

# Help make Hartfield a Hedgehog hotspot

Hedgehogs are the UK's only spiny mammal, around 20-28cm long and up to 1.5kg in weight. They live in a variety of habitats including the edges of woodland, in hedgerows and in parks and gardens, and are nocturnal, roaming over an area of approximately two kilometres during the course of a night. Invertebrates are their favourite food, most commonly slugs, beetles, earthworms and caterpillars. Hedgehogs hibernate from around November to March, making a nest of fallen leaves in a sheltered spot and usually moving nests at least once during the winter. Their young, known as hoglets, are born between May and September in litters of up to seven. Hedgehogs have been known to live for seven years but two to three is a more typical lifespan and sadly many will not make their first birthday. British hedgehogs are now officially vulnerable to extinction so need your help.

## How you can help:

**Hedgehog highways** - Hedgehogs roam from 1 to 2 km per night for food, nesting and mating. Get together with your neighbours to cut a hole in your fence or dig an underground tunnel between gardens. The gap only needs to be 13cm by 13cm, sufficient for a hedgehog to pass through but too small for almost all pets. See Hedgehog Street for more information: <https://www.hedgehogstreet.org/>

**Make water safe** - Hedgehogs are good swimmers but need an escape route from pools and ponds. Make a ramp from a plank of wood covered in chicken wire or create shallow areas at the edge so they can scramble out.

**Avoid the use of pesticides** - Ditch the slug pellets and avoid the use of pesticides. Hedgehogs are natural "pest" controllers and need a plentiful and varied supply of invertebrate prey such as slugs and snails to stay healthy. Slug killer is poisonous to hedgehogs regardless of whether the pellets are organic or non-organic.

### **Allow a corner of your garden to 'go wild' -**

Hedgehogs love to forage in leaf litter and long grass to find their food. We all like a tidy garden but allowing a corner to become the 'wildlife corner' will be a great boost for the local hedgehogs and other wildlife.

**Feed appropriately** - Hedgehogs eat beetles, worms, slugs and caterpillars. In cold or dry weather hedgehogs will benefit from a dish of shallow water and meat-based dog or cat food. Do not give them bread or milk, which they cannot digest.



For further information about hedgehogs scan the QR codes below:

Wildlife Trust:



Environment Trust:

