

# West Surrey Badger Group

NEWSLETTER No 63 AUGUST 2012

[www.wsbg.co.uk](http://www.wsbg.co.uk)

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Sent from my iPad



*"I like a drop of rain but this is just too much."*

## *In this issue*

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'WILDLIFE  
ROCKS'  
EVENT  
IN SEPTEMBER

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Member of the Mammal Society  
and Surrey Wildlife Trust

Member of the Badger Trust

Registered Charity No 1100142  
Patron David Shepherd OBE

12th JULY 2012

## A BLACK DAY FOR BADGERS

**Following a closely fought 2-day Judicial Review in June, the High Court has decided NOT to quash the Coalition Government's proposal to kill badgers in England.**

The proposal attempts to marginally reduce the incidence of bovine tuberculosis (bTB) in cattle over 9 years. Although the Judge refused an oral request, the option is still open for a written application and Badger Trust, together with their legal advisors, are considering an appeal.

Importantly, Mr Justice Ouseley's verdict is restricted to the law; it was not within his remit to decide on whether culling could work or not. He recognised the controversy surrounding the science underpinning the cull plans, and understood that bTB also spread from cattle to cattle and cattle to badgers. At the hearing it was agreed between the parties that culling could spread the disease to more herds and that even with free-shooting, culling may lead to a net monetary cost to farmers.

The Badger Trust will now study the judgment closely and consider the next steps in its campaign to protect the badger from a pointless cull. The Trust will do everything in its power and within the law to minimise the

harm caused by this thoroughly unnecessary killing. But the likely method of free-shooting is cut-price expediency, risking a cruel and brutal outcome for a protected species and increased outbreaks for farmers both within and around the culling zone.

If the pilots go ahead, we shall call for detailed disclosure of the costings and findings, so that Parliament can decide whether or not they can actually be justified.

The judgment demonstrates that the legislation in this area has not kept pace with developments in the understanding of how TB works.

The Badger Trust has acted entirely alone in mounting and financing this legal challenge, as it did in its successful appeal to the Court of Appeal in 2010 which resulted in the Welsh Assembly Government's decision to kill badgers being quashed

*Dave Williams, Chairman, Badger Trust*

### **STOP PRESS**

The Badger Trust is lodging an appeal.

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Nick Nickells

The news that the Badger Trust has failed in the High Court to stop the badger cull has just been announced in the media, and many of our members and supporters have expressed their disappointment and concern: disappointment because the decision does not have scientific support, and concern that more than 40,000 badgers will be killed in the next four years. Much of the cull is still to be arranged, such as the training of gunmen who will have free range to shoot the badgers in the designated areas – this alone should worry those who live in, or visit to enjoy, the countryside.

The one ray of hope is that the Badger Trust has been given a short period in which to submit a written appeal. At the time of writing, it is not known what line of action the Badger Trust will take, but they know they have a majority support throughout the UK.

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The postscript to my last report was completely unnecessary considering the record-breaking amount of rain we have had since then. Ironically the last four water companies supplying part of our area have only this week cancelled their hosepipe ban. Obviously, many people have been affected by this extremely wet weather, but wildlife generally must have suffered with such high water levels flooding underground setts, etc. Sadly there is little we can do to alleviate this problem except remain vigilant if we hear or see any wildlife, especially badger cubs, in distress. Our 24/7 service is ready to

respond when and wherever we are needed.

Our Annual General Meeting was held on the 29th May, 2012 and was attended by 23 members. After the Chairman's report, our Treasurer Nigel Mee presented a very healthy set of accounts and Dave Williams reported on highlights of the Group's day-to-day activities. The Committee was re-elected en bloc and we were pleased to welcome the election of Jacqui Christmas onto the Committee.

Following the meeting, PC John Hockley, in his new role as Force Rural Communities Officer, described the new set-up now operated by Surrey Police for dealing with animal and wildlife problems. There are now 12 officers operating throughout Surrey under his command, which is very reassuring, and we will be working together as and when required. The meeting was followed by an enjoyable social evening, with excellent refreshments provided by Pat Williams.

