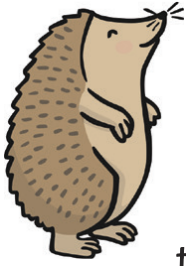


Hedgehogs



Hedgehogs can be found almost everywhere in the UK. They live in cities and towns, and can be found on railway land, parks and gardens. They do not live on mountainsides because there is not much food for them and there are not many places for them to nest.

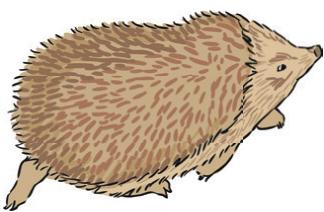
What do they look like?

Hedgehogs are small, spiky animals. Their babies are called hoglets. Adult hedgehogs have long spines along their backs and sides, but not on their faces or legs. Some hedgehogs can have up to seven thousand spines!

What do they eat?

Hedgehogs are often called the Gardener's Friend because they eat the slugs that eat plants and cause damage to the garden. Gardeners are usually pleased to see a hedgehog.

If you want a hedgehog to visit your garden, you could leave a small saucer of cat or dog food out as they like the meat. Make sure that you leave a saucer of water out too, especially in the summer months.



No milk for hedgehogs!

Milk makes hedgehogs very poorly so don't leave it out for them.

Hedgehog Habits

Hedgehogs visit a lot of gardens. You could have as many as 10 different hedgehogs passing through your garden! They are very nose-y animals, and sometimes need rescuing from getting their heads stuck in empty yoghurt pots, tins and plastic cups.

Helping a Hedgehog

There are some things you can do to keep a visiting hedgehog safe if they pass through your garden.



When a hedgehog feels scared, it will roll itself up into a ball so that its spikes will frighten off its enemies.

Slug pellets – Never use these to kill slugs. Hedgehogs eat the pellets or the dead slugs and the poison in them can kill the hedgehogs.

Garden ponds – Hedgehogs can fall into ponds and drown. Make sure your pond has sloping sides so a hedgehog can get out to safety if they fall in. You could also cover the pond with netting or chicken wire.



Hedgehogs hibernate between November and the middle of March, so be extra careful if moving piles of leaves during this time.

Nesting places – Hedgehogs nest in piles of leaves, so if you are planning to tidy the garden, be careful you don't accidentally wake a sleeping hedgehog.

hibernate – to sleep all through the cold winter months until the springtime.

slug pellets – poisonous tablets left out in the garden to kill slugs.

Hedgehogs Questions

Answer the following questions in as much detail as you can and in full sentences.

1. Name two places hedgehogs can live.

2. What are hoglets?

3. Why would a gardener want to have a hedgehog in their garden?

4. Why do you think the author says you should leave a saucer of water out for them 'especially in the summer months'?

5. What does the hedgehog use to frighten off its enemies?

6. Why should you not use slug pellets in the garden?

7. Where do hedgehogs like to nest?

8. What would you expect a hedgehog to be doing at the beginning of March?

Hedgehogs **Answers**

1. Name two places hedgehogs can live.

Any of the following two places: cities, towns, railway land, parks and/or gardens.

2. What are hoglets?

Hoglets are baby hedgehogs.

3. Why would a gardener want to have a hedgehog in their garden?

A gardener would want a hedgehog in their garden because they eat slugs that can damage their plants.

4. Why do you think the author says you should leave a saucer of water out for them 'especially in the summer months'?

You should leave a saucer of water out 'especially in the summer months' because it can get hot and the hedgehogs will need a drink.

5. What does the hedgehog use to frighten off its enemies?

The hedgehog uses its spikes to frighten off its enemies.

6. Why should you not use slug pellets in the garden?

You should not use slug pellets in the garden because hedgehogs might eat them or the dead slugs and then could die because the pellets can make the hedgehog very poorly.

7. Where do hedgehogs like to nest?

Hedgehogs like to nest in piles of leaves.

8. What would you expect a hedgehog to be doing at the beginning of March?

I would expect a hedgehog to be hibernating (sleeping) at the beginning of March.