



Biodiversity and supporting nature: Helping hedgehogs

Sadly hedgehog numbers are in decline and they need all the help we can give them. We know one of the main reasons is because our fences and walls are becoming more secure restricting the amount of land available to them. There's lots of useful websites with some great tips on what we can do. Here we share some ideas you can get involved in.

Build a hedgehog corridor

Helping hedgehogs pass freely through your garden is the most important thing you can do to help them. Most hedgehogs travel around 1 mile every night in search of food or a mate, but secure fences and walls can put a stop to these plans!

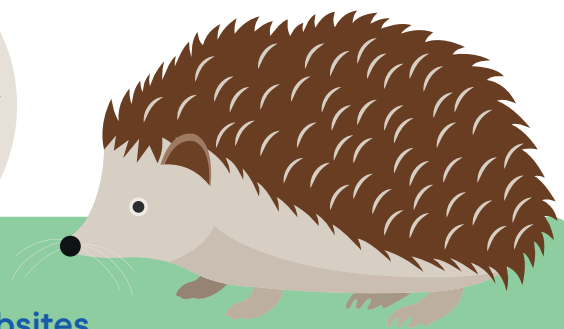


Did you know...

Hedgehogs make hibernation nests in winter under hedgerows, fallen logs and brambles – these are called hibernaculas



To turn your garden into a hedgehog corridor, ask permission to make a hole in or under a fence. 13cm x 13cm is enough for hedgehogs and too small for most pets. Or create a gap under a hedge.



Top Hedgehog Tips

1. Link your garden and create access with hedgehog highways
2. Plant a hedge allowing easy access and room for piles of leaves underneath – perfect for foraging, hibernating and raising their young
3. If you have a pond make it safe with a ramp or ensure it has sloping sides
4. Check before strimming
5. Avoid using slug pellets and stop using chemicals in the garden
6. Make a home for hedgehogs to keep them safe and dry
7. Create a wild corner and retain twigs and leaves. Compost heaps are great for hedgehogs as they contain lots of their favourite food – creepy crawlies
8. Leave out extra food such as dog or cat food, preferably turkey or chicken flavour. Don't leave out bread, milk, seasoned or raw food – all are bad for hedgehogs!
9. Check bonfires
10. Grow native plants such as honeysuckle or dog rose to encourage a wide range of moths – nourishing food for hedgehogs

Useful hedgehog websites

<https://www.hedgehogstreet.org/help-hedgehogs/>
<https://www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk/helping-hedgehog/>
<https://www.sttiggywinkles.org.uk/hedgehog-fact-sheet/>
<https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/what-do-if-you-find-wild-animal/help-hedgehog>



Make a hedgehog house

1 Cardboard hedgehog house

- Take a big, thick cardboard box and cut two side air vents like windows about 15cm x 5cm and make an entrance 15cm in diameter
- Put some torn newspapers inside with clean, dry grass or straw on top and tuck the box near a hedge, if possible with the entrance facing south
- Cover the top of the box with a small piece of plastic – this could be an opened out carrier bag. Then add twigs, dry grass and leaves on top and around the hedgehog home
- You could add a tunnel entrance using a large tube
- How about decorating the front of the house to welcome your hedgehog home!

Tip

Add a tunnel entrance using a large tube



Tip

Avoid putting food or water inside the house, place it nearby



Tip

Place the hedgehog house in a shady, quiet area of your garden, preferably near a boundary in your back garden and 5m from your house

2 Plastic hedgehog house

- Take a spare plastic storage box, planter or milk crate (make sure it has holes) and flip it upside down
- Make an entrance hole approx 13cm x 13cm and if possible position the house with the entrance facing south. If the hole is off the ground add a ramp using a small plank of untreated wood
- Put some bedding in the house using pet straw and/or leaves
- Cover the box with plastic sheeting or an opened out carrier bag and then cover that with leaves, soil, grass cuttings etc to create a mound and insulate the hedgehog house
- Now wait for the hedgehogs to arrive!

3 Wood hedgehog house

You can make a house from untreated timber which is a little bit trickier and may require some help but it will last longer. Check out the instructions at <https://www.hedgehogstreet.org/help-hedgehogs/hedgehog-homes/>