Our programme of Group meetings for the autumn is currently being organised and by the time this newsletter goes to print we will, hopefully, have full details. Finding speakers to cover our six meetings per year is becoming increasingly difficult. So if any member knows someone who gives talks which would be of interest to our Group members, please contact Dave who coordinates this programme.

Hopefully, by the time you receive this the weather will have improved and you will have enjoyed a sun-blessed summer holiday.

*Welcome to our  
new members*

Jacky Ambrose  
Tracy Ambrose  
Ryan Edwards

Robert Hartley  
Lara Homaidan  
Julie Palmer

## 7 REASURER'S REPORT

Nigel Mee

I'm aware that I have a habit of starting my reports with a reference to the weather prevalent at the time of writing. It's probably because I find that nearly everybody is interested in the weather but not everyone is attracted towards figures, and of course a Treasurer's work is basically all about figures. Well, this year and certainly since March, the weather has been so wet, cold, windy and generally dreadful that I shan't dwell on that any further. Let's just sum it up from what an Australian just arrived from Melbourne said to me last week: "Well it's not quite as cold as Melbourne right now but then it is mid-winter there". How ironic!

### Now down to business!

Since my last report the West Surrey Badger Group completed the financial year ending

31st March 2012. As usual the charity's independent accountant/auditor, Sue Havell, took my various spreadsheets, lists, schedules and general Treasurer's paraphernalia and turned it all into a coherent and sensible set of accounts. She works her magic and I am extremely grateful for that. I learned recently that Sue has been filling this important role for the WSBG since the beginning, which I reckon must be 26 years. Whilst Sue doesn't look anywhere near old enough for that to be the case all I can say is what a great job she does – quietly, in the background, without any fuss – a truly modest person whom I sincerely thank on behalf of us all.

Basically, income on the year before was up from £6,016 to £7,423 with a further £1,500 coming in being the repayment of a loan. The increase was mainly down to some

generous donations in the year. Expenditure was very slightly up on last year from £5,831 to £6,147. No particular overhead stands out as being the culprit for the increase though. Computer repairs and some professional fees were one-offs in the year; indeed there are usually a few one-off payments to be made but costs generally have risen, some quite dramatically – for example, the cost of the Royal Mail PO Box number increased from £126 to £200, and of course postage stamps have now gone up in price by some 40% I believe.

I confirm that I presented the 2011-12 accounts to members at the recent AGM and am glad to say that they were approved.

### Fundraising

I was involved with the WSBG sales stall at the Tilford Rural Life Centre Woodland Day at the end of April. That weekend it rained a lot and people may have sensibly stayed indoors, but unfortunately it meant

there were more helpers on the site than visitors. However, the stall looked lovely set up as it was in one of the rural barns with a backdrop of historic wooden carts and farm equipment. Jacqui and Marisa endured the day with me and many thanks to them, but I had to stop the other supporters from turning up who had kindly offered to help, as the day proved to be such a washout. No, we weren't selling dinosaur heads that day! We were set up next to a chainsaw sculptor who clearly loved turning odd chunks of wood into works of art.

Having put that day down as experience and looking forward to the Wildlife Aid Open Day at the Leatherhead Wildlife Hospital, lo and behold they cancelled it – too much of the wet stuff!

Thank you to all you supporters out there, not just for reading thus far but for all your support last year and continuing support into 2012-13.



*Manned by Jacqui, our attractive stall at the Tilford Rural Life Centre Woodland Day.*

Nigel Mee

## 7 FIELD OFFICER

Dave Williams

As you may know, I have been busy with Badger Trust matters and appreciate the help given by the other officers, as you will see in the reports from Jeff, Peter and Rodger.

### THREE FIELD REPORTS

Jeff Clark

#### Tekels Park

The last time I wrote a field report I recorded the situation at 4 Tekels Park. The outcome was that the developer reinstated the bank in accordance with the planning approval, the licence issued by Natural England, and my wishes.

The developer has also carried out the primary landscaping in areas that do not encroach on the sensitive badger areas. It only now remains to erect a ranch-style fence to mark these areas to stop any new house owners inadvertently further

disturbing the badgers. A leaflet laying out responsibilities towards the badgers, written by me, will be appended to all sales literature, so this will be made clear to potential buyers.

