

Badgery Science Fun 16



This fox arrived at the hide sett one morning. She was watching an event going on in the valley.

A female fox, a **vixen**, gave birth to cubs for three years. Each litter of foxes had 5 cubs.

Sadly, not all fox cubs live to see their

second year. (Life is tough in the wild – no doctors, not sticking plaster, food doesn't come from a supermarket!)

2007	3 survived
2008	2 survived
2009	5 survived

Can you think of a reason why different numbers of fox cubs survived in different years? **There might not have been enough food in the two poorer years. Perhaps the weather was cold. Perhaps disease spread through the area.**

The number of adult foxes in an area also changes from year to year. A male fox, (a dog fox), will often live in a territory with a number of females, (vixens). Often the numbers in the territory change. In our area, the numbers were:

Year	2007	2008	2009
Number of adults	13	10	15

Why might this have happened? As above. Fox territories will only support enough foxes to survive without eating out the prey species. Perhaps a dog fox drove some young foxes from the territory. Perhaps some just left to find a territory of their own.

Foxes will often live in badger setts. These two cubs are at the sett entrance, probably waiting for Mum to come back with tea!

