



Photo credit: Dreamstime.com CCO

HELPING HEDGEHOGS



THE IRISH HEDGEHOG SURVEY

If you see a hedgehog alive or dead, you can log your sighting via Irish hedgehog survey page on www.BiodiversityIreland.ie

If you would like to take part as a volunteer in the Irish Hedgehog Survey 2021-2022, or if you would like to learn more about hedgehogs please visit...

<https://www.irishhedgehogsurvey.com/>

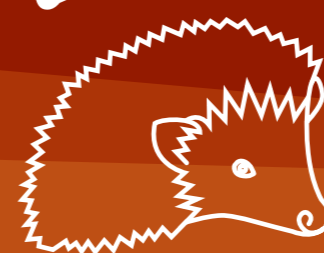
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HELPING HEDGEHOGS



SOME SIMPLE TIPS FOR MAKING YOUR HOME + COMMUNITY MORE HEDGEHOG FRIENDLY



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Photo credit main: Shutterstock, Piotr Krzeslak





Hedgehogs are one of our most loved wild animals. As they frequently visit or live in gardens, parks and other green spaces around our towns and villages here are some steps we can take to make our surroundings more welcoming for hedgehogs.



Photo credit: Hedgehog House by timo_w2s on flickr CC BY-SA 2.0



ROOM TO ROAM

During the active season, hedgehogs travel between 1-2km every night looking for food and mates and each hedgehog may have several nests where they rest during the day. No one garden can provide everything a hedgehog needs. You can help the little wanderers by making 'hedgehog highways'. Create a hole approximately 13cm x 13cm in your garden wall or fence to allow them to travel between your garden and the surrounding area.



Photo credit: Henry Johnson Barnes

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Growing wildlife friendly plants as well as fruit and vegetables will attract the mini-beasts that hedgehogs feed on such as beetles, caterpillars and worms. Leaving a corner of your garden grow wild and uncut will also provide a refuge for these tasty bugs throughout the year.

A PLACE TO CALL HOME

Hedgehogs may nest in undisturbed areas of the garden such as under a hedge or garden shed. You can provide spaces for hedgehogs to nest or hibernate by making piles of logs or leaves in a quiet corner. These natural hedgehog homes will also attract lots of insects which provide food for hedgehogs but also for other animals such as birds, frogs and pygmy shrews!

You can also buy or make a special hedgehog house – for directions see <https://www.hedgehogstreet.org/help-hedgehogs/hedgehog-homes/>



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Photo credit below: Dreamstime.com CCO



Photo credit: Dreamstime.com CCO



Photo credit Bonfires: Leaf Pile, bishib70 on flickr CC BY-NC-ND 2.0



Photo credit: Good garden pond, Quisnovus on flickr CC BY-NC 2.0

Insects grow scarce in the colder months of spring/autumn so you can offer some extra food if you wish. The best thing to leave out is wet cat or dog food or

dry cat or kitten food (small size kibble is best). Bread, milk, fruit and nuts are not suitable foods for hedgehogs. While they may eat them, they can cause illness or injury.

It is important to provide a safe source of water for hedgehogs and other animals so please leave out a shallow dish of water. If you have the space, a wildlife pond would be ideal and would benefit lots of other garden wildlife too.

If you have dogs, cats or foxes in your garden, you can make an enclosed feeding area for hedgehogs from an old plastic storage box. See here <https://www.hedgehogstreet.org/help-hedgehogs/feed-hedgehogs/>



Photo credit: Shutterstocknomad-photo.eu

A SAFE SPACE

Watch out for hedgehog hazards in garden and parks such as:

Litter – hedgehogs can become entangled in wire, netting, food containers and other litter. Collect and safely dispose of litter to prevent injury.

Chemicals – pesticides not only kill the bugs and grubs that hedgehogs eat, they can also be very harmful to hedgehogs. Many hedgehogs die every year from eating slug pellets. Avoid using artificial pesticides and seek natural pest control methods.

Water – hedgehogs can fall in to drains, ponds and cattlegrids where they can die

if they cannot get out. Cover drains and provide a ramp made of wood (covered with chicken wire for grip) or blocks or stones in ponds and cattle grids to allow them to escape.

Strimmers – Check the long grass and under hedges for snoozing hedgehogs before you start strimming or cutting hedges.

Bonfires – hedgehogs just love piles of branches, leaves and other garden waste. Please check your bonfire heap for sleeping hedgehogs before you light it.

Remember – to wear gardening gloves if you need to move a hedgehog out of harm's way!

HEDGEHOG WELFARE

If you find a sick or injured hedgehog you should contact your local ISPCA branch or wildlife rescue for help and advice. Further information and a list of rescue agencies is available on <http://www.irishwildlifematters.ie/index.html>