

COUNTY DURHAM



"Isn't County Durham filled with old pit heads and wall-to-wall factories?"

"Have a look at the photos of my home, and you decide how beautiful Durham really is."



Entering County Durham from Northumbria. Which other counties border Durham?



Riparian landscape on the River Tees.
Can you find out what 'riparian' means?



Looking up Weardale. The valley of the River Wear is one of gentle moorland and valley bottoms. Can you find out where the River Wear meets the sea?



Harvest time in Weardale. Crops are grown in the valley bottoms. Why aren't they grown on the moors?

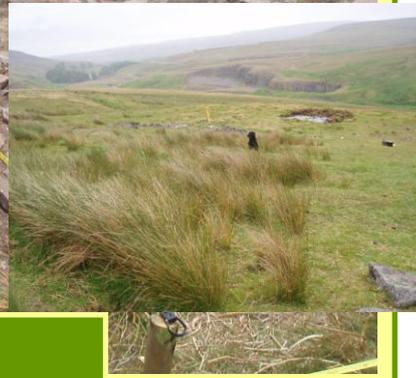
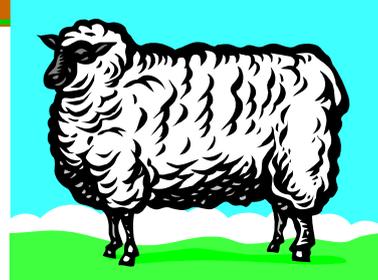


Looking out over the Dale. Can you find out what sort of plants you might find growing on moorland? Moorland is not a great habitat for badgers. There tends to be less food to eat. Badgers can survive on about 25 acres in a perfect environment, but on the moors, territory is measured in square miles. What is the badger's favourite food?



These animals are ideal for moorland grazing.
What do we get from them?
Sheep are 'hefted' to the hillside. Can you find out
what 'hefted' means?

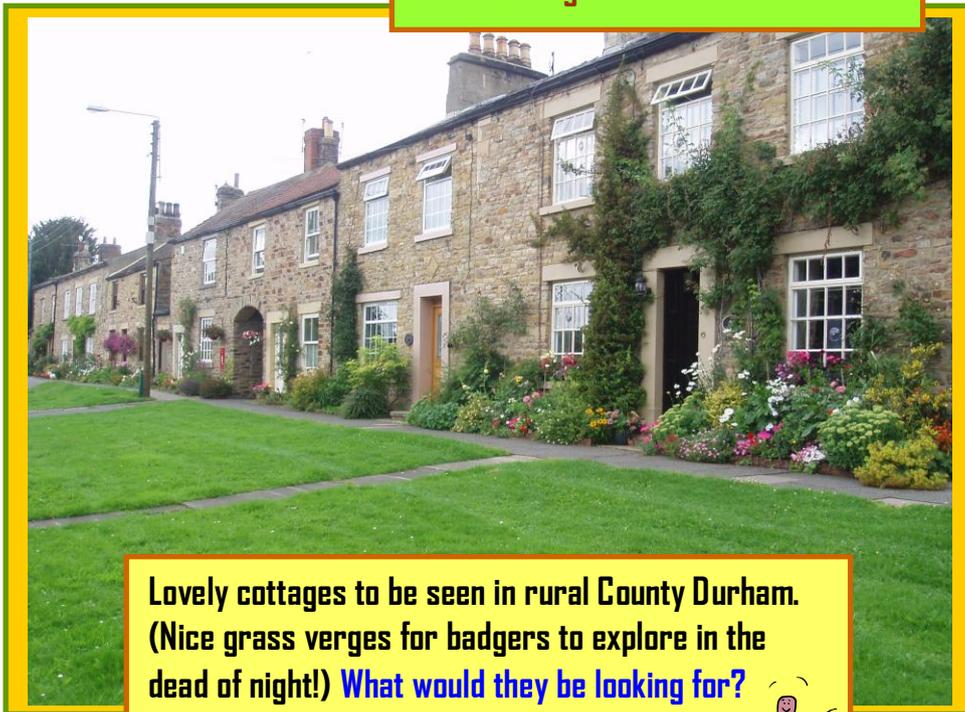
In times gone by, *shielings*, (also: sheiling,
sheeling, shealing), were found on the moors.
Can you find out what they were for?



