

# HEDGE HUNTERS



2022 ISSUE



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# ALL ABOUT HEDGEROWS

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE HEDGEHUNTERS



## WHO ARE WE?

BY THE HEDGEHUNTERS

We are a group of young people who volunteer with Volunteer's Green Influencer's and work with the University of Hull to map out hedgerows around the East Riding of Yorkshire and hopefully soon to be nationwide!

Our project includes an online website and app that has a survey you can take part in to report hedgerow gaps. By 2050 the UK government aims to extend hedgerows by 40% as they are more important than you think! They are fantastic biodiversity corridors and have the potential to help with our carbon footprint and future flood risk.

Read on to find out more!



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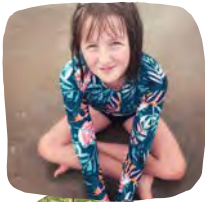
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# MEET THE HEDGEHUNTERS



**Poppie**  
*The artist*



**Oliver**  
*The sporty  
but  
hungry one*



**Lisa**  
*The lovely one*



**Lucie**  
*The  
talkative  
one*



**Saskia**  
*The kind  
and  
creative one*



**Katie**  
*The  
leader*



**Summer**  
*The conservationist*



**Kit**  
*The big thinker*



**James**  
*The deep  
thinker*



**Josh**  
*The PI*

**If you like what you see, become a HedgeHunter like me!**



If you're interested in finding out more then join the HedgeHunters today.

1. Join the HedgeHunters at <https://hedge-hunters-historycentre.hub.arcgis.com/> and download the app from your app store
2. Follow us on Twitter [@TheHedgeHunters](https://twitter.com/TheHedgeHunters)



# Spring

In Spring, most hedgerows start to grow back with new buds and flowers, for example, Blackthorne, Hawthorne, Hazel and Elder.

As the hedgerow springs back to life, so does the biodiversity within it including pollinators, birds and other hibernating animals (such as hedgehogs!).

Nesting birds often use hedgerows which is why it's important to check before you cut them. Nesting season is between March 1st and August 31st. Check here for tips:

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/plants/types/hedges/pruning-guide>

During rainfall (especially April showers) the hedgerow roots help protect the soil from being washed away ensuring that the hedgerow and habitat stays healthy.

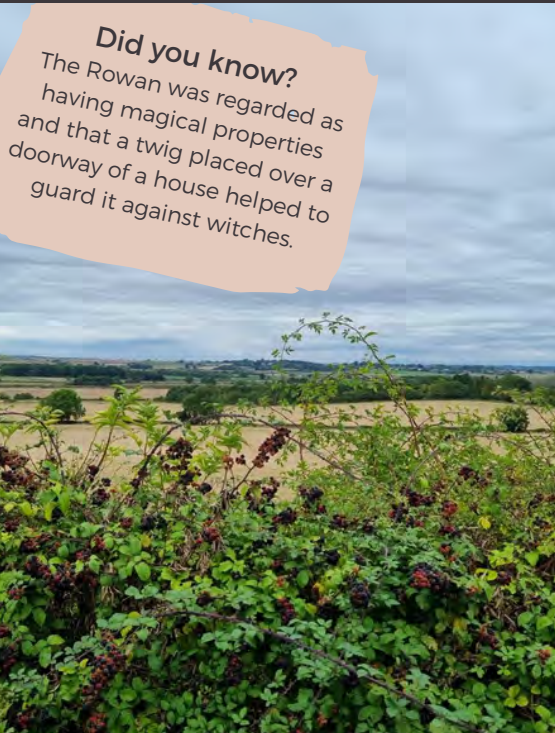


## Did you know?

Fauna in flora and fauna is called fauna because in Roman mythology half animal half humans were called Fauns e.g. Mr Tumnus, Narnia

## Did you know?

The Rowan was regarded as having magical properties and that a twig placed over a doorway of a house helped to guard it against witches.



# Autumn

In the Autumn the leaves begin to fall. However the leaves at the bottom of hedgerows help to keep the soil warm over winter and provide vital nutrients for the hedges and wildlife that live there.

Autumnal berries begin to appear for animals to gather for the winter. Not a scrap is left behind or wasted. Lots of animals begin to look for the perfect place to hibernate through the harsh winter

When birds migrate, they eat berries from hedgerows, then poo out the seeds so new hedgerows grow everywhere.

The rowan is known for having an excellent display of foliage and fruits in the autumn.

