest. You can email us at elaine@scottishbadgers.org.uk or write to us at Scottish Badger Distribution Survey, 48 Adelphi Place, Portobello, EH15 1BE. Alternatively you can call us on 0131 657 4125 or 0789 677 1867.

Once you have registered, we will be in touch to let you know of briefing events near you.

Once you have completed the briefing session, you will be issued with a Survey Pack including details of your survey square, recording form, checklists etc.

In the meantime, why not check out the Scottish Badger Distribution Survey Forum on the Forums Page of our website at www.scottishbadgers.org.uk. You can use the Forum to keep up to date with the progress of the project or to post any questions or queries that you may have.

Scottish Charity SC034297



Scottish Badgers
Working together with
Scottish Natural Heritage
To protect Scotland's Badgers

