



AWSLG AUGUST 2026

Welcome to your plot

August is a month of two halves. The first half is still high summer — tomatoes ripening, squash swelling, beans in full production, and the plot as generous as it has been all year. The second half begins to feel different: mornings have a hint of chill, the light changes, and the plot starts to signal that the season is turning. This is the time to harvest with purpose, store carefully, and sow the crops that will carry your table into winter. It is also the month when the Annual Show becomes real.



COMMITTEE CORNER

▲ THE ANNUAL SHOW

— ANNUAL SHOW SUNDAY 6TH SEPTEMBER

The Annual Show is approaching – a chance to get together and celebrate the produce of the season. Although there is a friendly competitive element to it, the main focus is to get together and have fun.

It has been a challenging year but there are still examples of excellent crops around the site from potatoes to tomatoes to tree fruit. So, nurture your exhibits for a few more weeks. Or preserve your produce to enter in the Domestic categories. There is also a chance to display your flowers.

Part of the Show is a Photography Competition. Whether it is pictures of Wildlife, Flowers, Vegetables or Life on the Allotment, print your photos and submit them. There are also categories for our younger members – creating a Vegetable Animal or mini garden, a Flowerpot or getting creative in the kitchen



🕒 A FRIENDLY REMINDER — YOUR COMMUNITY SUPPORT HOURS

Just a gentle nudge: our regulations ask every plot holder to give at least **four hours a year** to the Society, and time is starting to run short if you haven't yet put yours in. It really does make a difference — every hour donated helps us keep the site looking its best and helps keep everyone's plot rent down, so it's very much a case of everyone doing their bit. The next clean-up morning is **Saturday 12th September**, the week after the Show, and it's a lovely, easy way to tick off your hours — even an hour or two helps enormously, many hands make light work! We'd also love your support on the day of the Show itself, whether that's helping set up, welcoming visitors, or just being on hand — please do let us know if you can lend a hand.

⚠️ IMPORTANT NOTICE — THAMES WATER HOSEPIPE BAN NOW IN FORCE

PROHIBITED



Thames Water has imposed a Temporary Use Ban (hosepipe ban) across the entire Thames Water supply area, which includes Croydon. The ban came into effect on Thursday 23rd July 2026 and remains in place until further notice.

This means that using a hosepipe connected to the mains water supply on your plot is now illegal. Sprinklers and pressure washers are also prohibited. Failure to comply carries a fine of up to £1,000.

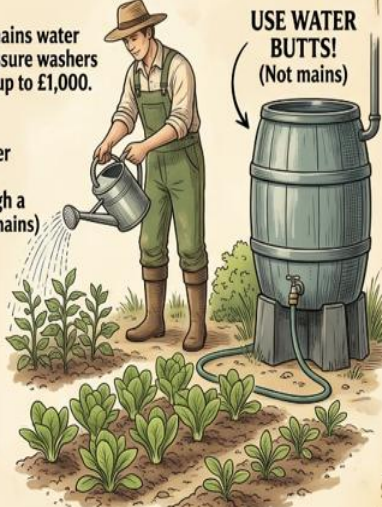
What you can still do:

- Fill a watering can or bucket from the tap and water your plot as normal
- Use water from your water butt — including through a hosepipe if it runs directly from the butt (not the mains)
- Use grey water from your sink or bath through a hosepipe

The ban does not affect your ability to water your crops — it simply means the watering can is now not just the considerate choice, it is the only legal one. This is also a reminder of how valuable water butts are on every plot.

AWSLG will comply fully with Thames Water's requirements. Please do your part. For full details of the ban and any exemptions, visit: thameswater.co.uk/help/temporary-hosepipe-ban

PERMITTED



USE WATER BUTTS! (Not mains)

The Only Legal Choice

AWSLG ADHERES TO ALL BAN REQUIREMENTS

TOGETHER WE KEEP OUR ALLOTMENTS THRIVING!

QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?

Contact the Secretary or any Committee member **Email:** awslg.ltd@gmail.com

Members & Community News

WHAT A COMMUNITY DAY! SALSA ON THE GREEN AND THE GREAT TREASURE HUNT

What a fantastic afternoon we had! Everyone who joined us for the community gathering had a brilliant time — the salsa dancing on the green had people of all ages up on their feet, and the children's treasure hunt kept the little ones (and quite a few grown-ups) busy hunting across the canteen green. Add in the barbecue, the music, and seeing so many familiar faces together in one place, and it made for a truly special day. Thank you to everyone who came along and made it such fun — we're already looking forward to the next one!

