

NEWS

Book discount for readers

ONE of Britain's biggest secondhand book businesses which used to be based in Totterdown is making a special offer to Voice readers.

Bookbarn International, which for several years was based at Paintworks on Bath Road, is offering a 10 per cent discount to readers who visit its vast book store, housed just off the A37, with the advert below.

Co-owner William Pryor said: "Our business is mostly online but our warehouse in Hallatrow near Bristol is attracting an increasing number of visitors.

"They can buy books in our vast secondhand book store, browse antiquarian and rare items in our Darwin Rare Book Room or relax in our Full Stop Café."

The Bookbarn is located 30 minutes south of Bristol where the A39 meets the A37, at Hallatrow.

• bookbarninternational.com

FEATURES

How to help wildlife make it

There's plenty we can do to protect our non-human neighbours, writes Alex Morss

WITH its cloak of warm colours inflamed in ethereal sunlight, the whiff of bonfires and gardens bountiful with exciting harvests, autumn is my favourite time. It can also be a time of plenty for much of our city wildlife, especially if we have been half-decent nature guardians. So how welcome are our wild neighbours this season, in our little green spaces?

Right now there is a lot you can do to ensure they get the best chance to thrive as harder months approach. Wild creatures need to be well nourished and in

WINTER WILDLIFE SPECIAL



Beware of hedgehogs curling up wherever they feel cosy, like in a sack

good health to help them survive whatever winter will throw at them, so think: food, water, shelter, and safety.

BONFIRES

November 5 is the next big challenge, not just for pets but also for those poor hedgehogs who thought they'd found the perfect pyre of wood to snuggle up in and maybe start to hibernate. Our funky frogs, toads, newts and slow-worms are also vulnerable to the bonfire stack. All these species are thankfully still common in our city gardens, allotments and some parks in south Bristol. Even if they escape the fire, the noise and smells will traumatise them and may prevent them foraging for food.

Please spare them a thought – don't burn everything, leave a refuge area of deep leaves, lawn cuttings, wood or logs in your garden so you don't make them homeless in your quest to build the biggest inferno. Avoid building it until the day of lighting, so nothing has time to sneak in.

HEDGEHOGS

What do you do if you find a hedgehog in distress around bonfire night? Kay Bullen, a trustee of the British Hedgehog Preservation Society, advises: "Any rescued hedgehogs can be put into a high-sided box or pet carrier with some towelling that they can snuggle into. Make sure they cannot get out of the box.

Some hedgehog food or meat-based cat or dog food can be left in the box, and a dish of water. This can all be put into, perhaps, a greenhouse, shed, downstairs toilet or similar until the noise and heat from the fire has died down. Once calm is restored, they can be released with some more food and water."

There is still a little time before hog hibernation starts to take part in our Hedgehog Highway Appeal with Avon Wildlife Trust, and make an access into your garden for hedgehogs. This will help our prickly friends find a choice of safe places to hibernate over winter. You may find they sneak into your shed or a gap under it and carry off your piles of leaf litter to build a hibernation nest. By opening up your garden, you give them an increased range of places to shelter plus lots of extra habitat in which to find food. This enables them to build up those vital fat reserves without wasting energy on big foraging trips.

As the temperature drops, their metabolism will slow down. Their heart rate will crash down from 190 beats per minute to a faint 20, their temperature will fall from 35 Celsius to 10, and they will barely breathe. Once this process kicks in, they will have a better chance of surviving hibernation if they start off at a good weight.

You can leave out meat-based cat food (never fish, milk or bread) or buy proper hedgehog food online to help fatten them

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