

# The Badger

By Sheila Clark-Edmands

Illustrated by Tammie Lyon



**S.P.I.R.E.**

Specialized Program Individualizing Reading Excellence

**EDUCATORS PUBLISHING SERVICE**

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eISBN: 978-1-4293-0903-5

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### **Where It Lives**

Badgers can be found in many places. You will find them most often in Britain and in North America. They often live surprisingly near the center of cities.



Badgers are rarely seen because of their nocturnal habits. It is extremely rare for a badger to be seen during the daylight. Badgers come out during the long nights of fall and winter, one hour after sunset. They come out earlier in the summer.

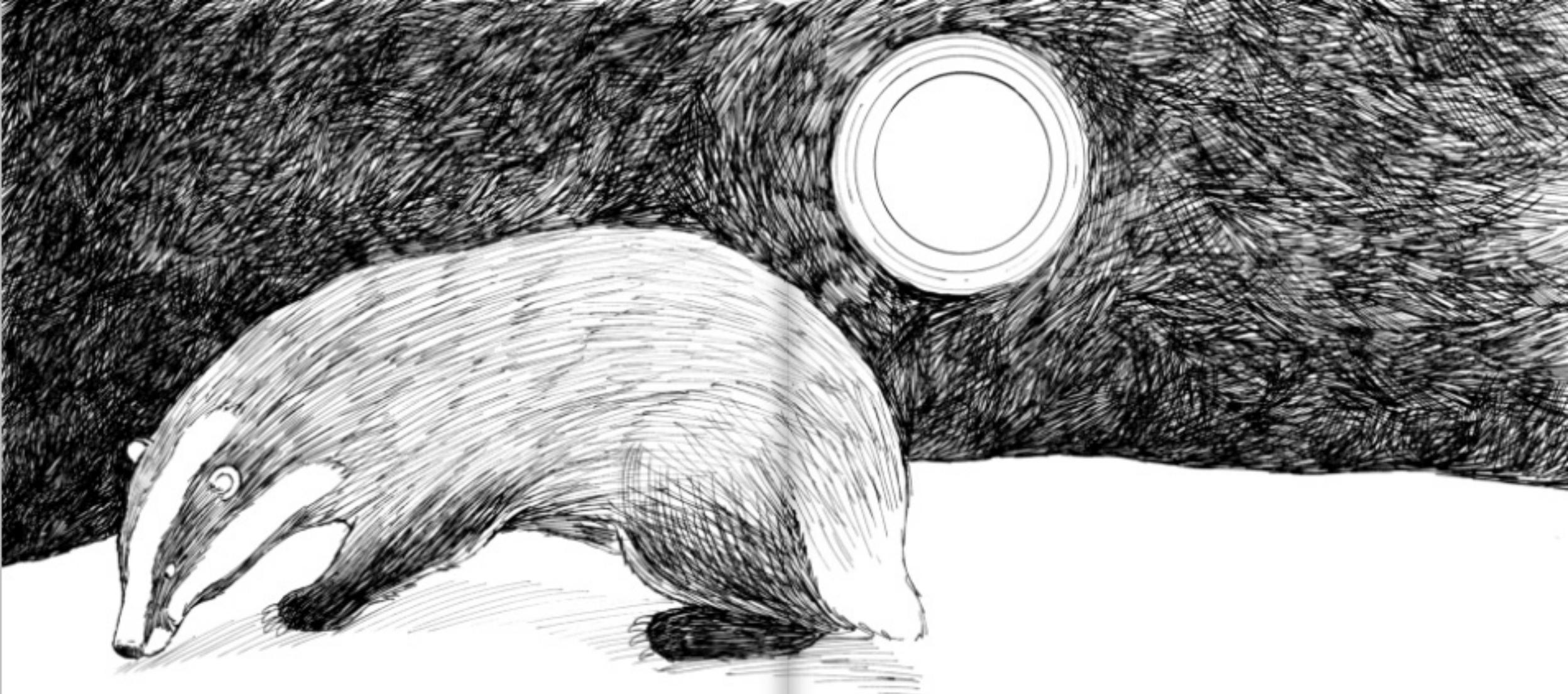
If there is any disturbance, unlikely sound, or smell, the badger may stay underground for the night. Badgers often fail to come out of their holes on bright, moonlit nights.



Badger holes are easy to distinguish from the dwellings of foxes and rabbits by their big size and the mass of earth and stones that lie at the entrance. Near the entrance there may be scratching posts, where badgers stand on their hind legs and scratch the trunk of a tree.



Around the mouth of the badger hole and along the paths leading to it will be fresh plants that have been collected for bedding. The badger gathers these with its forelegs and shuffles back, leaving a trail of plants. Badgers are very clean animals because they change their bedding often.



### **What It Looks Like**

Some badgers have a gray body with black and white stripes on the head. People might think that the stripes help it hide from its enemies at night because they look like beams of moonlight coming through the trees.

Yet badgers seldom come out in moonlight, and when they do, they stand out like a sore thumb. White objects will stand out if there is the slightest bit of light in the night.



