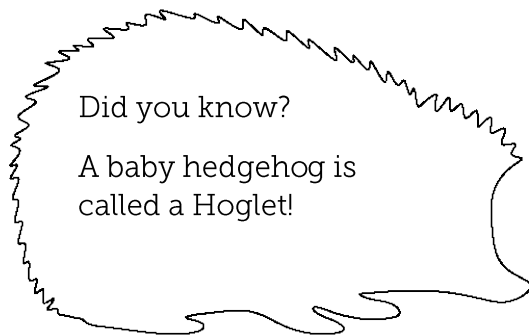


## Help a Hedgehog

Hedgehogs are in decline in the UK, some studies estimate there are under 1 million left. It is important we try to include our spikey friends in gardening practices. As autumn is beginning to appear, hedgehogs will start to put on weight for hibernation and look for dry, secure places to curl up for winter. Hedgehogs need to weigh around 600g to be able to safely hibernate and they sometimes need a bit of help to put weight on.



### How to Help

**Hibernation** – Provide somewhere sheltered and protected – can be as simple as an upturned wooden crate with a 13cm square hole in one end of it, covered in soil and vegetation.

**Food** – Put out food like meaty dog/cat food and plain peanuts. NO bread this is bad for hedgehogs.

**Passage** – Hedgehogs sometime need

help getting from garden to garden and can become de-hydrated and malnourished if restricted to one area. Create hedgehog highways by making a 13cm square hole in the garden fence.

**Drink** – Fresh, shallow water is perfect for all native wildlife and it sadly becoming less common in UK gardens, providing a dish of fresh water is one of the best ways of encouraging wildlife into your garden. No milk, hedgehogs are lactose intolerant.

**Wild Area** - Providing a wild area in your garden for hedgehogs to hunt for insects is the perfect way to encourage natural foraging.

**Bonfires** – Around the 5<sup>th</sup> of November many people will enjoy bonfire night by burning piles of leaves and twigs. These bonfires are the perfect place for hedgehogs to hibernate so make sure to CHECK YOUR BONFIRE PILE before lighting it. During winter if you do burn any garden waste, check for hedgehogs.

**Rescue** – If you find a hedgehog out in the middle of the day, disturb a hibernating hedgehog or come across an underweight or young hedgehog contact the RSPCA on 0300 1234 999 so it can be looked after.

