

Dangers and Hazards

Hedgehogs are very inquisitive creatures and get into all sorts of problems:

Drains and Holes

Keep them covered, Hedgehogs can easily get jammed in holes and pipes

Pesticides & Slug Pellets and other Poisons

Many of these are poisonous to hedgehogs. The hog may also die if it has eaten a poisoned slug or insect. Explore other methods of pest control. Many wood preservatives and other garden products are poisonous to hedgehogs and other wildlife. Ask your Garden Centre for an environmentally safe product.

Rubbish

Hedgehogs can get stuck in tins, plastic containers, ice cream cups and plastic rings from drink cans etc. They can get cut by broken glass. Keep all rubbish wrapped and safe and never throw it on the ground, always use a rubbish bin.

Bonfires and Compost Heaps

Piles of garden rubbish are often used as nests. Always check the bonfire carefully before lighting it. Take care when forking through the compost heap or other piles of rubbish - You might disturb a sleeping hedgehog or a nest of babies.

Lawnmowers and Strimmers

Look in the long grass before digging or mowing as a hedgehog might be sleeping there, Take extra care with strimmers which kill and maim thousands of hedgehogs every year.

Barbed Wire, String Netting and Tennis Nets

Put these away after use and keep them at least 1 foot above ground level, whilst in use.

Hedgehogs often get hopelessly tangled and will die.

Oil and Paint

If a hedgehog falls into these wash him with warm water and washing up liquid. Make sure you keep him warm afterwards and dry him properly. It's always a good idea to take him to your local vet, to make sure he is ok.

Swimming Pools and Ponds

Leave an escape route from ponds and swimming pools. Make a ramp so they can scramble out. Hedgehogs can swim but they will drown if they cannot get out of the water.

Please be aware of Dangers in your garden

Be on danger patrol in your garden, not only for hedgehogs, but also for other wildlife. How many **Hazards** can you find?

If you have found this leaflet useful, please make a small donation towards our work, helping hedgehogs.

For more information, help and advice visit our website:

www.thehedgehog.co.uk

Email: help@thehedgehog.co.uk

Hedgehog Information

This small leaflet is to give you a few basic facts about hedgehogs. It tells you what to do if you find a sick or injured hedgehog & gives a few tips on making your garden "hedgehog friendly"



For more information, help and advice visit our website:

www.thehedgehog.co.uk

If you find a sick or injured hedgehog or want more information your local contact is:



or ring your local vet
or **RSPCA on 0300 1234 999**

Useful Hedgehog Facts

Latin Name: Erinaceus Europaeus.

Hedgehogs are nocturnal animals, this means they come out at night and are not usually seen during the day. **Any hedgehog out in daylight will be ill and need URGENT help.** They are almost totally covered in spines.

Lifespan: 1½-2 years in the wild, but anything up to 5 - 8 years or longer in the garden, if helped by giving food, water, shelter and any veterinary treatment. The maximum weight for a fully grown male is about 2 Kg, but more usually they are around 700-1500 grammes. The hedgehog evolved more than 15 million years ago and has hardly changed. It is unique in being able to curl up into a tight ball, where special muscles allow the spines to erect into a bristling mass when in danger. This is their only means of defence as they do not bite or attack other animals or people.

Hibernation

Hibernation is a strategy to conserve energy when food is scarce during the cold winter months. In Britain hedgehogs normally hibernate from December till around Easter. They need to be fed well before hibernation as they lose up to half of their body weight during the long sleep. They need to be at least 600 grams before hibernation, to survive. If you find a young, underweight or sickly looking hedgehog at this time, it will not survive on its own. Take it in and contact us for advice on how to look after it during the winter.

Hedgehogs in the Garden

The hedgehog is known as the gardener's friend as it eats, beetles, caterpillars etc. and does no harm. If you have a garden hedgehogs should be encouraged.



They should not be kept in close captivity, but regarded as an honoured visitor.

Feeding

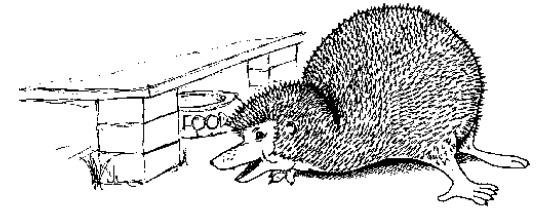
Hedgehogs are insectivorous, this means that in the wild, they eat insects, worms, beetles, and a very few slugs and snails.

The most important thing **YOU** can do to help them is feed them.

A plate of dog or cat meat or a dish of cat or kitten biscuits is perfect. Also give chopped peanuts, cheese, sultanas and raisins. **Do not give bread and milk, it makes them very ill.** Put the food down at night and take it up in the morning, before the flies come

Make sure you put down a shallow bowl of water at all times. Hedgehogs need to drink a lot and can get dehydrated in hot weather

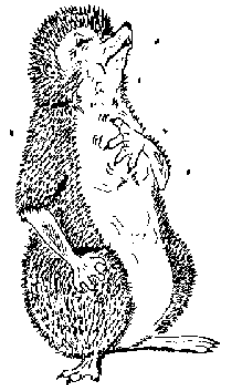
Put the food outside your back door, in a place where foxes, dogs and cats cannot get it. It is quite easy to make or buy a small feeding station that the hedgehog can go into but a cat, dog or fox cannot.



It is especially important to put down extra food during Autumn, from late September onwards when the hedgehogs are preparing for hibernation. Leave a plate of cat biscuits under cover during hibernation, they often wake up on warm winter days for a snack

Fleas and Ticks

Do not worry, hedgehogs fleas only live on the hedgehog and will not harm you or your pet. Only use a safe flea powder (pyrethrum based) on the hedgehog. Sprays will kill the hedge. We recommend a flea powder that is safe for cage birds. To remove ticks, smother the tick in cooking oil and it will die and drop off.



If You find a sick, injured or baby hedgehog, pick it up carefully, put it into a cardboard box with an old towel or similar and contact your local centre for help