

Build a log pile

Simple to build, a log pile of rotting wood attracts countless animals, including the insects that hedgehogs eat.

Any size pile will help but the bigger you can make it the better for nesting sites.

As the wood rots down, replenish the logs from time to time.



Further info on our website at kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/help-a-hedgehog

Let your plants go wild

A great hedgehog garden will provide both abundant invertebrates and places for hedgehogs to rest or nest.

Leave a corner of the garden unattended and watch the plants thrive, providing nectar for insects and shelter for hogs.

One may even choose to nest there so leave some vegetation standing over winter too.



Further info on our website at kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/help-a-hedgehog

Check before strimming

Be careful with any cutting equipment but strimmers are particularly dangerous as these can wound or kill hedgehogs hiding in long vegetation. Unlike other animals, they will not run away from noisy machinery.

Before undertaking the work, check patches of long grass, along rough edges and under hedges. If you do discover a hedgehog, either postpone your work until it leaves or carefully move it using thick gloves to a safer place in the garden.



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Make ponds safe

A pond is a top feature for attracting wildlife into your garden. It will provide feeding opportunities for hedgehogs and also a vital water source.

Hedgehogs can drown in steep-sided ponds or pools. Make yours safe by building a pebble beach along the edge or by using lengths of small-holed chicken wire over the side.

If you are planning a new pond then think ahead and design it with gently sloping sides.



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© Tom Marshall



Let your plants go wild

Kent Wildlife Trust



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Stop using chemicals

Slug pellets are toxic and may be very damaging to hedgehogs. In a healthy garden, natural populations of wild animals will keep levels of slugs and snails down, along with other insect pests, making chemicals unnecessary.

Herbicides reduce worm densities in your lawn and should also be avoided. In very wet years try nematodes to keep on top of mollusc outbreaks.



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Check before burning

A bonfire is a very attractive nesting or hibernation site for a hedgehog. Hedgehogs will be attracted to them at any time of year so it's best to be careful if you plan to burn yours. Nesting hedgehogs are very difficult to find so it's far better to rebuild the pyre on the day of burning to ensure that no animals are trapped inside. You could also place a barrier around the bonfire using material like chicken wire or tires to prevent them moving in. Before burning, always check the bonfire thoroughly with a torch – even if you've moved it.



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Providing food

Provide meat-based dog or cat food, unsalted crushed nuts or meal worms. This will only be used by local hedgehogs as a supplement to their natural food and it won't affect their behaviour in a damaging way.

If you are worried about foxes or pets getting at the food, you can make a simple feeding station that will keep them out. If you see hedgehogs active in mid-winter, supplementary food could be a crucial life-line. Spring is another critical period for providing food as hedgehogs are just exiting their hibernation.



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Hoglets

Baby hedgehogs are called hoglets. They can appear from June right into autumn. Up until around five weeks old, hoglets will remain in the nest with their mother. If you suspect you have a maternity nest then it's best to leave it alone, as disturbed mothers may desert their young.

It's very unusual to see baby hedgehogs out and about on their own. Be sure that there are no adults nearby and contact the British Hedgehog Preservation Society on 01584 890801.



Further info on our website at kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/help-a-hedgehog



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**Check before
burning**

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**Stop using
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Hoglets

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**Providing
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Hibernation

Hedgehogs typically hibernate between October and April, choosing a sheltered spot to build a nest. This might be in the compost heap, in the middle of a dense bush or under the shed. If you accidentally disturb a nest with an adult hedgehog in it, replace the nesting material. The hedgehog can then either repair the nest or re-build another elsewhere.

Underweight animals will remain active longer as they try to gain weight - provide a plate of dog or cat food and a dish of water.



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Link your garden

Hedgehogs need to roam through many gardens to find food and mates. No single garden is large enough in isolation. Barriers such as solid fences and walls often prevent their movement. Hedges and natural boundaries are better for hedgehogs as they allow them to roam freely and can provide shelter.

If you already have a wall or fence then try creating a small hole, 13cm by 13cm, that will enable hedgehogs to move between your and your neighbour's gardens.



Further info on our website at kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/help-a-hedgehog

Involve your community

Use the neighbour invitation letter in your Help A Hedgehog pack to raise awareness along your street and connect gardens.

Print extra copies of these cards and distribute them to friends and family. Or put up some of the flyers in community areas like your local shop or surgery.



Further info on our website at kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/help-a-hedgehog

Garden safety

Loose netting can entangle hedgehogs - ensure it is kept tight and maintained or stored inside when not in use.

Avoid leaving sheds open as hedgehogs may wander inside and become trapped.

Ensure drains are safely covered. Hedgehogs are prone to getting stuck down holes.



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garden**

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Hibernation

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