Other people think that the black and white stripes are colors that signal danger. Many animals that can be dangerous have colors like this. The skunk, with its terrible smell, has a band of white along the head and back and a bushy white tail. Bees and wasps have colors of black and yellow. Other animals learn to think of these colors as unpleasant and will leave them alone.



When the badger becomes frightened, it makes a sound that could scare the paint off a wall. Then it bristles, the hair of the body standing on end, so that it looks twice its size, almost like it was struck by lightning. It looks quite "shocking."



### **What It Eats**

Badgers are flesh-eaters, and when you look at a badger's skull, you can see an animal that is made to attack and eat another very big animal. Its teeth are strong, and there are long ridges around the hinges of the jaws that keep the teeth from breaking. Yet badgers live on a wide range of soft food. Earthworms are eaten the most, as are young rabbits.



Mice, voles, moles, frogs, snails, beetles, hedgehogs, and wasps make up the animal content that badgers eat.



Apples, bulbs, blackberries, and grass are also eaten. Crops suffer when badgers flatten stalks to get to the ears of corn. Chicken killing sometimes occurs, but it is not typical. Badgers have sometimes been found in hen houses with none of the inhabitants disturbed.



What badgers eat differs with the season and the weather. On wet nights, badgers will go to fields to feed on earthworms, and mother badgers with little ones who drink her milk will eat little else but earthworms.



Badgers have little to fear except humans, who in past times trapped them for fun. Today, they are often hit by cars. They suffer from rabbit clearance, too. People gas places where rabbits live and, without intending to, also kill the badgers.

## Note to Teachers and Parents

All children should have the opportunity to experience success when reading. The decodable ebooks in this engaging series begin with simple words and sentences and increase in difficulty from level to level. Children may begin reading anywhere in the series, depending on their reading ability. The focus concept and sight words for this title, as well as a list of phonics skills children may already be familiar with, can be found at the end of this book.

This decodable ebook is perfect for independent reading. Encourage children to find a quiet spot to read, away from distractions. Help children build confidence by having them read aloud to you or to a friend or sibling.

Before beginning, you may wish to have children read the list of focus concept and sight words. When children have finished the story, encourage them to find these words on each page. To extend children's experience with these phonics concepts, encourage them to name or write down other words that follow the same phonics pattern. For example, if the focus concept is short *o*, they might write *log*, *pot*, and *frog*.

The presentation of phonics concepts in this series of ebooks was developed for the S.P.I.R.E.® reading program, a product of Educators Publishing Service.

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badger  
badger's  
badgers  
hedgehogs  
ridges

**Consonant Sounds**

all consonants  
sh (ship)  
ch (chin)  
th (this, thin)  
wh (whisk)  
ck (clock)  
tch (catch)  
ff (cliff)  
ll (will)  
ss (miss)  
qu (quilt)  
soft c (cent)  
soft g (gym)

Vse

**Welded Sounds**

ang (sang)  
ing (ring)  
ong (strong)  
ung (stung)  
ank (bank)  
ink (wink)  
onk (honk)  
unk (trunk)

**Syllable Patterns**

open single syllables (so, he, fly)  
closed syllable exceptions  
(child, cold, find, post, roll)  
twin-consonant syllable division  
nontwin-consonant syllable division  
consonant-le

**Vowel Sounds**

a (ax)  
i (hit)  
o (ox)  
u (up)  
e (bed)  
al (ball)  
wa (wasp)  
a (lake)  
i (bike)  
o (rode)  
u (tune)  
e (Pete)

ay (spray)  
ou (mound, cousin, doughnut, you)  
ea (eat, bread, steak)

oa (goat)  
ai (paint)  
ee (sheep)  
oo (food, cook)  
igh (light)  
ie (pie, chief)

er (fern, berry)  
ur (surf)  
ir (squirt)  
ear (earth)  
wor (world)

**Affixes**

suffix -ed (melted, smelled, winked)  
suffixes -s, -es, -ing, -er, -est, -en,  
-ish, -ly, -y, -ful, -ness, -less  
prefix a- (alike)

**Sight Words\***

a, another, any, are, been, come, could, danger,  
do, has, have, is, live, many, mother, of, one, other,  
people, some, the, The, there, they, through, to,  
today, was, what, where, who, you

\*Sight words are nonpatterned or very low-patterned words of high frequency.



# S.P.I.R.E.

Specialized Program Individualizing Reading Excellence

**Heat: Molecules on the Move**

Soft c (cent)

**The Rooster and the Gemstone (A Fable)**

Soft g (gym)

**A Great American: A School Essay**er (fern, berry), ur (surf), ir (squirt), ear (earth),  
wor (world) **The Badger**

dge (judge)

**Deserts of the World**

s=/z/ (rose)

**The Butterfly and the Moth**

ow (snow, plow)

**If You Can't Say Something Nice**

oe (toe)

**The Loris**

or (fork)

**The Ugly Buckling**

or (fork)

**Moose in Love: A Real Story**

ar (car, warthog)