

# How to make a reptile hibernaculum

Reptiles are found in various places across the UK, such as woodland ridges, sandy heathlands and garden compost heaps. However, many of them are now declining and incredibly rare, therefore protecting and restoring their habitat is vital to their survival.

Reptiles are ectotherms, meaning that they cannot generate body heat internally, but rely on the sun and other external heat sources to raise their body temperature. During warmer months, reptiles like to lay out and bask in the sun. During hibernation periods (October-March), reptiles like to use underground chambers called



**Did you know we only have six native reptiles in the UK? Three lizards (common lizard, sand lizard, slow worm) and three snakes (grass snake, smooth snake and adder).**

don't have much space, any size will do.

3. Fill your hole with rocks, bricks, logs and twigs, leaving lots of gaps and holes in between so reptiles can enter.

4. Cover the hole with the soil you previously dug up.

5. Plant wild flower seeds over the top to attract all sorts of insects.

**Make sure your site has good drainage to ensure the hibernaculum doesn't flood**



hibernacula, as they keep the warmth in and protect them from the cold throughout winter. Therefore, the number of reptiles using hibernacula is highest during autumn, winter and spring, and lowest mid-summer.

## Want to help reptiles on your doorstep? Make a hibernaculum.

1. Choose a sunny and warm area for your hibernaculum.
2. Dig a hole that's roughly 50cm deep and as wide as possible (it can be up to 1.5 metres wide), but don't worry if you

### You'll need:

1. A green space
2. A spade to dig
3. Some logs and twigs
4. Rocks, stones and bricks
5. Some soil and earth
6. Wild flower seeds to go on top