# Summer

In the Summer life is blooming and abundant in the hedgerow. Most birds have now left their nest but still use the hedgerows to shade, feed and frolic about.

The flowering of the hedgerows attract many pollinators and the insect population reaches its peak.

Plants begin to grow due to photosynthesis meaning that there is more fruit available to eat. They hawthorn in particular has a deep red berry that attracts animals to its glossy look in the summer sun.

Hedgerows offer sanctuary from the hot sun, especially in large fields used for farming where there's not a lot of shade.



**Did you know?**  
The oldest known surviving hedgerow is in Cambridgeshire in England and is called Judith's hedge. It is estimated to be over 900 years old!!!



**Did you know?**  
Dormice are one of only three UK mammals to hibernate! Do you know what the others are?

# Winter

In the Winter is the best time for you to start to trim back your hedgerow. The hedgerow lays dormant in the winter so the cutting will cause less harm. Checkout this useful page from the People's Trust for Endangered Species for more information: [ptes.org/winter-hedgerows/](https://ptes.org/winter-hedgerows/)

The hedgerow stores all of its energy in its roots and so by having that layer of leaves helps keep it warm.

Dense hedgerows are also a great habitat for dormice who make little nests in them. In winter they are fast asleep in the hedgerow! When the dormice are more active, hedgerows act as a corridor for them (and other animals) to move safely between isolated areas of woodland instead of across big open fields.





# HEDGEHOG

**Did you  
know**



*Hedgehog babies are called Hoglets and that they are born in July.*

*Each hedgehog has about 4 to 5 hoglets.*

BY POPPIE ANDREWS

Hedgehogs are nocturnal creatures meaning that they sleep in the day and come out at night. Their eyesight isn't very good, but they can see very well in the dark. So if you want to see the cute critters, wait until its night time! You can see them at night in April to October, as the rest of the time they are hibernating!

Hedgehogs usually live on the edge of woodlands, in hedgerows, and in gardens, and hedgehogs like to eat snails, caterpillars, slugs, beetles and earthworms, birds' egg and earwigs. However, they are lactose intolerant, so milk should never be left out for them but water is perfectly fine. Hedgehogs like if you leave food out for them, or make a shelter. Sometimes they have to walk 2 miles a night!

Hedgehogs have 5,000 to 7,000 spines on their back, which can be raised and lowered if they feel scared or in danger. Every spike lasts about a year before dropping out and being replaced, which means in a lifetime, a hedgehog will grow 10,000 to 35,000 spikes in their life!!

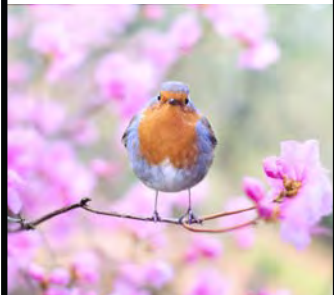
Hedgehogs can do something called self anointing. This means that they can spread smelly substances over themselves. We're not 100% sure why they do this, but it could be to create a scent camouflage (hiding in smell)! Or to poison their spines for added protection from predators.



# ROBIN

**Did you  
know** ?

*That the Robin has  
been voted as the  
UK's favourite bird?*



### BY SUMMER PORTER

The Robin red breast is often associated with winter as they have a bright chest that stands out against the white snow. Younger birds don't have the red chest, but instead have lots of small yellow dots. Male and female robins look the same, unlike other bird species.

Robins usually nest on or near the ground, in log piles, hollows in tree trunks, hedgerows and any other tight spaces they come across. They like quiet places where they are going to be left alone. Nests are made by the female robin, using grass, dead leaves and moss. Robins are a fighting species, and are very territorial once they have a home.

Robins breed in march, and have roughly 4-6 eggs and is a bird that is always singing.

Robins are very smart, and normally follow gardeners as they show where worms are when digging. They also follow pigs as they root through the undergrowth.

Robins eat seeds, worms, fruits and insects, so leave out the bird seed, and see the robins coming to have a nibble!

The average lifespan of a robin is up to two years, but the oldest ever robin (that people know about) was 11 years and 5 months old, according to the RSPB.



# POLLINATORS

BY LUCIE PARSONS

**Did you  
know** 

*Bees do a special dance called the waggle dance to tell each other where the best food is. They do this dance by moving in a way that shows where the place is in line with the sun and how far away it is by how long they vibrate for.*  
**WOW!**

Almost 90% of wild plants and 75% of crops such as wheat and corn, and 1/3rd of every single mouthful couldn't have been made without pollinators.