WHY DO WE HAVE ALLOTMENTS?

A bit of History for young growers:- Have you ever wondered why AWSLG exists, or why there are allotments all over Britain? It is a brilliant story that goes back hundreds of years, and it explains why growing your own food has always mattered so much to people in this country.

Long, Long Ago: Sharing the Land

Over a thousand years ago, back in Saxon times, villagers cleared patches of woodland and grew food on them together. Nobody owned this shared land. Everybody in the village could use it to grow crops or graze animals. This shared land was called 'the commons'.

The Enclosures: Losing the Shared Land

From the late 1500s onwards, things began to change. Landowners started building hedges and fences around the common land, dividing it up so that only they could use it. This was called 'the enclosures', and it happened gradually over hundreds of years.

This left many ordinary families with nowhere to grow their own food. To help a little, small strips of land, called 'allotments', were sometimes given alongside workers' cottages. This is thought to be the very first time the word 'allotment' was used in Britain

1845: A Law to Help the Poor

As more and more people moved to crowded towns and cities during the Industrial Revolution, life became very hard for poor families. In 1845, a law called the General Enclosure Act said that some land had to be set aside as 'field gardens' for people who had no land of their own. Later, in 1908, another law made local councils responsible for providing allotments if enough people in the area asked for one. That law still matters today; it is why councils across Britain provide allotment sites

Dig for Victory!

The most famous chapter in allotment history came during the Second World War, from 1939 to 1945. Food had to travel to Britain by ship, and many ships were being attacked, so there was not enough food to go round. The government asked ordinary people to grow their own fruit and vegetables at home, on every spare bit of land they could find. This became known as the 'Dig for Victory' campaign.

It worked brilliantly. By 1943, at the height of the campaign, there were around 1.5 million allotment plots across Britain, all helping to feed the nation. That is why allotments still remind people of that clever, determined, make-do-and-mend spirit from the 1940s.



Allotments Today

After the war, allotments became less popular for a while, as supermarkets made food easy to buy. But in more recent years, allotments have made a wonderful comeback, as people want to grow their own healthy food and be part of a friendly community, just like families did generations ago.



CHILDREN ENTERING THE SHOW — GET INVOLVED THIS SEPTEMBER!

The AWSLG Annual Show is just around the corner, and it's the perfect chance for our young growers to show off what they've been up to all summer. Whether it's a wonky-but-wonderful vegetable animal, a tiny miniature garden in a tray, homemade flapjacks, or a photo taken proudly on the plot, there's a class for every child — split by age group (0–5 and 6–10), so everyone has a real chance of taking home a rosette. It's not about being perfect; it's about having a go, being proud of what they've grown, and getting that first taste of the joy of entering a show. We can't wait to see what they bring along!

