



SCIENCE AND
CONSERVATION EVENTS

UK hedgehog conservation: connecting wildlife and people through a flagship species



AGENDA

Grace Johnson

Hedgehog Officer, Hedgehog Street

“Hedgehog Street: Twelve years of hedgehog conservation in Britain”

Dr Nigel Reeve

**British Hedgehog Preservation
Society Trustee**

“The British Hedgehog Preservation Society: What do we do?”

**Dr Chris Carbone¹ & Kate
Scott-Gatty²**

**¹Senior Research Fellow, Institute of
Zoology, ZSL; ²Project Manager,
London HogWatch**

“Shot in the dark: the use of camera traps to understand London’s elusive hedgehogs”

**Chaired by Dr Richard Yarnell
University of Nottingham**

DATE

Tuesday 9 May 2023

TIME

6pm – 7:30pm

LOCATION

Huxley Lecture Theatre,
Zoological Society of London,
Outer Circle, Regent’s Park,
London, NW1 4RY

FREE

ABSTRACTS

Hedgehog Street: Twelve years of hedgehog conservation in Britain

Grace Johnson, Hedgehog Officer, Hedgehog Street

Hedgehogs are an unwaveringly popular species, frequently topping polls of our favourite British wildlife species. But sadly they have struggled in recent decades as a result of human activity; habitat loss and fragmentation are just two of the many threats hedgehogs face. The State of Britain's Hedgehogs report, published every three to four years, has revealed insights into urban and rural habitat, with a more positive picture emerging in our urban and suburban landscape. As our gardens and greenspaces become an increasingly important stronghold for hedgehogs, engaging communities in hedgehog conservation is key to reversing declines and securing a sustainable future for the species. Hedgehog Street is a conservation campaign by wildlife charities by People's Trust for Endangered Species and The British Hedgehog Preservation Society. The campaign works with individual 'Hedgehog Champions' as well as volunteer groups, land managers, farmers, ecologists and developers all over Britain to raise awareness of the different ways in which people can help. Hedgehog Street also organises public campaigns to bring about meaningful change, whether by improving our knowledge of hedgehogs and their ecology, or by directly improving habitat. Key messaging around small, simple garden modifications to help hedgehogs form a key part of the Hedgehog Street campaign. Garden additions including wildlife-friendly compost heaps and log piles as well as 'hedgehog highway' access gaps in fences, can also benefit species such as amphibians and pollinators. In the 12 years since its launch,

Hedgehog Street's key achievements include coverage in national media, supporting vital research, launching a land management course to improve habitat and recruiting over 120,000 volunteer Hedgehog Champions.

Grace is the Hedgehog Officer for Hedgehog Street, a joint conservation campaign by People's Trust for Endangered Species and The British Hedgehog Preservation Society. Grace studied Zoology at the University of Leeds before undertaking volunteering roles in Britain as well as throughout south east Asia and Australia. She started her career working at the Bat Conservation Trust and remains involved in bat work in a voluntary capacity as a trustee of London Bat Group. Grace is passionate about British nature with a particular interest in urban conservation and human attitudes to wildlife. She has been working on the Hedgehog Street campaign for almost four years.

The British Hedgehog Preservation Society: What do we do?

Dr Nigel Reeve, British Hedgehog Preservation Society Trustee

The BHPS is a UK registered charity with a mission to protect the future and welfare of native British hedgehogs (*Erinaceus europaeus*). Based in Shropshire, the society was founded in 1982 by Major Adrian Coles who campaigned for hedgehog escape ramps to be fitted in cattle grids. Now, with over 11,500 supporters, through our campaigns, advocacy, educational projects and partnerships, we raise awareness of what can be done to help reverse the decline of hedgehogs in the wild, improve their welfare and safeguard the future of this much-loved animal. Leaflets and other information can be downloaded from our website www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk and we provide free information packs to schools and project packs for Scouts and Guides. We offer advice to enquirers with sick, injured or orphaned hedgehogs and we maintain a list of about 590 independent rehabilitators in the UK so that we can hopefully find a local contact for them. We also produce advice and guidance for rehabilitators and veterinary practitioners.

Partnerships are important, and Hedgehog Street is one very successful public engagement project jointly delivered in partnership with the People's Trust for Endangered Species and involving over 121,000 hedgehog champions. The talk will give an over-view of our work with examples including some of the scientific research funded by the BHPS that provides important new insights into the conservation and welfare of hedgehogs.