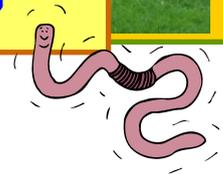
Archaeologists excavate a medieval shieling on
Bollihope Common in Weardale.
What does an 'archaeologist' do?

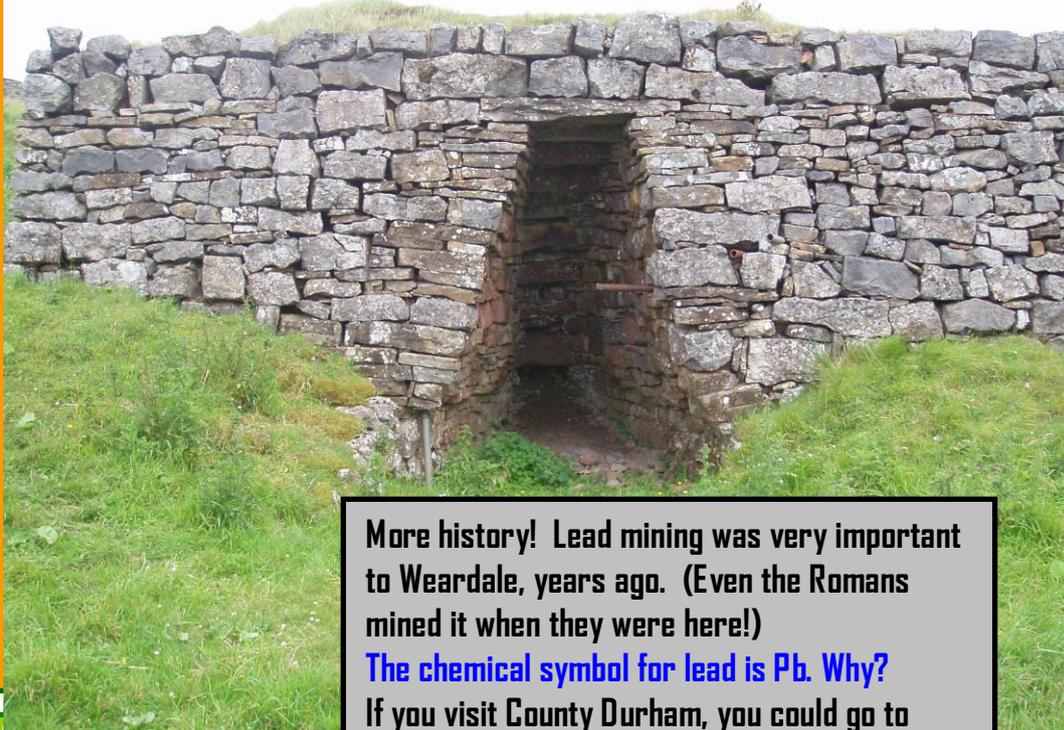


Down in the valley bottoms, cattle graze on the richer pastures. Badgers love pasture land – lots of worms and grubs!



Lovely cottages to be seen in rural County Durham. (Nice grass verges for badgers to explore in the dead of night!) **What would they be looking for?**





More history! Lead mining was very important to Weardale, years ago. (Even the Romans mined it when they were here!)

The chemical symbol for lead is Pb. Why?

If you visit County Durham, you could go to Killhope Lead Mining Museum, to see how it all happened. Look at their website.

Visit: www.killhope.org.uk



Look carefully at the vegetation in the red oval. Can you see you it is different to the vegetation around it? The reason for this is that it was once the site of a medieval lead smelter. The bare patch, (only growing moss), is still contaminated by the waste lead slag from the smelter.

