

Hedgehogs



Hedgehogs are included on the UK Red List for British Mammals as vulnerable to extinction, and protected by the 1981 Wildlife & Countryside Act as well as being listed on the UK Biodiversity Action Plan list so should be checked for before any work and mitigation procedures put in place. It is important to check at the right times for hedgehogs, since they are nocturnal animals and hibernate during winter, so surveys carried out in daylight between April and November, and at any time between November and April when they are hibernating could risk missing hedgehogs that are there, and then injuring or even killing them if work is done. Please see <https://www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk/hibernation-2/> which explains more about the state of hibernation.



Hedgehogs in Britain have undergone a long historic decline; after many years of research showing decline in all areas, the State of Britain's Hedgehog Report 2022 showed that in urban areas, the picture is of a stable population that might be recovering, highlighting the importance of green spaces, and local action, in ensuring a future for hedgehogs. The decline in rural areas unfortunately continues.

A major factor in the decline in numbers is fragmentation of their habitat. Hedgehogs need to be able to travel through areas which have an abundance of their natural nesting areas, mates and foods. The removal or reduction of hedgerows and general undergrowth is also a factor in their decline because hedgehogs (as their name suggests) use this habitat to live in and travel along, as is the increase in development of land without regard to the wildlife living there.



A couple of useful documents to consult can be found here:

<https://www.hedgehogstreet.org/hempguide/> (for land managers) and <https://www.hedgehogstreet.org/development/>

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