

## Sheep's parsley – a favourite of hares

Given the choice, hares prefer to eat wild plants rather than cultivated ones, with grasses predominating in the winter and herbs in the summer. But a special favourite of hares is sheep's parsley *Petroselinum crispum* which is a common forage herb, usually mixed with ribgrass, yarrow and burnet to increase diversity and lift trace elements from deep within the soil. It can be mixed with regular grassland crops by farmers wishing to increase grazing quality or attract hares to their land. It can also be sown in patches by householders wishing to attract hares into their garden. Sheep's parsley is available from Cotswold Seeds:-

[www.cotswoldseeds.com/content/sheeps-parsley-petroselenium-crispum](http://www.cotswoldseeds.com/content/sheeps-parsley-petroselenium-crispum)

## Bees under threat from toxic pesticides

Soon, our Government will decide whether to allow bee-harming pesticides to be used on UK fields. Certain pesticides known as neonicotinoids are currently restricted across Europe, but the National Farmers Union and pesticide companies are trying to weaken the restrictions. This could have an indirect effect on hares by reducing pollination of wild forage plants by bees. A study co-authored by a University of Guelph scientist Nigel Raine and Richard Gill of Imperial College, London involved fitting bumblebees with tiny radio frequency tags and showed that long-term exposure of bees to a neonicotinoid pesticide hampers their ability to forage for pollen. "Bees have to learn many things about their environment, including how to collect pollen from flowers" says Raine "and exposure to this neonicotinoid pesticide seems to prevent bees from being able to learn these essential skills."

Your MP can make a difference. Recently, over 150 MPs attended an event hosted by Friends of the Earth and 38 Degrees. Many spoke about how much bees mean to the people they represent. So please tell your MP why bees matter to you, mentioning the hare aspect. If enough MPs back the ban on pesticides then the Government will have to listen. And it's clear that MPs from every political party are already hearing about bees from lots of people, but the pressure needs to be kept on to protect our bees from pesticides. You can send a message to your MP here: [www.theyworkforyou.com/mps/](http://www.theyworkforyou.com/mps/) Alternatively, you can write to your MP at the House of Commons SW1A 0AA. Experience has shown that a well presented hard copy letter by first class is most likely to produce a favourable result.

## Snares

Self-locking snares have an ever tightening, ratchet type of action and are illegal. Legal free running snares should, in theory, relax their grip if the animal stops pulling, but can become twisted as the animal thrashes around in a desperate attempt to escape and then act like self-locking snares. Photographs of the different types of snare can be seen here:

[www.antisnaring.org.uk/snares/types-of-snares/](http://www.antisnaring.org.uk/snares/types-of-snares/)

If you find an animal caught in a snare call the RSPCA's 24-hour national cruelty and advice line on 0300 1234 999 immediately. If possible, arrange to meet with whoever attends so that you can guide them directly to the injured animal. Please do not attempt to release the animal yourself. The animal may injure you, or it may suffer further injuries itself. It may even escape with the snare still in place, and die a lingering death.

If you find a snare take a photograph if possible, record its exact location and contact the National Anti Snaring Campaign (NASC) on 07580 455223. If you find an illegal snare or snares of any description set in such a way that they are likely to catch pets or protected species, please contact the RSPCA and the NASC .

## Leverets suckling once a day at dusk

As far as we know just two photographs have ever been captured of this awesome event. Increase your chances with an automatic wildlife camera, available here:

[www.wildviewcameras.co.uk/wildlife-cameras](http://www.wildviewcameras.co.uk/wildlife-cameras)

[SWAFH@actionforhares.org.uk](mailto:SWAFH@actionforhares.org.uk)