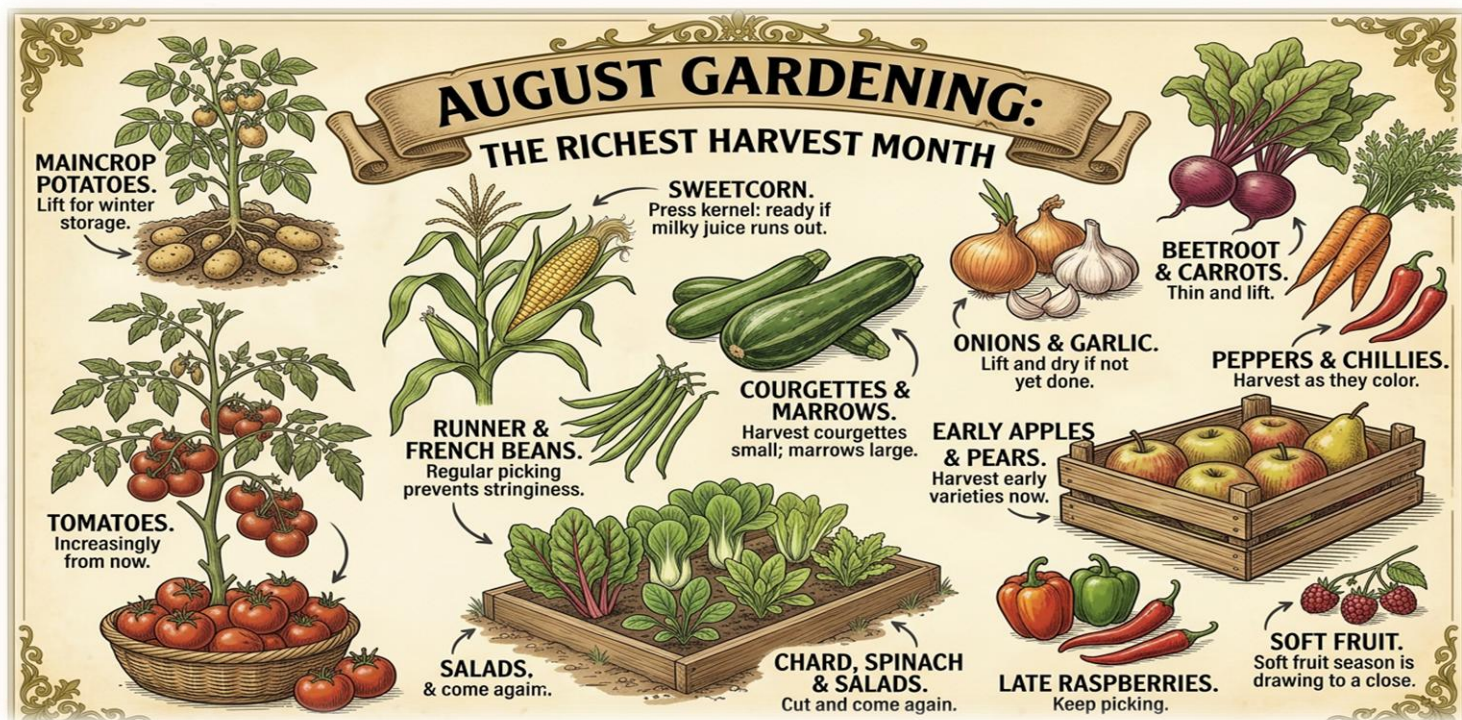


★ THE GOLDEN RULE FOR AUGUST:

What you do in August, you eat in December. Lift, cure, and store with care; sow the winter crops while the soil is still warm. The season turns quietly — stay ahead of it.

This Month's Growing Guide

August asks you to do two things at once: harvest the abundance of summer while preparing for the season that follows. Neither can be neglected. The crops you lift and store correctly now will feed you through the winter. The beds you prepare and sow now will supply you from October onwards. It is a satisfying double act — the plot giving with one hand while you invest in the future with the other.



WHAT TO HARVEST NOW

August is the richest harvest month of the year: maincrop potatoes, tomatoes (increasingly from now), runner beans and French beans, courgettes and marrows, sweetcorn (test by pressing a kernel — if milky juice runs out, it is ready), cucumbers, beetroot, carrots, onions and garlic (if not yet lifted), peppers, chillies, chard, perpetual spinach, salad leaves, late raspberries, and the first early apples and pears. Soft fruit harvesting is drawing to a close.

PRIORITY JOBS THIS MONTH

Listed in order of importance — focus on the top jobs first.

Lift and store maincrop potatoes. Maincrop varieties planted in April are ready now. Wait for a dry spell, then fork them up carefully from well outside the plant to avoid spearing tubers. Lay them out to dry for a few hours in the sun, then brush off loose soil and inspect each tuber. Any with blight damage, cuts, or soft spots should be eaten immediately rather than stored. Sound, undamaged potatoes store well in paper sacks (not plastic, which traps moisture) in a cool, dark, frost-free place. The RHS advises keeping stored potatoes below 10°C but above freezing, and checking them regularly through winter.

Save seeds from your best plants. August is seed-saving time.

Allow a few pods or fruits on your best-performing plants to ripen fully and dry on the plant. Collect them on a dry day. Spread seeds on paper to dry fully for two to three weeks — any remaining moisture will cause them to rot in storage. Store in labelled paper envelopes in a cool, dry, dark place. Runner beans, French beans, peas, tomatoes, courgettes, and squash all save well. See the Grower's Tips section for specific guidance on each crop.



Sow green manures on cleared beds. As you lift potatoes, pull spent bean plants, and clear finished crops, do not leave bare soil to compact and lose nutrients over winter. Sow a green manure immediately. For August, the RHS recommends phacelia (fast-growing, excellent for pollinators, digs in easily), mustard (fast, suppresses weeds, kills some soil pests), and winter tares (fixes nitrogen, overwinters well). Sow thinly, rake in, and water. These will cover the soil through autumn and can be dug in before spring sowing.