The bee is just one type of pollinator but there lots of different types, such as the bumblebee, the honeybee and stingless bee. Bees live in little homes called hives. Bee hives exist all over the world! In every hive, each bee has a special job. Some bees are called worker bees, and they go out and collect nectar from flowers. As the bee drinks the nectar, pollen sticks to their hairy legs, and when a bee flies to another flower, the pollen falls of, and this is called pollination. They bees take the nectar back to the hive, and turn it into honey, which we eat. mmmmmm.

Another type of bee is the queen bee. She is the mum of all of the worker bees, and in turn the workers protect her.

If you find a bumblebee that looks like it's struggling, it may be just resting, particularly in early spring. However, if you think it's struggling, the best thing to do is put it on any purple flowers, as bees see purple more vividly than any other colour. If there are no flowers around, mix 50:50 white sugar:water to give the bumblebee a one-off energy boost providing the energy it needs to fly.

Other pollinators are wasps, caterpillars and butterflies, and hornets.





# DORMICE

Did you  
know ?

*The tiny dormice of today come from giant dormice, an extinct ancestor (as big as a rat) from the dinosaur times. Fossils date back to 33 to 56 million years ago, when they are thought to have lived with ancient horses, apes, and bats. They were discovered in Europe and Asia at least 30 million years before being discovered in Africa.*

BY SASKIA MULLEY SAUNDERS

Dormice are hard to spot – not only do they only come out at night, which means, like Hedgehogs, they are nocturnal, but they are also only found in very few places in the UK, only in Southern England and Wales. Dormice spend a lot of their time hibernating and are known to snore!

Dormice are usually a light brown or yellow colour, with fur that coats their bodies, which are only 6-9 cm long! That is about the length of a Crayola crayon. Their tail, however, is 5 to 6 cm long, which means their entire length is about 13 cm—about the size of a small pen.

These cute creatures live for 5 years. They hibernate for six months in the autumn/ winter, and can be seen in the spring/ summer months. Not only are they asleep all winter, but also during every day!! In the night they come out to collect food, such as hazelnuts, berries, and insects.

Dormice build nests out of grass and leaves ready for the mother to give birth from 1 to 7 babies! In autumn, dormice start looking for the perfect spot to hibernate in winter. They often choose to sleep in logs or leaves at the base of trees and hedgerows or just under the ground where they can stay warm.

# Identifying



## The Hawthorn Hedge

In Celtic mythology, Hawthorn was known as the sacred symbolising love and protection

Hawthorn hedges are very common as both borders to fields and garden hedges. Mature hedges can reach a height of 15 m, but some hawthorns grow as short trees. The bark is a brown grey, and the twigs are covered in sharp thorns used to deter predators. In winter, the hedges and trees stand bare but in spring, buds start to show. Over the summer, these buds unfurl becoming leaves and the flowers. Throughout the time when the flowers are open bees and other pollinators carry the pollen to and fro from plant to plant so that, when it is autumn, the flowers can turn into berries. These berries are vital for the survival of many hedgerow animals but sadly, many hedges are cut too early so the berries never appear. In a healthy hawthorn hedge, there should be new shoots of growth every year and plenty of berries in the autumn.



## Hazel Hedges

These hedges are quite common around most areas of Britain. They have large green foliage and support over 70 species of insects and animals including squirrels, moths and caterpillars.

In spring they are weighted down with catkins and in autumn they are vitally important to many hedgerow creatures since they grow nuts. The hazel dormouse for instance is dependent upon the nuts from this plant for food for the autumn winter and spring. These nuts are also eaten by woodpeckers, nuthatches, jays and mammals like the red squirrel wood mouse and bank vole.

Hazel is one of the most useful trees for its bendy stems and fast growth rate - up to 40 cm a year!



# Hedgerows

## Elder

In folklore, Elder is one of the most magically powerful trees. They are feared by the devil and evil spirits. It is often seen as a good omen if Elder grows near a house.

Elder grows in lots of countries including UK (mostly in autumn), and is often confused with walnut.

Its twigs are hollow with a spongy centre. When young, its bark is mostly grey or brown coloured bark and this becomes browner as it gets older. Twigs from Elder are good for whittling and carving



The creamy white flowers and berries are edible but only when cooked: they are mildly poisonous when raw! The flowers are often used in elderflower cordial.

