

HABITAT PILES FOR HEDGEHOGS, AMPHIBIANS, REPTILES, INVERTEBRATES AND OTHER DECAYING ORGANISMS

AIM

To create a habitat pile at least 1 metre in diameter and 50 cms high, above ground level, which will suit a range of animals including hibernating amphibians, reptiles and hedgehogs, and also create habitat for invertebrates and food for species which feed on them.

SITING

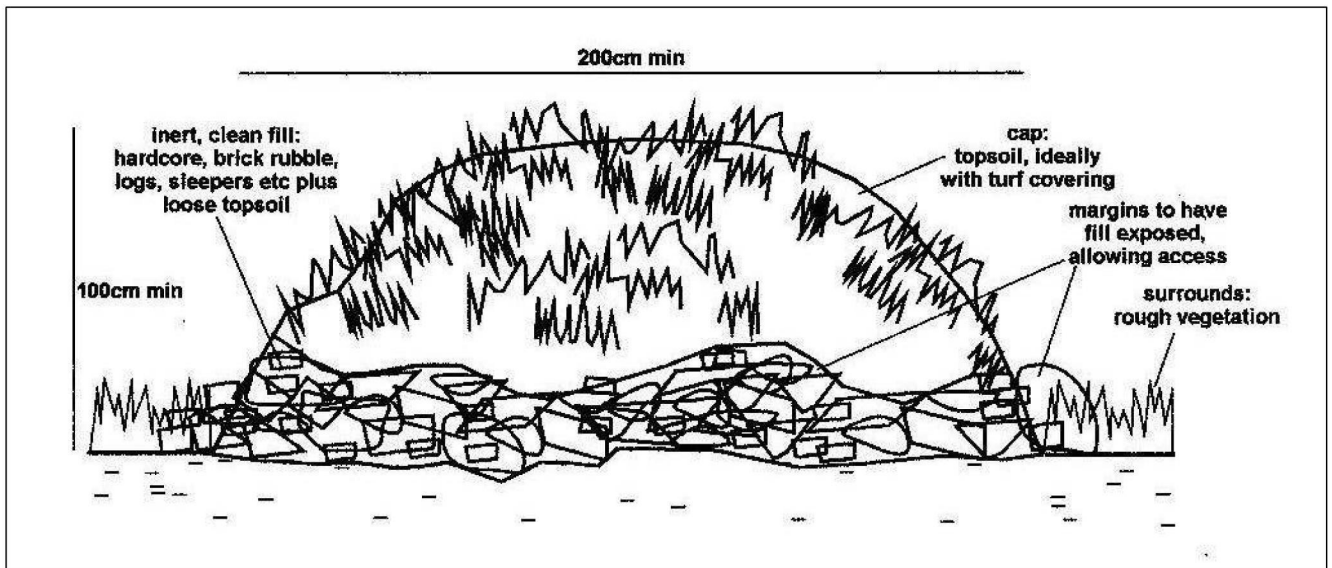
To be sited in the shade, close to other habitat (areas of bramble or scrub, hedge, pond), where it can be left undisturbed, surrounded by a margin of unmanaged grass.

MATERIALS

Inert, clean fill: hardcore, brick, rubble, small logs and large logs up to 20 cms diameter, etc, plus loose topsoil.