This Month's Growing Guide Continued

PRIORITY JOBS THIS MONTH CONTINUED

4: Help tomatoes ripen. August is critical for ripening outdoor tomatoes before the season ends. Remove all leaves below the lowest ripening truss — this improves air circulation (reducing blight risk) and directs the plant's energy into fruit. If you have not yet stopped your plants, do so now: remove the growing tip two leaves above the highest truss. Lay down a mulch of straw under plants to reflect warmth upwards and keep soil moisture even.

5: Check apples and pears for ripeness. Early apple varieties are ready in August. Test by cupping a fruit in your hand and lifting it gently with a slight twist — if it comes away cleanly, it is ready. If it resists, wait a few more days. Dessert apples are best eaten straight from the tree; cooking apples and late varieties can be stored in a cool, dark place, laid in a single layer, not touching. Pears must be picked before fully ripe and ripened indoors.

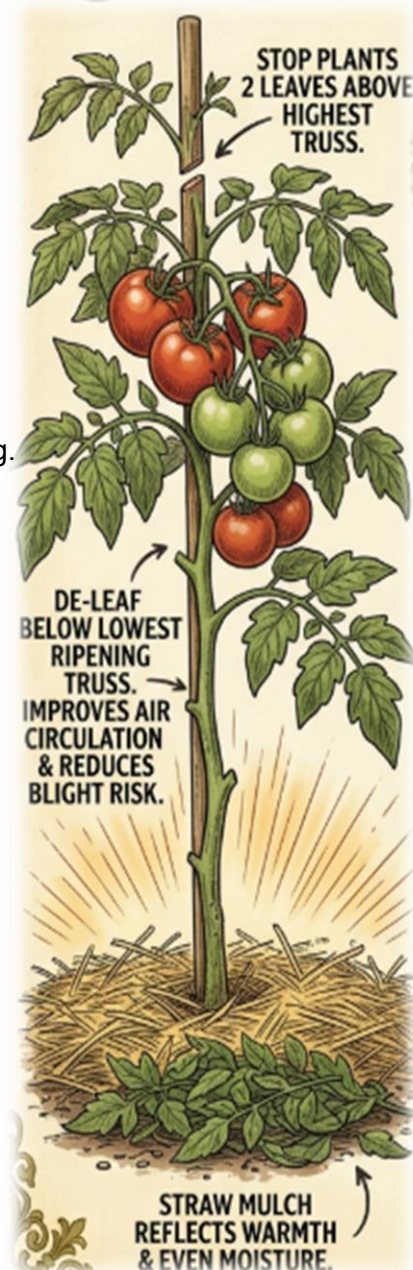
6: Sow autumn and winter salads. This is your last reliable opportunity for winter salad sowing. Sow under cover or in a sheltered spot: lamb's lettuce (corn salad), winter purslane, land cress, mizuna, mustard greens, and endive. These will produce harvests from October through the winter hungry gap — one of the most valuable sowings of the whole year..



WHAT TO SOW & PLANT NOW

Sow now for autumn and winter:

- Autumn/winter salad leaves: lamb's lettuce, land cress, winter purslane, endive, mizuna
- Spinach — last sowing for autumn picking
- Spring cabbage — last call if not already sown
- Green manures on cleared beds: phacelia, mustard, winter tares
- Overwintering onion sets — available late September; prepare the bed now

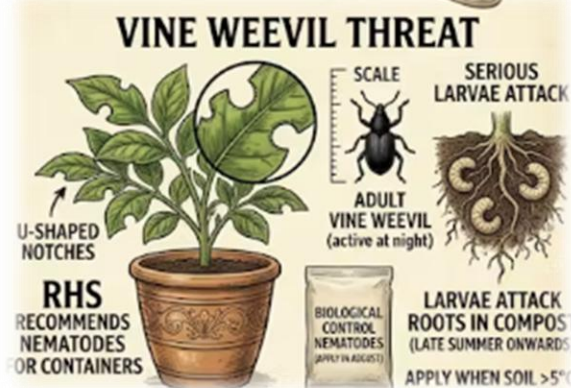


PEST & DISEASE WATCH

Blight remains the final season threat to potatoes and tomatoes. Any plants showing symptoms now should have affected material removed and binned immediately. Maincrop potatoes can be cut down to the ground if blight arrives — the tubers below continue to develop for two to three weeks, allowing a still-useful harvest.