The flowers produce nectar for insects, berries are commonly eaten by birds and moth caterpillars eat the foliage.

Elder is threatened by black fly and sap sucking red spider mites.

The name Elder comes from the Anglo-Saxon word "**ald**" as the twigs are hollow and were used to blow air into fire



## Blackberry

Blackberries can grow everywhere, they're wild! They flower at the start of summer, but the soil has to be rich, in full-partial sun. They produce berries that have lots of pimples and lots of seeds, also quite black (blackberries *Rubus fruticosus*). British brambles produce fruit and seeds without fertilisation. If you're growing them at home, make sure you use T-shaped fencing and stakes that are eight feet long.

Blackberry is sometimes referred to as the devil's fruit as the devil got thrown down onto a patch of brambles and blackberries started growing. The top of the bush goes mouldy and blackberry decays is said to be when the devil spat on them.

It was once believed that passing sick people seven times through the loop of a blackberry branch could cure, rickets, whooping cough and rheumatism. During the American civil war, blackberry tea was used to cure dysentery. Confederate and union soldiers would pick blackberries together often from the same bush at the same time.





# Row Recipe

There are so many delicious recipes that you can make from the fruit on hedgerows. Why not tuck into our favourite one! More on our website.

## Blackberry and Apple Crumble Cake

### Ingredients:

- 180g Self raising flour - sifted
- 2 tbsp oats
- 225g Golden caster sugar
- 1tsp ground cinnamon
- 230g butter, 30g chilled and diced, 200g softened
- 1/2tsp baking powder
- 2 apples, peeled and cored
- 1tbsp lemon juice
- 3 large eggs
- 100g ground almonds
- 100g of fresh blackberries

### Directions:

- Preheat oven gas mark 4, 180c (fan 160c) Grease or line a 20cm square cake tin (4m deep).
- Cut eat apple quarter into 3 slices, pour the lemon juice & half the cinnamon over & set aside.
- Mix oats, 30g of flour, 25g of almond flour, half of the cinnamon & a pinch of salt into a large bowl.
- Add the 30g diced butter & rub with your fingers until like breadcrumbs.
- Put the remaining butter in a bowl and whisk with the sugar for 3-5 mins until pale & creamy.
- Whisk in the eggs, one at a time.
- Fold in the remaining flour, ground almonds, baking powder & a pinch of salt.
- Spoon half of the mix into the tin, then scatter over half the apple slices & press gently. Add the remaining cake mix, then repeat with the apples & blackberries.
- Finally sprinkle over the crumble mix.
- Bake for 50-60 mins or until skewer comes out clean.
- Leave to cool for 30 mins then enjoy!

## Interview with Megan Gimber

*from the People's Trust  
for Endangered Species*

### **What wildlife is depending on hedgerows and which species is suffering the most?**

A huge amount of wildlife depend on hedgerows, so if you think of the United Kingdom, 70% of that is farmland. The Species suffering the most? That's a difficult one to say, cause there is a lot of suffering quite a huge amount. I think it's been about a 90% decline in hedgehogs. We've lost 50% of our dormice since the Millennium, I would say birds as well. 80% of our woodland species birds live in hedges and we've lost a significant amount of our birds since the 1970s. It's something like 16 out of 19...

...of our farmland indicator bird species depend on hedgerows.

### **What can we do to help?**

That is a fantastic question. I would say if you own hedges I would say manage them on their lifecycle and they will become big, beautiful, wildlife filled hedges in no time. Most people aren't lucky enough to own a farm, or lots of hedges, but there is still lots of things that you can do. I would say surveying hedges, so we've got lots of groups up and down the countryside that survey hedges and they work alongside the farmers. We've got two surveys, one of which is called the Great British Hedgerow Survey, this gives us instant feedback about the health of the hedge, but also pinpoints where that hedge is on the management cycle.



### **Can you tell us about any career opportunities**

Like with most things, we're much better at protecting and looking after things that we understand. So I think there's a lot more to do in terms of research and so if you have a scientific mind or that's the sort of thing that you're interested in, I would say go into biological research systems research that sort of thing would be fantastic. If you're more of a practical person Hedge Laying I think is a really fantastic thing to do.



## **Why are you passionate about nature?**

That is a really big question. It's a difficult one to answer as well because I've got so many different reasons for being passionate about nature.

