

Autumn Juveniles

High mating season is usually in May and June with hoglets appearing around 4 weeks after nesting. Mating will involve a lot of huffing so don't be alarmed at hearing this! A female may have 4 to 5 hoglets. Sometimes a second litter is born late in the autumn and these hoglets can struggle to put on sufficient weight before winter hibernation.



Hedgehogs don't have hibernation calendars!

Right now we are in early Autumn. Lots of hedgehog youngsters are around and they have plenty of time to get up to a decent weight for hibernation.

Unless there is a very good reason to take them in - out during the day, illness, injury, or an abandoned nest with hoglets, right now the best thing to do is to leave them as nature intended. They do NOT need to be brought in to be 'overwintered' just yet.

Leave food and water out where you can to help them along the way.

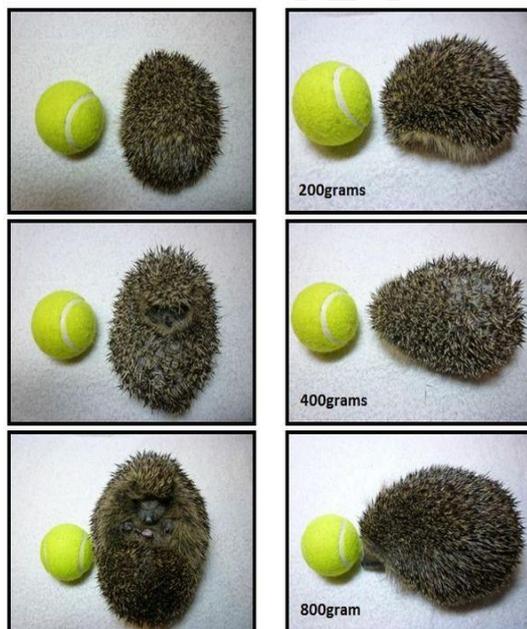
With thanks to Blyth Wildlife for creation of this poster on behalf of a consortium of rescues

There is no guaranteed date that hedgehogs will hibernate, it varies year on year depending on weather conditions and temperature. Usually this is late November/early December but this isn't an exact science!

A hedgehog under 450g will most likely not have the energy reserves to survive hibernation.

BE ALERT: When overnight temperatures are forecast to be below 5°C for at least a week ahead, there is frost & the ground is hard. At this point we would be concerned to find any hedgehogs under 600g, and bring them into the rescue for support and assessment

A hedgehog can lose 30-35% body weight during the hibernation period.



A tennis ball is a very useful point of reference for determining size without needing to pick them up and weigh them. This intervention when not necessary will cause the hedgehog stress and in turn will likely disrupt the balance of internal parasites and may contribute to it becoming ill.

If a small hedgehog (less than the 400g size) is seen in late autumn, then contact your local rescue for their advice before picking up and weighing.

Hibernation

During the winter months, hedgehogs are understood to go into deep sleep called hibernation.

However, they don't sleep the entire time, often waking to move nests which can consume a huge amount of energy. Not all hedgehogs hibernate either.

Nests and Hoglets

If you accidentally disturb a nest, **cover it back up immediately**. Do not take photos or touch any hoglets as the mum may abandon or kill the young.

Place some food and water nearby so the mum doesn't need to go far for this. If 'peeping' is heard and no evidence of mum returning is noted, call a rescue. If hoglets are around without a mum, again – call a rescue for advice.

Call your local rescue for advice - [Helpwildlife.co.uk/map](https://www.helpwildlife.co.uk/map)

Or call the British Hedgehog Preservation Society on 01584 890 801
info@britishhedgehogs.org.uk

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