

Help A Hedgehog Pack

Key information



Often voted as the UK's favourite wild animal, the hedgehog is our country's only native spiny mammal.

Common name

Hedgehog

Scientific name

Erinaceis europaeus

Description

22 - 28cm long, covered on back and flanks by around 6000 banded spines; face and underside with coarse brown fur.

Habitat

Both urban and rural situations. Absent from plantations, marshes & moorlands. All gardens increasingly important.

Diet

Ground-dwelling invertebrates especially worms, beetles, slugs, caterpillars, millipedes and earwigs. Readily eat meaty cat food or dog food provided by people.

Habits

Mobile and wide-ranging. Travel 1 - 2km a night. Generally solitary, non-territorial, nocturnal. Hibernate in winter. Roll into a ball when threatened.

Breeding

Breed between April and September, with peak activity in May and June. Noisy courtship routine. Mothers may desert or eat young if disturbed while nesting. Hoglets emerge from end of June onwards, are weaned at around five weeks and independent from then on. Females may attempt two litters in a year.

Conservation Status

There is now considerable evidence for a dramatic decline in recent years, with around a third of the national population lost since the millennium. Declining in both rural and urban habitats, due to a range of factors. The hedgehog is legally protected from trapping or intentional harm, but none of the legislation deals with the drivers of the decline.

