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Further Information

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Derbyshire

Wildlife Trust



Hedgerows are an important wildlife habitat in both rural and urban areas. Over 600 plant species, 1500 insects, 65 birds and 20 mammals have been recorded living or feeding in British hedgerows.

The wildlife value of hedgerows increases with their size and complexity. A larger hedgerow has more space available for species to inhabit or use, whilst the greater the variety of trees, shrubs and other plants found in a hedgerow, the more species will be able to make use of its resources.

Associated hedgerow features such as hedge banks, ditches, margins and hedgerow trees also increase the wildlife value of the hedgerow.

hedgerow wildlife



hedgerow wildlife

Plants

Over 600 different plant species have been recorded in Britain's hedgerows, including trees, shrubs, flowers and grasses. These not only add to the wildlife value of a hedgerow in themselves but they also provide food and shelter for a wide range of other animal species.



In Derbyshire, typical hedgerow shrubs and trees include hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel, field maple, dog rose, oak and ash. These support many more species than non-native plants and therefore make

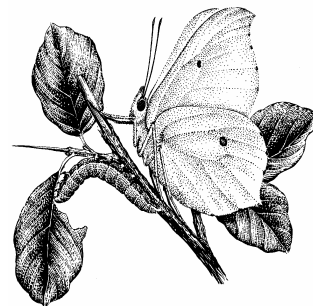
better wildlife hedgerows. For example, a hawthorn may house and feed over 200 species.



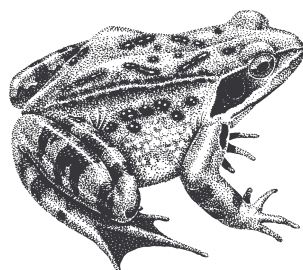
Some plants found in hedge bottoms, such as bluebell, dogs mercury and yellow archangel indicate that the hedgerow may once have been part of a woodland. Other common species include cow parsley, nettle, creeping thistle and cocksfoot.

Insects and Amphibians

Over 1500 different species of insect can be found in hedgerows. These include lacewings, ladybirds, moths, snails, slugs and spiders.



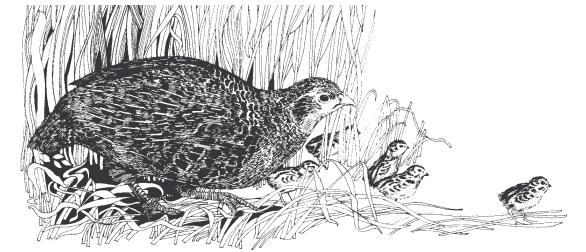
Butterflies also use hedgerows throughout the seasons, as a source of food for caterpillars, for basking in the sun and for sheltering from the cold.



Although it may seem unlikely at first, amphibians such as frogs, newts and toads can also be found in hedgerows. They prefer to use hedgerows which have associated ditches and dense ground cover.

Birds

Over 60 different species of bird use hedgerows for feeding, roosting or nesting.



These include common birds such as dunnocks, blue tits, wrens, blackbirds, robins and chaffinches as well as rarer species such as yellowhammers and bullfinches and seasonal visitors such as whitethroats and willow warblers. Ground nesting birds such as grey partridges also make use of hedgerow verges.



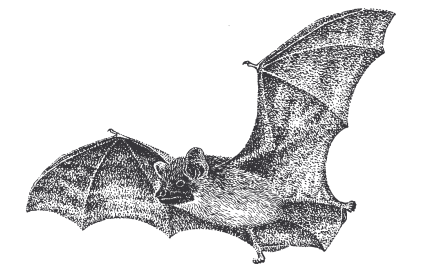
Hedgerow trees and uncut hedge tops are also important for birds as they provide song posts, allowing birds such as song thrushes to establish territories in the breeding season.

Owls, kestrels and sparrowhawks will hunt for smaller birds, mammals and insects around hedgerows.

Mammals

Over 20 species of mammal use hedgerows.

In Derbyshire these include rarer mammals such as brown hares, which use hedgerows for shelter and to provide cover for their young.



Other common mammals, such as hedgehogs, shrews, bank voles, wood mice, stoats and weasels will all use hedgerows to feed, nest or hibernate.



Rabbit burrows, fox earths and badger setts can sometimes be seen in older hedgerows as well.

Bats use hedgerows as flight paths and for feeding along. They also use old hedgerow trees for roosting.