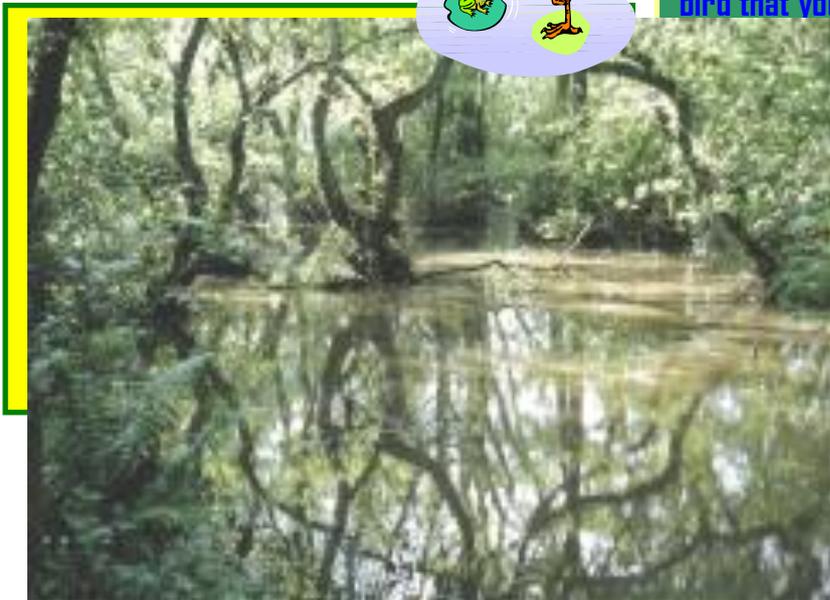
Lead is a poisonous substance to animals. It damages the nervous system and causes brain disorders. Excessive lead also causes blood disorders in mammals. It's a good thing that grass won't grow, or it would poison the sheep! (It wouldn't do the wildlife much good either!) What can you find out about pollution in the environment?



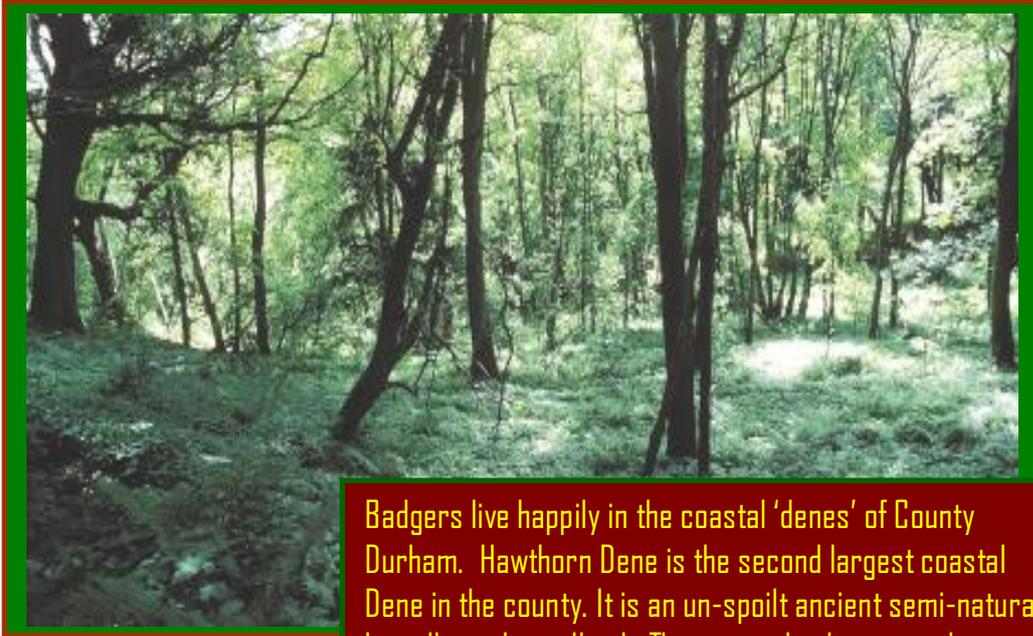
This is a mid-altitude heath in County Durham. It is important for many types of wildlife, including short-eared owls, green hairstreak butterflies, adders and, of course, badgers. What is special about adders?



