



RSPB Spotlight: Badgers

James Lowen

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Badgers are elusive wanderers of the night and few mammals are as mysterious. Their nocturnal lifestyle means not many of us have ever glimpsed their monochrome form as they sniff and bustle their way through woodland or across pasture – yet most of us live far closer to a Badger group than we might think. In *Spotlight: Badgers* James Lowen explores all aspects of their lives including their communal living, feeding habits, as well as the major threats to and conservation support for Badgers.

These iconic omnivores are widely represented in folklore and have permeated our popular culture. Generations of children have been entranced by Badger in Kenneth Grahame's book *Wind in the Willows*, however these determined yet mostly peaceful animals have also been loathed and persecuted for centuries. Badger baiting is thankfully now illegal, but the legal badger cull introduced in 2011 in parts of Gloucestershire and Somerset remains in place following the 2015 general election.

With so much politics surrounding Badgers in the UK, it's not easy to get unbiassed information. In *RSPB Spotlight: Badgers* James Lowen keeps a neutral tone on the debate about Badger culling. He describes the history, from the first Badger found to be infected with bTB in 1972 and the subsequent gassing of setts from 1975 to 1982. He also outlines the RSPB's stance on the Badger cull. As one of the UK's largest landowners, the RSPB oppose Badger culling on their land, in favour of vaccination, cattle testing, bio-security and movement controls.

The Spotlight series introduces readers to the lives and behaviours of our favourite animals with eyecatching, colour photography and informative expert text.



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