

New Hedgerow Handbook To Boost Biodiversity

A new handbook that promotes greater conservation of hedgerows and the species that live within them in the UK has been published by Defra.
<http://www.defra.gov.uk/>

Hedgerows play a vital role in conserving biodiversity, and also make an important contribution to both farming and our traditional countryside landscape.

They support a variety of plants and animals, many of which have been identified as species of conservation concern.

Until recently little was known about their condition or number, making it difficult to make decisions about what needed to be done to conserve these 'green veins' for the future.

The second edition of the Hedgerow Handbook has been substantially updated and improved. It sets out a standard method of surveying hedgerows to ensure that their biodiversity value is correctly assessed. It is a valuable tool for local councils, surveyors and voluntary groups who help to deliver the UK Hedgerow Action Plans and associated Local Biodiversity Action Plans.

The handbook is designed to encourage increased assessment and recognition of the value of hedgerows to ensure they are preserved for future generations.

Barry Gardiner, Minister for Biodiversity, Landscape and Rural Affairs welcomed the hand-book: *"Hedgerows not only improve the richness of our landscapes, they also provide a habitat for a variety of species, many of which are deemed to be of conservation concern.*

"This handbook will help supply the knowledge that's needed, so we can take action to conserve important local hedgerows across the UK. Action like this is vital if we are to reach our target to halt the loss of biodiversity by 2010."

An electronic copy of the Handbook can be found at:
<http://www.defra.gov.uk/farm/environment/landscape/hedgerows.htm>

*Copies are also available free from the Natural England enquiry service:
enquires@naturalengland.org.uk / 0845 600 3078*