

# Badgers and Wildlife Crime

Badgers remain one of the most persecuted of all species despite having one of the highest levels of protection in law.



**STOP  
BADGER  
CRIME**



As the leading voice for badgers in England and Wales, Badger Trust campaigns to strengthen legislation, trains police forces to enhance the number of successful prosecutions, researches crime trends to inform future policy, and develops new technologies to encourage more public reporting. We rely on your reports to monitor, respond to, and track badger-related wildlife crime.

The police are unable to capture national statistics for badger crime data, as badger crime does not carry notifiable status. Data collected by Badger Trust helps to keep badger crime listed as a UK Wildlife Crime Priority by giving a conservative estimate of badger crime rates in England and Wales.

If you witness badger persecution remember the Three Rs: **Recognise, Record and Report.**

Badgers have a long history of cruelty and persecution in the UK, spanning hundreds of years. To this day, badgers remain among the most persecuted of all species despite having one of the highest levels of legal protection (Protection of Badgers Act 1992). From blood sports to development concerns, thousands of badgers become the victims of wildlife crimes each year.

Badger Crime is diverse and can be broadly grouped into three categories: **Malicious Crime** involving intentional injury, death, and/or sett destruction during illegal activities for the sake of enjoyment or hunting; **Negligent Crime** caused by negligence, intentional or otherwise, during otherwise legal activities and **Cyber-Enabled Crime**, which mainly relates to promoting badger persecution by sharing in online spaces such as social media platforms.

## Malicious Crime

### Sett Interference

Sett disturbance is the criminal act most reported to Badger Trust. It comes in many forms and can fall under the category of both malicious and negligent crimes, e.g. fox hunts/people blocking setts who don't want them on their property.

### Snaring

A snare is a wire noose that captures an animal around the neck with the intention to immobilise. While snares are not illegal, the intentional snaring of a badger is illegal.

### Shooting

Unless carried out under licence, shooting badgers is illegal. Lamping is a night-time activity that is often linked with illegal badger shooting. Lamping involves the use of a high-powered spotlight to transfix the animal and then either shoot or use dogs to kill them.

## Badger Baiting and Digging

With badger baiting, terriers are typically involved in the digging and are sent into badger setts with radio collars to locate badgers. Once the badger has been captured the real horror begins as it will be forced to fight with large, powerful dogs. Once the badger has been overpowered by the dogs it is usually either killed by the dogs or beaten to death by the offenders. The other victims are, of course, the dogs who are often maimed, injured or killed when they're forced to fight.





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## Negligent Crime

### Forestry Operations

Operations within woodlands may come into conflict with badgers and their setts. Felling, the removal of timber, developments, cultivation, and quarrying, if carried out near a badger sett, may risk an offence under the Protection of Badgers Act, 1992.

### Development

When applying for planning permission, developers are expected to be aware of protected areas and species where the development proposes to take place. However, many are unaware of the best practice rules for badger protection, including the need for a joined-up approach to species protection across developments.

### Sett Interference

Ploughing and harvesting crops are the most common cases where offences are committed.

A protection zone is advised to avoid damage or disturbance to the badgers and their sett(s).



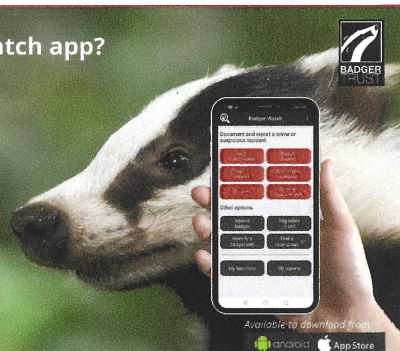
Where carefully managed, many of these tasks can be carried out without risk of damage or disturbance to badgers and their setts. In many cases where an offence has been committed, the resulting actions could have been avoided if advice had been sought

## Badger Watch App

The Badger Watch app has been developed as a FREE tool for members of the public and Badger Groups to easily **recognise, record and report** instances of badger crime. This can save crucial time especially when witnessing crime as it occurs.

### Why download the Badger Watch app?

- 1 The app is designed to help users: **Recognise, Record, and Report** badger crime, bringing criminals to justice
- 2 Reporting badger crime is **vital** for securing prosecutions and monitoring national rates of badger persecution.
- 3 Reports are fed into the **National Wildlife Crime Unit** statistics to **keep badger crime a UK wildlife crime priority.**



Available to download from

Available on the App Store

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## How you can Act for Badgers

- **Remember the Three Rs: Recognise, Record and Report** if you witness badger persecution in person or online.
- **Report badger crime** via the **Badger Watch App** or our **Online Reporting Centre**.
- **Get active locally** and help protect badgers near you.

Visit us online for free badger crime resources, more information and the latest badger crime news **[www.badgertrust.org.uk](http://www.badgertrust.org.uk)**



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