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Bournemouth Naturally

The Bournemouth Naturally project aims to build up a picture of biodiversity in Bournemouth through creation of a database of your wildlife sightings. Each month will feature a species, if you have seen it in your garden or local greenspace then please let us know.

Species of the Month: **September 2012**

Hedgehog

Erinaceus europaeus



Photo: Sophie Court

Hedgehog Conservation

Hedgehogs are found throughout the UK. Recent surveys suggest that there has been a steady decline in the numbers of rural and urban hedgehogs which could be as much as a 25% drop in 10 years. Hedgehogs are now a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority species. The reason for such a dramatic decline in population is unclear but is likely to be due to several contributing factors such as more intensive agriculture, increased use of pesticides, smaller tidier gardens, lack of connectivity between gardens, collisions with traffic and climatic changes.

Hedgehog Ecology

Hedgehogs are opportunistic feeders that have a varied diet depending on what is seasonally abundant; this includes insects, slugs, snails, and worms even small amphibians and bird eggs.

They visit several gardens a night in order to find enough food so connectivity between gardens is vital.

Hedgehogs at this time of year are building up fat reserves for winter hibernation (typically October till April).

Hedgehog Records

If you have seen a hedgehog in your garden or local greenspace in Bournemouth please let us know. The records are important for monitoring the status of hedgehog populations. Please contact Heather Dixon:

heatherdixon@bnss.org.uk or fill in the recording form on the email attachment (also downloadable from the website) www.bnss.org.uk/bournemouth-naturally.html