

Hedgehog Officer Ali North with a hedgehog John Ferguson

Hedgehogs are under threat, so a National Lottery project is encouraging people to turn their gardens into havens for the native spiny mammals.

A recent report by People's Trust for Endangered Species and the British Hedgehog Preservation society found that while the decline of hedgehogs is increasing in the countryside, it looks to be slowing in urban areas.

"This trend for urban populations is likely to be in no small part down to the actions of individuals and neighbourhoods" explained Ali North, Hedgehog Officer for Suffolk Wildlife Trust which is running a project to reverse the decline of the species and make Ipswich the most hedgehog-friendly town in the UK.

[quote= Ali North, Hedgehog Officer at Suffolk Wildlife Trust]"Regardless of where you live, you can help too!" [/quote]

It encourages people to transform their gardens into a living network for hedgehogs and it seems to be working.

"We have been amazed by the good will and enthusiasm of residents in Ipswich to help hedgehogs." said Ali North, Hedgehog Officer for Suffolk Wildlife Trust.

Help a hedgehog

"Regardless of where you live, you can help too!" Ali said.

And here's how:

1. **Create a hedgehog highway** by making small holes at the bottom of your fences or gaps under your gates so hedgehogs can move from garden to garden.
2. **Keep your garden wild and untidy** to create a hedgehog friendly habitat. Longer grass, log piles, leaves and wildflowers create nesting places and attract bugs, which hedgehogs love to eat.
3. **Reduce your chemical use** as slug pellets and other pesticides are harmful to hedgehogs and reduce the prey they rely on. Hedgehogs are natural pest controllers.
4. **Log your hedgehog sightings** on the Wildlife Trust's I Spy a Hedgehog map and help build a picture of how hedgehogs are doing and help conservation efforts.
5. **Become a hedgehog champion** and spread the word. The National Lottery funded project has a Hedgehog Champion scheme for those who live in Ipswich and there are plenty of other ways to help if you live somewhere else in the UK via the national website Hedgehog Street.

Find out more about hedgehogs and the Ipswich Hedgehog project on Suffolk Wildlife Trust's website.



Ali North, Suffolk Wildlife Trust John Ferguson



Back from the Brink will protect key threatened species such as the sand lizard Chris Davis

England’s threatened wildlife to be brought ‘back from the brink’