Vine weevil is a late-summer threat to plants in containers. If you find U-shaped notches cut into the edges of leaves, adult vine weevils are active at night. More seriously, the larvae attack roots in compost from late summer onwards. A biological control nematode applied in August when soil temperatures are above 5°C (they will be) is effective, and the RHS recommends this approach for container-grown plants.

Pigeons and parakeets are increasingly active as summer crops begin to wind down and they seek new food sources. All brassica seedlings must remain netted.



New to Your Plot

Welcome to your first August! This is a transitional month that many newer plot holders find slightly confusing. Is summer over? Not quite. Is autumn here? Almost. The answer is that both are true at once, and your job is to keep harvesting vigorously while starting to think ahead. Here is what matters most.

★ THE GOLDEN RULE FOR AUGUST:

Harvest everything that is ready right now, every visit. But also sow something for winter on every visit. August is the month you do both at the same time.

YOUR AUGUST JOBS (IN ORDER)

1. **Keep harvesting regularly.** Runner beans, courgettes, and tomatoes still need checking every visit. Do not let the late season make you complacent — produce left on the plant in August goes to waste just as fast as in July.
2. **Enter the Annual Show!** Even in your first or second year, there is a class for you. The new plot holders' class (Class 60: Trio of Vegetables for those who joined after August 2024) is specifically for newer members. The children's classes welcome everyone. Entry forms are at the Allotment Shop — deadline 31st August.
3. **Sow some winter salad.** Buy a packet of lamb's lettuce or winter purslane from the Allotment Shop. Sow thinly in a sheltered spot or under a cloche. This single act gives you fresh salad from October right through winter.
4. **Clear spent crops promptly.** Once a plant has stopped producing, remove it entirely. Spent bean plants, finished courgette plants, and bolted lettuce left on the plot harbour pests and disease over winter. Clear the bed, dig it over shallowly, and sow a green manure or prepare it for autumn planting.
5. **Visit the Allotment Shop.** Ask the team what green manure seeds are available for cleared beds, and whether autumn onion sets have arrived yet. These are August and September essentials.



AUGUST ALLOTMENT HIGHLIGHTS:

- HARVEST Maincrop Potatoes carefully
- INSPECT all tubers before storing
- SOW Green Manure on cleared beds
- PREPARE Annual Show Entries.



YOUR FIRST SUCCESS THIS MONTH

Lift your first maincrop potatoes. These are the big ones — the main harvest that was planted in April and has been quietly developing underground all summer. Fork up a plant, pull it out, and look at what is underneath. A well-grown maincrop plant can give you fifteen to twenty large potatoes. Brush off the soil and admire them. Store them correctly in a paper sack and you will be eating your own potatoes until Christmas. Few things feel quite as substantial.

DO NOT LEAVE BEDS BARE!
Sow Green Manure or Cover with Compost



WHAT NOT TO DO IN AUGUST

- Do not leave maincrop potatoes in the ground once their foliage has died back — the longer they sit, the greater the risk of slug damage and blight spread to tubers.
- Do not store any damaged, diseased, or cut potatoes — one bad tuber will infect those around it.
- Don't miss the email about the Annual Show
- Do not leave beds bare after clearing — sow a green manure or cover with compost.

Grower's Tips

SEED SAVING: A PRACTICAL GUIDE

Saving seed from your best plants is one of the most satisfying and cost-effective things a plot holder can do. It connects you to the history of growing — allotment growers have been saving and sharing seed for generations. The RHS recommends seed saving as an excellent way to preserve locally-adapted varieties. Here is how to do it successfully for the most common plot crops.

RUNNER & FRENCH BEANS



- LEAVE best pods to dry fully on plant (papery & brown).
- SHELL seeds and SPREAD on paper indoors (2-3 weeks).
- STORE in labeled paper envelope.

3-4 years

TOMATOES



CHOOSE fully ripe fruit. **SCOOP** out pulp & seeds into glass of water. **LEAVE** 2-3 days (viable seeds sink, mould forms). **RINSE** and **DRY** on a plate (1-2 weeks). **STORE** in paper envelope.

4-5 years

COURGETTES & SQUASH



- SCOOP, WASH, & DRY seeds on paper (2-3 weeks).
- STORE in paper envelope.

4-5 years

COURGETTES & SQUASH



ALLOW fruit to grow past eating stage.

- SCOOP, WASH, & DRY seeds on paper (2-3 weeks).
- STORE in paper envelope.