#### Shere

An elderly lady living alone in Shere was sure that a badger had made its home under her house. I say home, not sett, as once I had visited the site I was sure it was a single badger moving away from the main sett early this year. The digging was minimal as the house was built on piles, the ground

floor being suspended off ring beams leaving a suitable void under it. The badger thus only had to dig out under the beam and move into the void.

The badger been stealing milk from the step, had purloined the mat on the step (for bedding?) and had generally made a mess in the garden and in surrounding gardens.

During my subsequent visits the activity seemed to lessen, then a neighbour reported that a badger had been killed on the road in Shere near to the house, and was in fact still there. This I confirmed, and picked up the corpse as the local council seemed reluctant to do so, and suitably disposed of it.

The activity stopped completely, but I still soft-stopped the entrance to verify this. The house was owned by an association, and I met with their maintenance manager on site. He had contacted Natural England and reported the situation, and was told that if the soft stopping was not disturbed for 21 days, then in agreement with me the entrance could be filled and hard-stopped to deter other badgers

Needless to say, I was unsure about the trust the operative from Natural England placed in me. Can I now under my own volition close entrances using the same principles?

### **Coldharbour**

It was hoped to drill for oil (shale?) on forestry land next to Coldharbour near Dorking, but planning was denied, and the subsequent appeal was sought.

The representative of the anti-drilling villagers called me in, because they had looked through an original environmental report that said there was little or no badger activity in the vicinity. This was not what our maps showed! On my visit I found the sett shown on our maps to be about 75 metres downhill from the proposed drilling site, and

still very active. Nought out of ten for the blind environmentalist!

Via email I passed on my concerns to the council's environmental officer regarding:

- disturbance due to the machinery noise
- vibration through the earth
- the possibility that water courses would be diverted towards the sett
- the possibility that oil extracted could also seep through strata into the sett

He acknowledged receipt of my message and stated he was pleased to receive it. It was noted that "fracking" was not being used to extract the oil.

At the time of writing the appeal is still being heard.

### **RUXLEY UPDATE**

John Whitaker

New fencing and a new gate will be installed shortly. We will then be able to put in a pathway and erect a hide.

As you might expect, all our work in clearing undergrowth last year has been overtaken by fresh extra-lush vegetation. The badgers' spoil heap, which is right on the fence line, has also reached gigantic proportions . . .

### **Answers to anagram quiz on page 14**

1. Mammal Society (page 1)
2. Judicial Review (page 2)
3. Surrey Police (page 3)
4. Woodland Day (page 4)
5. Ranch-style (page 5)
6. Coldharbour (page 6)
7. David Hockney (page 7)
8. Peaslake (page 10)
9. Lethargic (page 11)
10. Rehabilitation (page 12)
11. Badger gate (page 13)
12. Raffle tickets (page 13)
13. National Badger Day (page 13)
14. Olympic cycling (page 14)

# *Drawing with an iPad*

*by Pat Williams*

(I just had to after visiting the David Hockney exhibition!)

I've been experimenting with my newly acquired iPad, and what fun I've had! Using an app called Art Set I set to finding out how it all worked. As I was "playing" with my new toy I decided to draw a badger, and the cover illustration on this newsletter is the result.

I only used my finger on the glassy surface selecting different drawing implements from the Art Set to achieve sharp line, blurred patches and even a sort of watery effect too – well, with all this rain what else should I have done!

I'm now experimenting with colour, not so appropriate for a black and white friend but who knows where it will lead! Using this method makes

sharing illustrations very quick and easy which is very inviting. I know that there are lots of Art apps out there not yet explored but I have NOT put away the pencils and pens and real paint just yet!

I would love to receive an email from anyone who has more knowledge than I have, so as to learn more; but I'm very happy to share the small amount that I've discovered so far, or to just chat to anyone who would like to have a go and hasn't yet experimented. My email is: [patwilliamsartist@gmail.com](mailto:patwilliamsartist@gmail.com)

Thank you David Hockney for sparking my interest. And, thinking of the forthcoming 'Wildlife Rocks' event, here's another offering, called BROCK STAR.