First of all, I just find it endlessly fascinating how all things work together and live together and how they all evolved these fantastic relationships and I love that there's so much more to find out. When I was younger, I thought that you know, we knew everything about science and as I got older and the more, I learned about nature and about science I realised how much that we still don't know because it's just so endlessly complex and beautiful

# Interview with Chris McGregor and Emily Ledder

from Natural England

## Tell us a bit about your job

**Chris:** My job is largely talking to people I have a responsibility for: Areas of land that we call sites of Special Scientific Interest. If you think about them as special sites that are important for either the species that they support or the habitats they support. They can also have geological interest as well. They are protected by law and they're up and down the country and the vast majority of them are owned by private individuals and we work with them to try and make sure those sites are in good condition.

**Emily:** My job involves working with Local Authorities to get them ready for the introduction of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). BNG is an approach to development which leaves biodiversity in a better state than it was before the development took place.

All developments will need to provide 10% more biodiversity compared to what was there to start with. Previously development often resulted in negative impacts on, and losses, of nature. However, BNG means that as a result of the development there will be more and better quality places for wildlife to live and thrive and for people to enjoy. Biodiversity is measured using a tool called the Biodiversity Metric which takes into consideration the size of a habitat, it's condition, how distinctive it is and how important it is locally. For hedgerows the Metric looks at several attributes such as height, width, how many gaps it has along its length and whether it has any mature trees in it.

## Why are hedgerows important?

Hedgerows are great for lots of different things. We have talked about how important they are for biodiversity, but also for the landscape as well. Hedgerows are regionally based because of the soil types and the climate...



... They are also important in terms of history and culture. They also minimise the risk of soil erosion, meaning that they are good for preventing pollutants getting into water courses.

## What can young people do to help?

Tell your friends and family about how important hedgerows are. Have a look around your school and have a think about how they are managed and whether they need any help. Get your teachers involved or neighbours.



## What is Natural England doing to help?

Natural England is one of the main advisors to the government in England so we try and advise the government to do things that are really beneficial for hedgerows. We are trying to get the government to introduce policies and laws and regulations to protect hedgerows. We also work with farmers to help manage the hedges in a certain way, more beneficial or to plant more hedges, which is great!

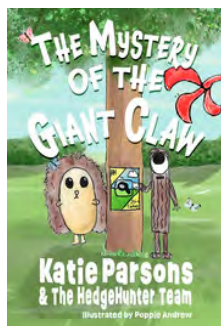


# FUN STUFF PAGE

## Wordsearch

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Hedgehog   Butterfly   Flower   Mouse   Hedgerows   Tractor   Wildlife  
 Squirrel   Berries   Bluebell   Leaves   Bird   Strimmer   Animals  
 Hare   Farmers   Overgrown   Primrose   Fox   HedgeHunters   Insects



We're releasing a book! Expected Winter 2022. Register your interest by scanning the QR code



# SUSTAINABLE FOOTBALL

## ON THE HUNT FOR GREEN FOOTBALL TEAMS

**Oliver Parsons**

I am a huge fan of football and sustainability and so I decided to do some research and found out about a football club called Forest Green Rovers. Forest Green Rovers are the most eco-friendly football team in the world. They have solar panels on the roof of the stadium, encourage fans and players to go vegan by only providing vegan food and make their kits from recycled plastic and coffee to name a few of the amazing things they do.

With this knowledge I wanted to see what other teams were doing about climate change and so I wrote them all a letter.

I was sent responses by all the great clubs like Manchester United, Tottenham, Watford, Southampton, Derby County and Liverpool. But my favourite and most detailed response came from Stoke City FC.

Some of the quotes from the letter are below:

***"We believe that it's a priority to educate people on the need to be eco-friendly"***

***"On match days we focus on educating our supporters and have vegan options and sell bottled water in cardboard containers"***



***"Any waste that we produce is taken care of by a massive commitment to recycling... 'zero landfill'"***

***"However, the main example is the efforts in maintaining our actual pitch... one of the secrets behind it looking like a bowling green is seaweed and organic sugar. We don't apply pesticides or chemicals to our pitches. And we have just purchased our first electric mower!"***

I thought that these responses were really cool and to hear how they are moving towards a more sustainable future made my day. Thank you to all of the teams that responded but especially a big thank you to Forest Green Rovers and Stoke City FC in leading the way.

My future hopes are to influence more football teams into making the footballing world greener.

