

Survey of Wroughton Hedgehogs



Wroughton is one of five areas in Wiltshire which is piloting a National Hedgehog Monitoring Programme. The monitoring will be carried out in 30 locations in the village using cameras that will be put in place by volunteers. The cameras will be set up at the end of September for 30 days and then removed in October. The intention is to repeat the monitoring for a further 2 years to see if there are any trends in the populations.

Hedgehogs are the nation's favourite mammal, and our gardens are increasingly a stronghold for them as many areas of the countryside become unsuitable. Worryingly, they have declined so much that they're now classed as vulnerable to extinction. However, the true scale of loss in specific areas is unknown.

To address this vital gap in our knowledge, a partnership of experts from wildlife charities and universities are piloting a National Hedgehog Monitoring Programme (NHMP). In Wiltshire the programme is being co-ordinated by The Wiltshire & Swindon Biological Records Centre and the co-ordinator for the Wroughton Survey is Chris Cossey, a volunteer with the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust. The other areas taking part in Wiltshire are Knowle Farm, Bowerchalke, Great Somerford, Malmesbury and Barford St Martin.

Can you help?

By Installing Cameras.

We need some more volunteers to help install the cameras and then remove them. If you are interested in helping and available in the last week of September and again in October, please contact Chris Cossey to find out more.

Allowing Access if Approached

The locations in Wroughton where the cameras will be sited have been randomly picked over an area of about one square kilometre. We will be writing and then visiting householders and landowners that have been selected, to obtain permission to site a camera on their property. We hope that if you are approached you will be willing to take part.

Being a Spotter and Reviewing Images

Finally, anyone else who is interested can help by being a spotter. Volunteers are needed to make the project a success and you can take part from the comfort of your own home. Last year trail cameras were placed at 13 different sites across the country, from Dorset to Glasgow. 30 trail cameras were placed at each site and were left in situ for a month, generating thousands of images. The species in these images need to be identified. The process is straight-forward: simply look through a sequence of images, tag which species you see, and continue! Free training and ID guides are available online. To find out more and to sign up, visit www.nhmp.co.uk

This programme led by wildlife charities The British Hedgehog Preservation Society (BHPS) and People's Trust for Endangered Species (PTES), in partnership with Nottingham Trent University, ZSL's London HogWatch, Durham University and MammalWeb. Largely funded by Natural England, this unique combination of AI, trail cameras and home-based volunteers will produce crucial insights into the factors causing hedgehog populations to plummet. It will enable conservationists to implement practical conservation measures to try to reverse the decline.

If you have any questions about the survey please contact the NHMP coordinator on the email address or phone number below.

Local Co-ordinator for Wroughton Chris Cossey

Wiltshire Regional Organiser: Jon Isherwood
WSBRC Manager
Tel. 01380 736072 x253
Email: Joni@wsbrc.org

NHMP coordinator: Henrietta Pringle (PTES/BHPS)
Email: NHMP@ptes.org Tel: 020 7498 4533