**WILDLIFE ROCKS – an exciting event with Brian May – see overleaf**

# SAVE ME

*presents*

A celebration of wildlife



**KERRY ELLIS**  
West Ends star and rock  
Chic will be performing a  
song close to her heart  
and wildlife



Call  
Box office at  
Guildford  
Cathedral NOW

# Wildlife Rocks



**BRIAN MAY**  
Rock Legend and Founder  
of Save Me will be talking  
and playing at Wildlife  
Rocks



**GAVIN GRANT**  
Talks of his new role as  
CEO of the largest animal  
welfare group in the world,  
the RSPCA

**Come and join us for  
Talks, bouncy castles,  
music, education and  
much much more .....**

**Saturday 1st September**

**11am - 4.30pm**

**Guildford Cathedral, Stag Hill, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 7UP**



# CUB RESCUE IN PEASLAKE

Rodger Munt

On the morning of Wednesday 4th July a semi-conscious badger cub was found beside the road in Hurt Wood, Peaslake, by a member of the public. The cub seemed barely alive and was carried in the arms of the rescuer to Wildlife Aid in Leatherhead. Anyone who has handled injured badgers would appreciate that the badger cub must have been very poorly, as it would not normally tolerate being carried this way. Indeed, care needs to be taken by the rescuer as the natural reaction of an injured badger is to protect itself with a bite that can be very serious. All your WSBG field officers have the appropriate rescue gear and experience in handling injured badgers.

There was no outward sign of injuries to the badger cub. After a short while under infrared lamps the cub began to recover and by early afternoon the cub's only intent was to find a way out of the treatment bay. Simon Cowell, who runs Wildlife Aid, phoned me later the same day to say the badger was well enough to be returned to where it was found. From the description of the location it appeared that the badger had been found on a road close to sett C191 and therefore I entered the Ordnance Survey coordinates of the location on my handheld gps receiver.

In the early evening of the same day I collected the badger from Wildlife Aid and met with the rescuer in Peaslake. About 20m from where the

cub had been found my gps receiver beeped, conveniently close to a layby, to indicate we were close to the sett.

The cub was taken to a clearing in the wood within about 10m of the sett to see if it would react. Initially it was very docile and clearly very scared about what these humans were going to do next. However, once in the clearing it obviously knew where it was as its



Rodger Munt

**"Please take me back to Peaslake."**

attitude changed to excitement and it became desperate to get out of the cage. It ran straight down a badger track that I had ascertained led to the sett. This time it was a successful badger recovery and release . . .

. . . Sadly not all of our rescues have such successful outcomes. My previous two rescues were in similar circumstances, where in each case the badgers were inactive and barely alive. In one case the badger died en route to Wildlife Aid.

In the other case the badger had a serious open wound to its head. After some time under infrared lamps at Wildlife Aid and thorough checks it was decided to euthanize this latter badger.

Both were found in North Hampshire and hence some distance from Wildlife Aid in Leatherhead. The WSBG field officer volunteers aim to do what's best for an injured badger, but we are not authorised to euthanize a badger to end its suffering even if we are convinced it's in such a bad state

that it will not survive. Unfortunately, most other Wildlife Rescue centres do not have 24-hour veterinary support or facilities to support injured badgers, so it's not easy to obtain a quick local assessment of the medical state of the badger. We know that Wildlife Aid, often an hour's drive away, is the animal's best chance even if its prospects of recovering are low. Vets and the RSPCA, if they are available, would generally opt to immediately euthanize a badger in many of these cases.

It's clear that the Peaslake badger cub was given the best opportunity to survive. We're so fortunate in Surrey to have Wildlife Aid, and WSBG gives it an annual donation to support its valuable work.

# CUB RESCUE IN FRENESHAM

Peter Eggleton

One very wet day at the beginning of June I received a call from a member of the public who had just walked by a badger that was apparently a road kill, but as he did so he noticed a slight movement. It was 2.30 in the afternoon and the badger was lying on the pavement alongside the main road through Frensham.

I found myself driving through floods on the way, and discovered the badger was actually lying in a puddle. (My morning adventure had been to pick up a deer – more floods to drive through and the deer was lying in a ditch – a general day for getting wet!).