4-5 years

APPLE AND PEAR HARVESTING AND STORAGE

The RHS advises the twist test for apples: cup the fruit in your palm, lift and give a gentle twist. If the fruit parts cleanly from the spur, it is ready. Ripe dessert apples do not keep — eat them within a week of picking. Cooking apples and late varieties store well: wrap individually in newspaper and lay in a single layer in a cool, dark, well-ventilated place, not touching each other. Check monthly and remove any that are softening.

Pears must be picked firm and ripened indoors at room temperature for a few days. The RHS notes that pears ripen from the inside out — by the time they feel soft on the outside, the core may already be overripe. Taste-test a fruit every day or two from when you bring it in.



RHS APPLE TWIST TEST

Cup fruit, lift & gentle twist. If it parts cleanly, it is ready.

EAT DESSERT APPLES FRESH

eat within a week



STORE COOKING & LATE VARIETIES



STORAGE METHOD: SINGLE LAYER



Wrap in newspaper. Keep cool & dark.

PEARS RIPEN INSIDE-OUT

Taste-test daily. By the time they feel soft, the core may be overripe!



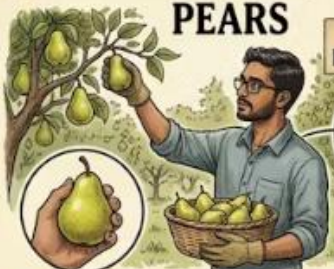
PEARS

PICKING FIRM PEARS

PICK WHEN FIRM

RIPEN INDOORS - ROOM TEMP

TASTE-TEST EVERY DAY



INSIDE-OUT RIPENING DANGER

OVERRIPE/BROWN CORE

SOFT OUTSIDE = OVERRIPE CORE



Roasted Tomato Soup

August is when tomatoes are at their most abundant and flavoursome. This soup uses a large quantity in one go — perfect for the glut — and freezes beautifully in portions. It is also the simplest thing in the world to make.

Ingredients:

- 1.5kg ripe tomatoes, halved; 1 whole bulb of garlic;
- 2 medium onions, halved; 4 tbsp good olive oil;
- 1 tsp sugar; few sprigs of fresh basil or thyme;
- 500ml stock; Salt and black pepper.

Method:

1. Preheat the oven in the 50°C, with the oven on. Scatter over the sugar and herbs, and season well.
2. Roast for 45 minutes. — The garlic should be completely soft, of to rip pieces.
3. Squeeze the garlic cloves from their skins. Add the tomatoes and onions and all the roasting juices.
4. Add the stock and blend and arrange the eggs to on, finish with. Reheat gently to serve, with bread.

To freeze: cool completely, pour into freezer containers in single-portion sizes, and freeze for up to three months. Reheat from frozen over a low heat, stirring occasionally.

Top tip: If your tomatoes are very sweet, a squeeze of lemon juice at the end balances the flavour perfectly. A swirl of cream or a spoonful of crème fraîche to serve is optional but very good.

NATURE & WILDLIFE GARDEN WATCH

SWIFTS - DEPARTING



After months of screaming, the sky falls quiet. They depart from mid-August onwards. Abrupt and sudden. Note the last date you see them.

AUGUST

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

MAKE A NOTE OF THE DATE YOU LAST SEE THEM

AUGUST 2026 **EUROPE** **AFRICA**

WILDLIFE TO WATCH FOR

LATE BUTTERFLIES & MOTHS



FEEDING UP ON NECTAR BEFORE AUTUMN

UK

Dusk: Silver Y moths, numerous in good years, migrate from southern Europe.

HEDGEHOGS PREPARING FOR HIBERNATION



BUILD FAT RESERVES FOR HIBERNATION

Approx 600g

FRESH WATER LEFT OUT AT NIGHT IS VITAL

CHECK COMPOST HEAPS & BONFIRE PILES

YOUNG BIRDS INDEPENDENT



LEARNING TO FIND FOOD

BEGINNING TO MOULT BREAST

SECOND BROOD NOW FLEDGED

WHAT YOU CAN DO THIS MONTH

- ☒ Avoid cutting hedges or disturbing rough areas until September at the earliest.
- ☒ Leave water dishes out overnight — nocturnal animals need water through dry August nights.
- ☐ Keep wildflower areas and rough grass corners undisturbed — essential for invertebrates.
- ☐ Take photographs of interesting wildlife and consider entering the Annual Show Photography Class P3.