



**ESSEX**  
Wildlife Trust

Hedgehog



GlaxoSmithKline

## Creatures of the night ~ Hedgehogs



Hedgehogs are small mammals that are covered in spikes, curl up in times of danger and make lots of noise when they eat. They are often found in gardens and eat worms, beetles and make a brilliant garden friend as they eat slugs and snails. Look out for long thin black droppings full of shiny beetle wings to tell you if you have a hedgehog in your garden.

Hegehogs curling up in times of danger is a perfect method of protecting themselves from enemies like foxes as they become a ball of fierce spikes. Unfortunately it does not give such good protection against approaching cars, there are reports that hedgehogs however are now learning to run at the sound of a car and as a result less are being killed by cars.

Hedgehogs are actually quite nimble and can even climb fences. If you ever see one run it is quite a funny experience as does not shuffle along close to the floor but raises itself up on long spindly legs and scuttles along quite quickly.

### YOU CAN HELP HEDGEHOGS— make your garden a hedgehog haven



Make or buy a Hedgehog hibernation home (and nesting home in the spring if you are lucky). An untreated wooden box about 50cm each side with a small tunnel entrance about 15cm diameter and height and about 20cm long is best. Place it in a hidden sheltered place that will not flood and cover it with dead leaves and twigs.

If you have a pond, make sure that it has a shallow edge or bricks to make steps so that if a hedgehog comes to drink and falls in, it will be able to get out. Hedgehogs have been known to drown in ponds with steep sides.

Don't use slug pellets as the hedgehog will be poisoned if it eats the pellets or the poisoned slugs and snails. Let the hedgehog be your pest control.

Put out cat food and a bowl of water for hedgehogs to eat and drink.

### Come out and go wild with Essex Wildlife Trust

You can join us on a mini beast hunt, come crabbing or pond dipping, or create amazing pieces of art. Contact your nearest EWT visitor centre for activities in your area.

Abberton nr Colchester 01206 738172  
Bedfords Park nr Romford 01708 748646  
Chafford Gorges nr Thurrock 01375 484016  
Fingringhoe nr Colchester 01206 729678

Hanningfield nr Chelmsford 01268 711001  
Langdon nr Basildon 01268 419103  
Thorndon nr Brentwood 01277232944  
General enquiries 01621 862991

People and Wildlife, Essex Wildlife Trust, Abbots Hall Farm, Colchester CO5 7RZ  
Registered Charity No. 210065



**ESSEX**  
Wildlife Trust

Visit us at  
[www.essexwt.org.uk](http://www.essexwt.org.uk)



We are celebrating our 50th birthday and you can join in the fun. Send us a list of 50 different types of wildlife you can find in your garden along with your name, age and address and we will send you a prize.

