

Badgers



Badger numbers have increased in urban areas as their natural habitat has disappeared. Some people enjoy them visiting, but they can sometimes cause damage to gardens and property. Where a number of properties are affected, solving a badger problem may need discussion and co-operation between neighbours.

Badgers and the Law

Badgers and their setts (their burrow) are protected under the **Protection of Badgers Act 1992**, which makes it **illegal to kill, injure or take badgers or to interfere with a badger sett**. Interference with a sett includes blocking tunnels or damaging the sett in any way.

Damage

Badgers are good at using the range of foods available in urban areas. They eat invertebrates (such as grubs, slugs, snails and worms) and may dig holes in lawns and flower beds to find them especially in dry or frosty weather. This kind of damage is usually short-lived and likely to be worse in late Autumn and early Spring.

Additional problems can be experienced when badger latrines (toilets), used to mark the edge of territories, are made in gardens.

Discouraging badgers

You can help stop badgers from coming in to the garden with solid fencing, making sure gates are locked and using ultrasonic devices (these may not be very effective). Some people also try hanging CDs as the noise they make and the reflections can put the badgers off. An electric fence can be the best way if it is practical to install. If these do not work, badger-proof fencing can be used. This is a mesh that is dug in to a trench up to a meter deep to stop badgers digging under the fence.

Some problems caused by badgers can be solved easily e.g. bins can be fitted with a clip-on lid or elastic "bungee straps" to secure the lid and stop them looking for food.

Lawn damage is caused when badgers are attracted by the presence of lawn pests. Treatments to get rid of these pests may help the problem but can affect things you want to live in the garden. There are no legal chemical products to stop badgers and you need to be careful not to break the law by harming badgers if using chemicals or pesticides.

Further Information

<http://badgertrust.org.uk/badgers/gardens.aspx>