

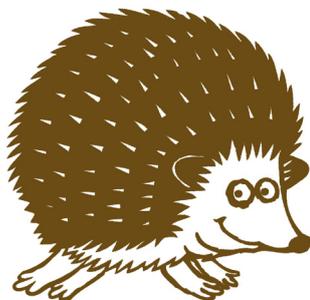
## Make Your Garden Hedgehog Friendly

**Most people are aware that hedgehog numbers in the UK are falling rapidly from more than 35 million in the 1950's to less than 1 million today. If this trend continues hedgehogs are likely to be on the endangered species list or even extinct by the turn of the next century.**

Creating a hedgehog friendly garden is inexpensive, quick and easy to do. You don't have to be a keen gardener or have any interest in gardening at all, in fact as far as hedgehogs are concerned the wilder the garden the better. All garden owners, from the expert to the person with little or no interest can play a vital role in creating a habitat where hedgehogs can live and thrive.

You may have hedgehogs in your area without realising it. They are nocturnal creatures (sleep during the day and awake after dark) and just because you don't see them doesn't mean they aren't out and about at night when you are asleep.

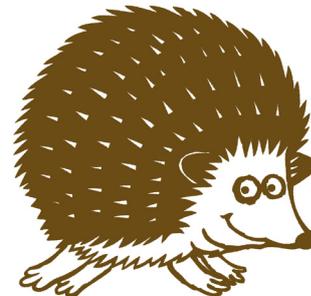
A hedgehog friendly garden is one with access between your garden and your neighbours on each side, wild areas to encourage nest building, compost heaps and wood piles, access out of ponds, no use of slug pellets or pesticides and a selection of bushes, plants and shrubs to attract insects and a bowl of fresh water each night. A hedgehog friendly garden is also one where you check for hedgehog activity before digging, strimming and mowing. If you find one sleeping do not disturb but just work around it.



### **How to Create a Hedgehog friendly garden:**

**Create gaps between gardens:** Hedgehogs need access to between 12 and 15 medium sized gardens to find enough food. The key message is to make sure there is a 5" square gap through your fence or under your gravel board on each side of the garden. You could encourage your neighbours to do the same so that you create a series of 'linked' gardens for the hedgehogs to explore and hunt for food.

Have a chat with your neighbour and see if you can agree a plan. If everyone did this we would have hedgehog corridors all over the country allowing safe access between gardens. It is also possible to buy hedgehog friendly gravel boards and fencing panels.



**Create a Compost heap and /or wood pile:** These are ideal nesting sites and a great source of insects. Check for hedgehog droppings nearby or entrance holes, and also have a gentle rummage around before using a fork. Try not to empty your bin before April to avoid evicting any hibernating hedgehog.

**Leave areas of your garden wild:** Leave an area of your garden naturally unkempt. Hedgehogs and other wildlife can then use fallen leaves, twigs and dead vegetation to build their nests. Wild areas also provide a home for the insects that hedgehogs and birds love to feed on.



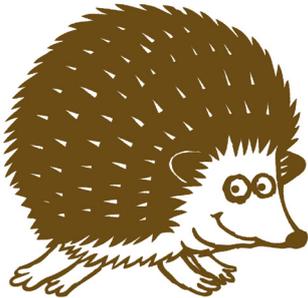
# Snuffles Hedgehog Rescue Four Oaks

## Make Your Garden Hedgehog Friendly

Avoid using slug pellets and other chemicals:  
Slug pellets kill hedgehogs and other wildlife so alternative slug management methods should always be used. One effective and safe method is Nematodes. Visit our website for details

Make ponds safe: Hedgehogs can swim but often fall in and can't get out. Create a sloping edge using stones or make a ramp covered in chicken wire so that they can climb out with ease.

Keep garden netting above ground level:  
Hedgehogs get tangled in netting and can end up losing a leg or die from shock. Place netting at least 0.5m above ground level and remove football or other sport nets from your garden after use.



### ***Keep deep holes or drains covered***

If a hedgehog falls into an uncovered drain or deep hole it may not be able to get out and will die of cold, hunger and exhaustion so keep any holes or drains covered.

### ***Check overgrown areas before mowing, strimming or digging***

This is a crucial message. When hedgehogs feel in danger their natural reaction is to freeze and curl up into a ball as their main form of defence. Thousands die each year as a result of strimming injuries. Please remember to check for hedgehog nests before gardening and if you find a hog asleep do not move or disturb it, just work around it.

### ***Provide hedgehogs with food and water***

Many adult hedgehogs can eat around half of their weight in food each night. You can feed them a sachet of meat based cat or dog food, meat based cat biscuits, Do not feed them bread or milk as they are lactose intolerant and this can give them diarrhoea, which is potentially fatal.

If you know there are hedgehogs passing through your garden put out some extra food (a sachet of meat based cat or dog food in jelly or meat based cat biscuits) and a bowl of water at night. Check it in the morning to see if it has been eaten and remove the bowl until the next night.

***For more information and a short film about hedgehog friendly gardens visit our website.***