



# Guide to Helping Hedgehogs

**Shepreth Wildlife Conservation Charity**



[www.swccharity.org](http://www.swccharity.org)

Registered charity number: 1145477

# Who We Are

Shepreth Wildlife Conservation Charity (SWCC) was founded in 2012 to build and maintain the SWCC Hedgehog Hospital and to raise funds for, and educate people about endangered species worldwide.

In the 25 years prior to this, Shepreth Wildlife Park had managed a hedgehog rehabilitation programme, but this desperately needed expansion. The SWCC Hedgehog Hospital was the solution.

Alongside the Wildlife Park, SWCC has now raised over £450,000 for conservation projects around the world, including the SWCC Hedgehog Hospital.

In our 10th year we want to reach over £500,000!

# How You Can Help

Via JustGiving

<https://www.justgiving.com/SWCC>

Via Amazon Wishlist

<https://amzn.to/3BpNBfo>



# What We Do

The SWCC Hedgehog Hospital treats and rehabilitates sick and injured hedgehogs, which come to us from across the region.

We operate according to best practice and scientific evidence. Our aim is to integrate hedgehog rehabilitation with the conservation of a healthy free-living hedgehog population to maximise breeding potential.

The hospital has admitted over 4,500 hedgehogs since it opened its doors in 2012.

## Found a Hedgehog? Here's How to Help

### Injury

**Minor Injuries** might be easily treated by a rescue centre even without an on-site vet.

**Major Injuries:** deep wounds, exposed bone, etc. will need a general anaesthetic. **Contact your local rescue centre or vet immediately.**

Dragging or unable to retract one limb usually indicates a fracture. Take care when handling and do not weigh down with heavy bedding. **Contact your local rescue centre or vet immediately.**

### Flystrike

Flies lay eggs (tiny white sacs) behind eyelids, in the mouth/genitals/ears/armpits. These will hatch into maggots which feed on flesh, causing horrible wounds. Do not place a hedgehog on direct heat (heatpad) if eggs are present, as they will hatch faster. **Contact your local rescue centre or vet immediately if fly eggs are seen.**

### Trapped in Netting

Do not try to remove netting as it could be embedded or entangled around limbs. Removing the netting could do more harm than good. **Cut the net around the hog, contain and call your local rescue centre/vet.** Never release without getting advice first.

### Collapsed

If found collapsed, on its side and floppy, possibly breathing with its mouth open – **take to a vet immediately.**

⚠ Please do not try and care for a hedgehog without talking to a rescue centre or a vet. They are complicated creatures and often have issues, both external and internal. The longer you wait to get advice, the longer that animal could be suffering.



## Out During the Daytime?

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Hedgehogs are nocturnal. A hedgehog out during the day is probably unwell or in trouble. If you see one out during the day acting 'drunk', wobbly, lethargic, as if it is 'sunbathing', or obviously hurt: **Contain it immediately, bring inside away from flies, and call a rescue centre for help.**

**! EXCEPTION: a purposeful hedgehog out during the day, most likely gathering leaf litter for a nest will be a female who is about to (or recently has) given birth. Do not stress her or stop her from returning to her young as she may abandon, hurt, or kill them.**

## Swaying/sunbathing/lethargic

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Likely to be dehydrated. Do not force-feed any food or water but contain the hedgehog, offer a shallow dish of water, and **contact a rescue centre urgently.**

## Sporadic Movements

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Potential neurological issue. Could be due to trauma, swelling in the inner ear/brain, or ingesting a poison such as slug pellets. **Contact a rescue centre urgently.**

## Noises

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A 'smokers cough', wheezing, screaming or squealing is likely to be a high burden of internal parasites. **Contact a rescue centre immediately.**

## How to Contain a Large Juvenile/Adult Hedgehog

- Prepare a high sided box (they can climb well!) or pet carrier with newspaper or an old towel on the base.
- Use gloves, or an old thick towel, to pick up the hedgehog and gently put into the container. Never handle with bare hands.
- Bring it inside, away from flies.
- Put a shallow dish of water inside the container.
- If they are bright and active, over the size of a tennis ball when curled, you can provide some wet cat or dog food, or cat/kitten biscuits.
- After you have delivered the hedgehog to a place of care, disinfect the container and dishes thoroughly.

## Normal Behaviours

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Normal noises include huffing and hissing. Cheeping like a baby bird is normal for newborns wanting food. A hedgehog contorting and licking a frothy saliva over its back is self-anointing which is a natural behaviour, most commonly seen when they encounter something new.





## Supplementary Feeding

The hedgehogs' natural diet comprises caterpillars, worms, slugs, beetles etc, so food left out is only to supplement this.

- A shallow bowl of water – especially important during hot spells and when awakening from hibernation
- Dry food – hedgehogs love cat and kitten biscuits, eating kibble helps clean teeth too!
- Wet food – hedgehog, dog, or cat food (ideally loaf, pate, or in jelly) not fish-based

Sometimes hedgehogs struggle to find enough natural food in the wild to thrive, but we can provide extra food to support them. Supplementary feeding is appreciated all year round but particularly during very cold and very hot weather, after hibernation and during breeding season.

## What NOT to Feed Hedgehogs

Here are a few common culprits:

- Milk – lactose can be fatal
- Bread
- Mealworms / Sunflower Seeds / Peanuts – high in phosphorous and low in calcium; can cause metabolic bone disease
- Human foods (biscuits / cake, etc.)
- Eggs
- Any live or dried insects
- Fresh or dried fruit / vegetables
- Raw meat / offal
- Any hedgehog specific food that contains any of the above



# 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Events 2022

Join us at Shepreth Wildlife Park throughout the year!

<b>17<sup>th</sup> January</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Auction and Raffle
<b>19<sup>th</sup> February</b>	Elephant Event
<b>March</b>	Yoga Month
<b>15<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> April</b>	Easter Event
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> May</b>	Red List Event
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> June</b>	Zoo Event
<b>29<sup>th</sup> July</b>	Tiger Event
<b>29<sup>th</sup> August</b>	Hedgehog Event
<b>17<sup>th</sup> September</b>	Red Panda Event
<b>30<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Halloween Event
<b>19<sup>th</sup> November</b>	Winter Ball
<b>December weekends</b>	Santa's Grotto

For further details of these events please visit our website and social media in 2022.



## Shepreth Wildlife Conservation Charity

Registered charity number: 1145477  
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Photography by Stephanie Foote | [www.stephaniefoote.com](http://www.stephaniefoote.com) | [@stephfootephoto](https://www.instagram.com/stephfootephoto)

**Hedgehog Helpline: 07947 361187**