

West European Hedgehog

Erinaceus europaeus

EcoRecord

the ecological database
for Birmingham and the Black Country

Species Fact Sheet



Photo @Gaudete

Ecology

With a distinctive round body covered in spines the Hedgehog is unmistakable and is a common visitor to gardens and parklands.

Hedgehogs feed largely on invertebrates including insects, worms, snails and slugs, but also take young mice, frogs and occasionally eat fruit and berries.

Hedgehogs are nocturnal and solitary, though their territories can overlap without conflict between individuals.

Hedgehogs construct a nest using mosses, grass, leaves and other garden debris. They can be found in areas of dense cover such as at the base of thick hedges, under thick bramble bushes, garden sheds or piles of rubbish.

In Britain adults hibernate between November and March while the young hibernate slightly later between December and April. It is normal for hedgehogs to wake up several times over the winter and may often build a new nest.

The hedgehog breeding season is from April to August and they typically have one litter of up to six offspring, though in favourable years they may have a second litter. A hedgehog's life span can be as high as 10 years but the average is just three as there is a very high mortality rate among first year hedgehogs.

One of the principal causes of hedgehog mortality is starvation during hibernation though many are also killed on the roads. In gardens, many hedgehogs are killed by hedge trimmers and poisoning by slug pellets. Both foxes and especially badgers are predators of hedgehogs, and they are generally absent where badgers are present.

Habitat

Woodland edges, hedgerows, gardens, parkland.

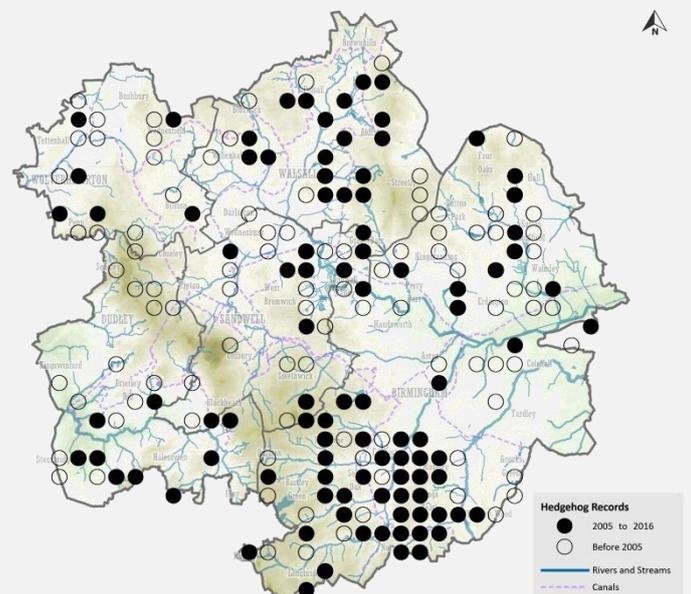
B&BC Distribution and Status

B&BC Status: Frequent



Hedgehog records in Birmingham and the Black Country have a broad distribution across the conurbation though they are particularly present in the leafy suburbs.

Due to their nocturnal lifestyle they are probably under-recorded in rural fringe/woodland areas.



Hedgehog Records
● 2005 to 2016
○ Before 2005
— Rivers and Streams
- - - Canals

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