Watery world. This is Marston Lake at Durham Wildlife Trust's Low Barns Nature Reserve. The Wildlife Trust has a number of reserves that you could visit to watch wildlife. Look up the Trust at: durhamwt.myzen.co.uk Badgers tend to get most of their liquid from the worms they eat. What is the name of this water bird that you might see at Low



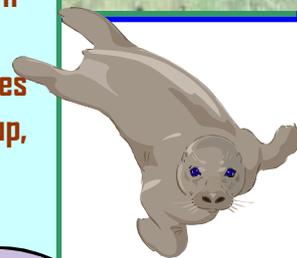
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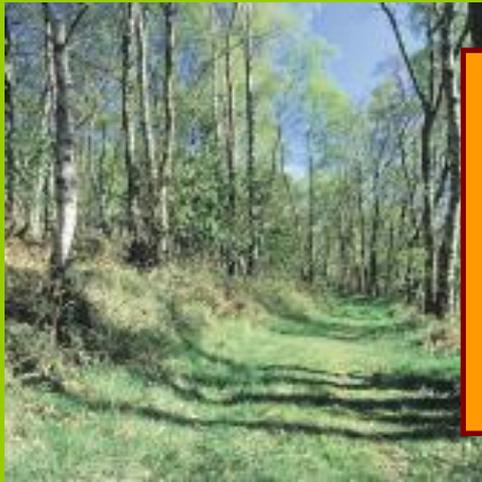


Badgers live happily in the coastal 'denes' of County Durham. Hawthorn Dene is the second largest coastal Dene in the county. It is an un-spoilt ancient semi-natural broadleaved woodland. There are also limestone hay meadows.



Badgers will live along the coastline, often coming down the coastal denes. Durham's coastline used to be badly polluted by decades of mining in the county. However, after a good clean-up, we are proud to display blue flags for quality beaches. If you stood on the Durham coastline and looked east, which country would lie across the sea?





Woodland is good badger country – though not the centre of the wood. Badgers often live along the edge of woods, where two habitats meet. The word for the edge of a wood like these is the: **TOONEEC** Can you unscramble the word?

Clue: E _____



Badgers will often dig up the green bluebell leaves and take them down into their setts. The green leaves rot down quickly underground. Rotting vegetation gives off heat – a badger's 'electric blanket'!

It's amazing who you can bump into in Durham's woodlands.

