Horti June 2023 meeting report

The members welcomed Jeff Hayden from the Badger Trust Sussex division to their June meeting who gave an interesting talk on the history and life of the Badger and an insight into the Badger Trust.

Badgers have lived in Britain for at least 250,000 years and some people suggest this could be as long as 750,000 years.

Badgers occur across most of the UK but the highest population densities are across are across the South and South West of England. Badger clans like to maintain their own territories this is achieved by grooming and establishing the sett scent on adults and cubs. This scent will be different from that of neighboring setts and helps in recognizing friends and strangers. In general a Badger clan and its territory/homes are marked and maintained by the combination of scent marking by dominant Badgers and the use of various feeding locations by other clan members.

Badgers are nocturnal and are rarely seen during the day. When not active, Badgers usually lie up in an extensive system of underground tunnels and nesting chambers, known as a sett. Occasionally when the weather is particularly hot they may briefly come above ground during the day.

Generally Badgers have poor eyesight bur very good sense of smell,as well as recognizing their own clan the use smell as an essential way of finding their way around and in searching for food. A Badgers sense of smell is considered to be 700-800 better than ours.

The Badgers main food are earth worms and they may eat up 200 worms up to in a single day. It is thought that this represents 60% of their diet the remainder is made up from gastropods and fruit.

The life span of a Badger is relatively short usually no greater than 5-7 years food shortages and finding suitable locations for their setts are thought to be the main reasons for this relatively short life span.

Jeff outlined the primary objectives of the Badger Trust the leading voice for Badgers actively promoting Badger conservation welfare and the protection of their setts. They should also be contacted should you find an unwell or injured Badger on 01243 8255.

The meeting closed with light refreshments and a raffle. The next meeting is on July 21st at the village hall Storrington commencing 7.30pm when Paul Abbot will be talking about Pteridimania, Victorian Fern growing craze. Please remember our summer show is on the 5th August, a schedule detailing all entry categories may be obtained from Janet Webber Tel 01903 740109

Michael Webber

Webb site: storrington.org.uk