It's always worth checking out a badger lying with its head tucked under in

typical sleep position, a good indication it may still be alive. There wasn't much room at this location, and despite pulling the car up on the pavement behind the badger I still managed to hold traffic up. It's amazing how quickly some drivers resort to the horn, even when you produce a cage and grasper from the back of the car. Securing the badger into the cage was quick and easy with no complaints about the grasper round its neck. Then straight off to Wildlife Aid as usual.

The badger was a female with no apparent injuries, maybe a little thin, and definitely rather lethargic. A week of rest and feeding was about all that was needed and she was ready to go.

However, things were not quite perfect as the badger did not show concern about being picked up by the scruff. (You would normally expect it to try and bite you).

Pre-release checks at the site were not too promising with no well-used sett in close proximity, and the nearest known sett showing no signs of use at all. There was some uncertainty about this release and I took the attitude that this may have been a transient badger rejected from her own territory. Whatever the situation, the

plan was to see if she showed any interest in a couple of possible badger paths not far from the point I had found her, or if that failed try and encourage her to go into the existing unused sett.

Well, she didn't show any signs of recognition at the pathways or at the sett, so I let her go at the sett as this gave her scope to find cover for her re-start in life. Not an ideal conclusion but it has given the badger a second chance and was the best I could offer.

## AN APRIL TREAT

Our members turned out in force in April for Michele Booth's presentation 'Animal Tales', with inspiring footage of the rescue and rehabilitation work she does. They even got to see a fox cub – a little older than the ones below.



Michele Booth

## Do you need a badger gate?



Michele Booth

**Do you have badgers feeding in your garden? Do they dig their way under your fence and let unwanted animals in? Do you want to secure your garden with new fencing, maybe to keep rabbits out or your dog in, but still want to let your badgers in and out? Then you need a badger gate.**

Even if you are thinking of erecting new fencing across an established badger run, and are expecting your badgers to enter your garden via another route, you will still need a gate. Why? Because your badgers won't react as you may expect: they are creatures of habit and will dig under or break through your new fence so as to follow their well-trodden routes. And in the process they will damage your fence. Hence, the best answer is always going to be a badger gate.

What exactly is a badger gate? In some ways it is rather like a heavy cat-flap in a fence. It swings both ways to allow badgers in and out, but is made of a solid wooden frame surrounding strong metal mesh so that other animals like rabbits and foxes which are not so heavy and strong cannot push their way through.

If you think your garden would benefit from a badger gate, get in touch, because in return for just a small donation, the WSBG will make and install a badger gate anywhere in the West Surrey area, and advise you as to how you should get your badgers used to their new gate. It is much easier to install when you are erecting new fencing, but even if you have existing fencing, its generally not a problem to install a gate. Just call 01252-702140 and we will take it from there.

*Jacqui Christmas*

The Badger Trust undertakes so much on our behalf. Please support it by purchasing the **raffle tickets** enclosed, and if possible by devising a sponsored activity for National Badger Day (6th October) since there is no sponsored walk this year.