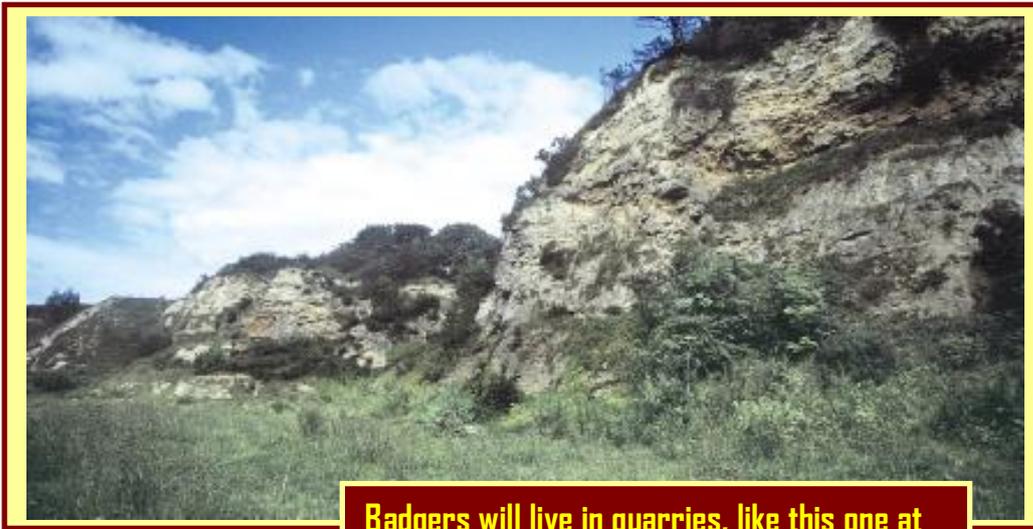


Photo: Durham Wildlife Trust license



Do you know what sort of deer these are?

<http://all-free-download.com/>Public domain



Badgers will live in quarries, like this one at Bishop Middleham. They can often dig under the rock strata to make a very safe and dry sett. They can get in deep very quickly.



Bee-eaters come to Bishop Middleham to nest and raise their young every year. Can you find out where they migrate from?



This is the Northern Brown Argus butterfly, which is very special to the area, It is often known as the 'Durham, Argus'.



Can you identify the two flowers on the right? They can be found in the quarry.



Traditional hay meadows, such as this one at Hannah's Meadow Nature Reserve, are usually rich in different species.

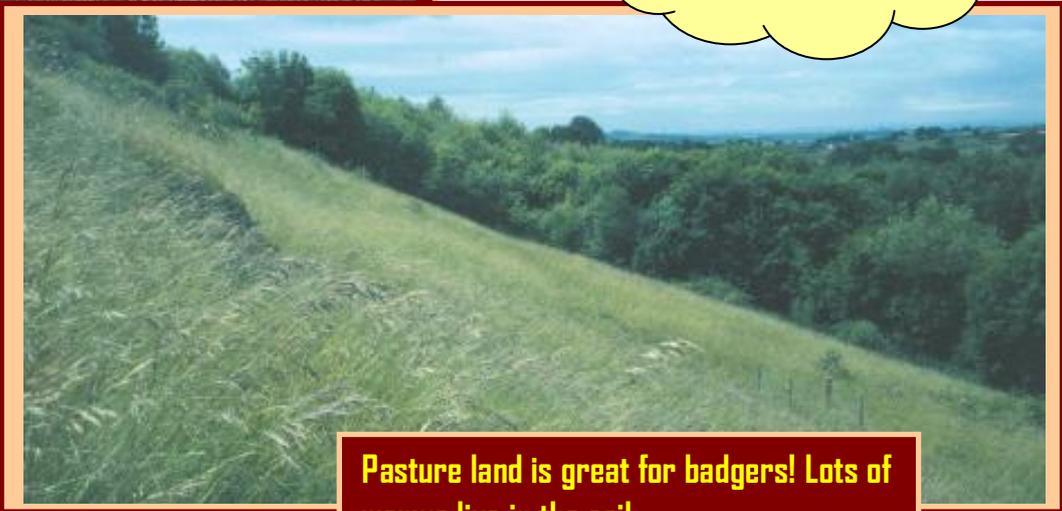


[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Lapwing_\(PSF\).png](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Lapwing_(PSF).png)
Pearson Scott Foresman

The meadows were previously owned and farmed by Hannah Hauxwell for over 50 years. Living alone at Low Birk Hat Farm, without the luxury of electricity or running Water, Hannah managed the land using the traditional methods that avoided adding artificial fertilizers or re-seeding.

What can you find out about Hannah?

So, what do you think of it so far?



Pasture land is great for badgers! Lots of worms live in the soil.



This is another of Durham Wildlife Trust's reserves. It is One of the most extensive areas of primary Magnesian Limestone grassland in Britain contained within a unique postglacial landform.



This is the 'real Easter Bunny'. What sort of animal is it?



Well, that's the county I live in. Not what you expected? Why not visit us and see it for real?

Thanks to Durham Wildlife Trust for use of their photos.