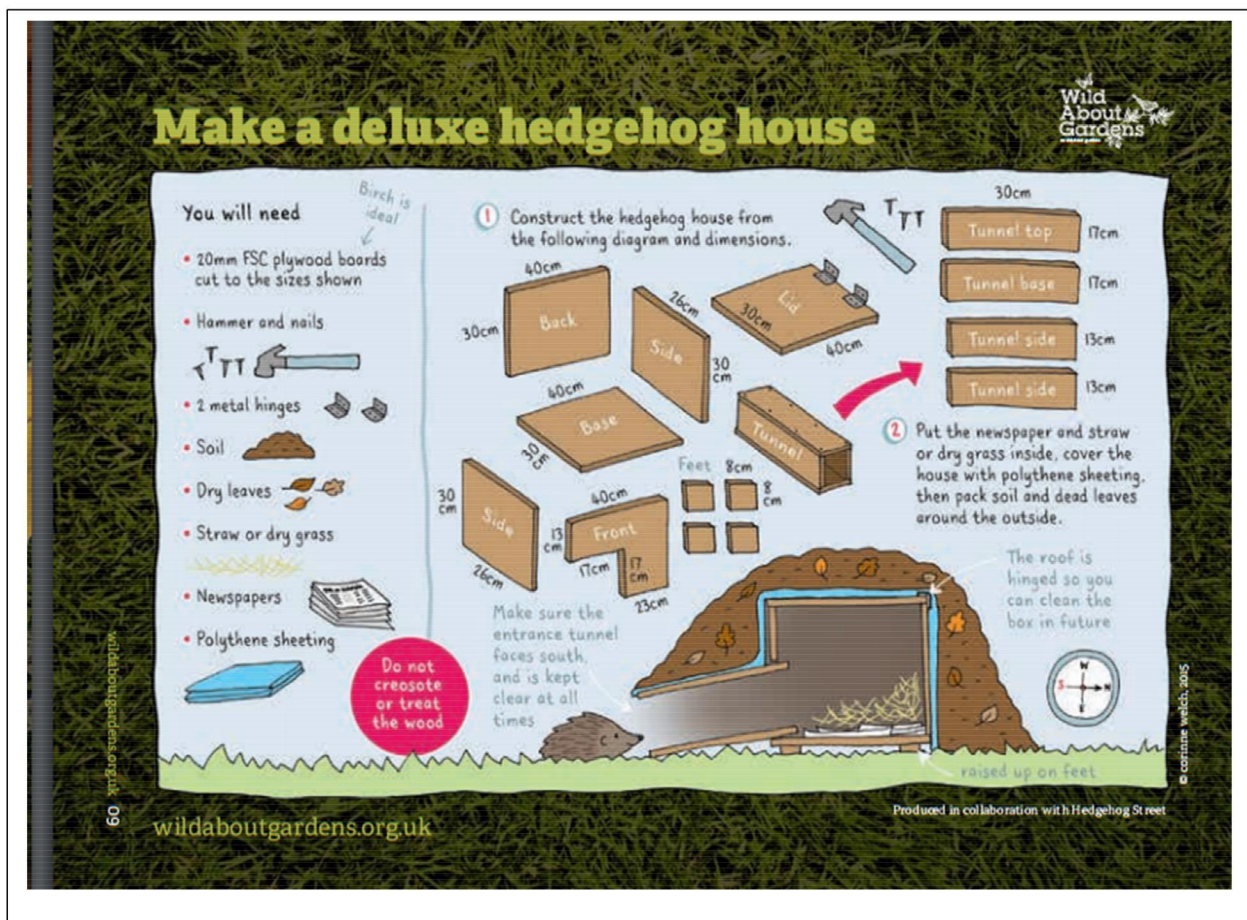
METHOD

- Dig a hole, shaped like a basin, to a depth of at least 30 cms at the centre.
- Fill with a mixture of large and small pieces of rubble and logs, creating large and small chambers which will be below ground. A large chamber for hedgehog with access pipe can be added, created from a sturdy wooden box and drain pipe. The dimensions of these are important to ensure that hedgehogs don't become trapped: see "Make a deluxe hedgehog home" below.
- Cover with sticks to form a platform at around the level of the surrounding ground.
- Pile on more stone and logs to make a rounded pile.
- Finally add soil to cover the mound of materials, allowing it to fall between fill to form a compact shell, leaving the margins of fill exposed, to allow access.
- Sow bare soil with grass seed or allow to green over naturally.



Above: example of habitat pile. Two smaller habitat piles as described (100 cm x 50 cm) are more valuable than one larger one shown above.

Below: how create hedgehog house or build hedgehog house into habitat pile. See wildaboutgardens.org.uk.



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