Nigel studied hedgehog behaviour and ecology for his PhD at Royal Holloway College and has been involved with hedgehogs ever since; writing a book on hedgehogs in 1994. He lectured and researched at Roehampton University from 1982 to 2002. From 2002-2013, he was Head of Ecology for The Royal Parks in London. He is now retired but remains active in a 10 year study of hedgehogs in The Regent's Park (since 2014) and, from October 2019, as a trustee of the British Hedgehog Preservation Society.

Shot in the dark: the use of camera traps to understand London's elusive hedgehogs

Chris Carbone, Senior Research Fellow, ZSL & Kate Scott-Gatty, Project Manager, London HogWatch, ZSL

Historically, hedgehogs have been an integral element of both urban and rural biodiversity in the UK but have declined dramatically in recent years. Evidence suggests that this decline has been particularly severe in rural areas, highlighting the significance of urban hedgehog populations for conserving this species. Hedgehogs occur in several areas across Greater London but our current understanding of these remaining populations is poor. For us to take effective conservation measures a greater knowledge of their distribution and population sizes is required. Since 2016, London HogWatch has been using camera traps and citizen science data to understand hedgehog distribution and abundance and to inform conservation efforts. We have conducted over 100 surveys, 2800 camera placements, involving over 1100

volunteers across half of all London boroughs. Our extensive data sets have revealed habitat fragmentation and population isolation are a central threat to London's hedgehogs. As an iconic British mammal, hedgehogs represent an excellent flagship species to engage and connect people to nature. This is particularly important in urban environments as wildlife in these areas are often overlooked leading to a disconnect between people and nature. In ever-increasing human-dominated landscapes, conservation requires collaboration between many different groups and organisations. Here, connecting people is critical to connecting wildlife. The London HogWatch programme involves a diverse range of collaborators including residents, local environmental groups, local government, NGOs, schools and recently, industrial partners, such as, Network Rail. Our volunteers are critical to the project's success helping us put out cameras in parks and more recently in their gardens too. In future, we hope to develop stronger relationships with a diverse range of communities across greater London to promote the appreciation of urban wildlife.

Chris is a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Zoology, and a conservationist with expertise in predator-prey relationships and animal ecology. He established the London HogWatch project, a citizen science-based initiative aimed at understanding and preserving hedgehog populations across London and is dedicated to promoting conservation efforts and public involvement in science and engagement with local nature.

Kate is the project manager for the London HogWatch project having first joined ZSL in 2019 in the Living Planet Index team. She has a background in biodiversity monitoring and conservation. She is also passionate about public engagement, having previously worked in behaviour change and business engagement in sustainable transport.

EVENT DETAILS

- This in-person Science and Conservation Event is free to attend but registration is required
- Register for your free ticket [here](#)
- The event will run from 6pm–7:30pm; doors will open at 5.30pm
- Seats are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Venue: Huxley Lecture Theatre, Zoological Society of London, Outer Circle, Regent's Park, London, NW1 4RY
- Travel: Nearest underground: Camden Town Station; Nearest bus: no. 274.
- Tickets: Please bring your ticket (or confirmation email) to show on arrival, in either digital or print form.
- Recording disclaimer: The presentations and Q&A session will be filmed during this event, and the recording published on our Science and Conservation YouTube channel. Please be aware that by attending this event you consent to be filmed or your voice to be recorded during the Q&A session, which will be included in the published video.



COMING UP

Lynx recovery in Europe: lessons for the UK?

6 June 2023, 6pm – 7:30pm

In-person; Huxley Lecture Theatre, ZSL

Once widespread across Europe, by the middle of the last century Eurasian lynx were on the brink of extinction. This collapse in population was driven by persecution, deforestation, loss of wild prey and, in some cases, government-led eradication. However, the species managed to cling on in four small isolated populations towards the northern and eastern edges of Europe. The survival and resurgence of Eurasian lynx, to a current population of approximately 8,000 individuals across 25 countries in continental Europe, is one of conservation's success stories. But this recovery did not happen accidentally – it came as a result of dramatic changes in wildlife policy and public attitudes that led to natural expansions in the lynx range, and the implementation of ambitious reintroduction programmes that have restored lynx to previously inhabited areas. This event provides an opportunity to hear from experts and practitioners about Eurasian lynx recovery programmes in Europe and to learn about opportunities for, and barriers against, the reintroduction of lynx in Britain, more than 500 years after the species went extinct.

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