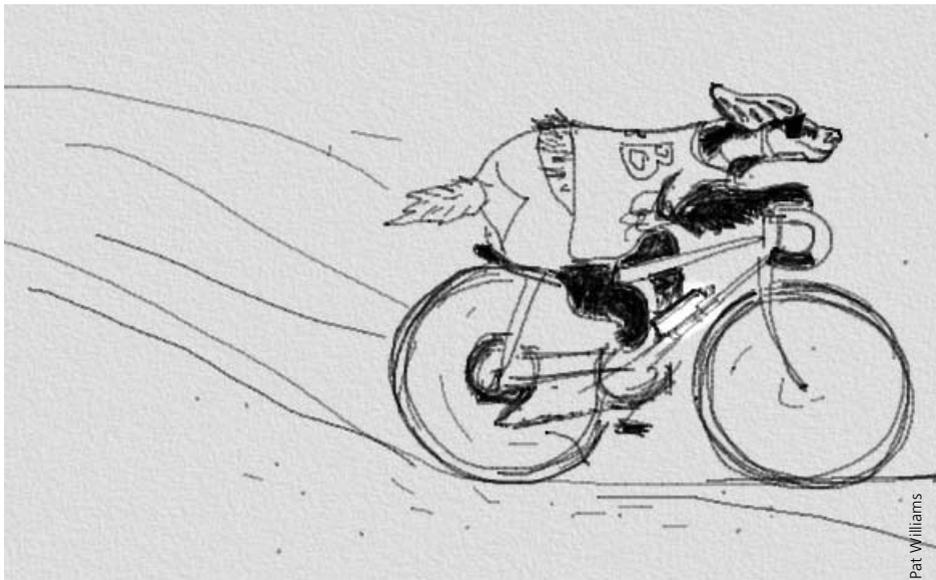
## ANAGRAM QUIZ

Can you solve these anagrams? The answers are all words you can find in this newsletter, in the order in which they appear.

Answers are on page 6.

1. Imam's toy camel (6,7)
2. I view jailed cur (8,6)
3. I ply recourse (6,6)
4. Do add any owl (8,3)
5. Lays trench (5-5)
6. Our bold arch (11)
7. I envy haddock (5,7)
8. Peak ales (8)
9. Car hit leg (9)
10. Hire Titian bola (14)
11. Get aged bra (6,4)
12. Ref fist tackle (6,7)
13. Radiated only a bang (8,6,3)
14. Clingy icy clomp (7,7)

## Olympic Cycling Road Race comes to Surrey



*"I know you've got all the gear but you'll have to grow your legs first.  
It's UP Box Hill not DOWN you know!"*

## FOR EMERGENCIES CALL:

Your local Police Station / 999

Surrey Police Wildlife Crime Officer 0845 125 2222

Wildlife Aid, Leatherhead 0906 1800132

(website [www.wildlifeaid.org.uk](http://www.wildlifeaid.org.uk))

RSPCA 0300 1234 999

Member of WSBG Committee

## NEIGHBOURING BADGER GROUPS

East Surrey 0208 660 9827

East Hants 01420 87366

West Sussex 01243 825804

Mid Sussex 01342 870320

Binfield, Berks 0709 2234377

Herts & Middx 01992 589152

## BADGER TRUST

0845 828 7878

Website [www.badgertrust.org.uk](http://www.badgertrust.org.uk)

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# WEST SURREY BADGER GROUP EVENING MEETINGS

## **Tuesday September 25     Steve Proud**

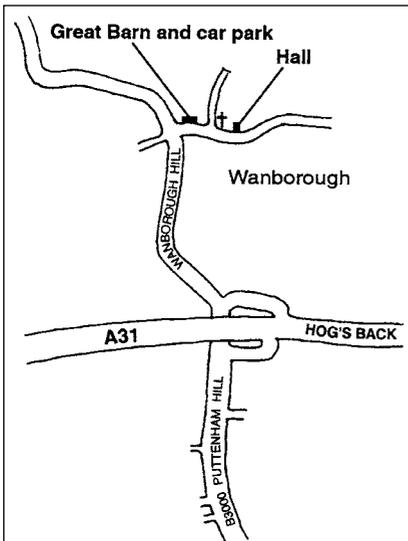
Steve manages the red deer herd grazing on the MOD heathland area in Ash/Pirbright. This is the first time that red deer have been used as a conservation tool to help restoration of the heathland. Some of the deer are radio-collared and remote cameras are used, giving some interesting results.

## **Tuesday October 16     Hart Wildlife Rescue**

A representative from this busy rescue centre will talk about its work, and hopes to bring along one of its stars – Albi the albino hedgehog!

## **Tuesday November 20     Frank Last**

Frank is a wildlife film maker who has given a great deal of pleasure with his films, and whom we are pleased to welcome back. We should get an update on his barn badgers and all the other wildlife that surrounds his country home in Sussex.



*All evening meetings start at 8pm and are held in Wanborough Hall unless otherwise stated.*

*This is just off the A31 Hogs Back.*

*Take the B3000 exit (from Guildford it's the first exit) and follow signs to Wanborough. At the bottom of the hill turn right (signposted Great Barn and Church). The car park is on the left next to the Barn.*

*Walk up to the hall, just beyond the church.*



The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of West Surrey Badger Group.

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