

It was you who set all the boundaries of the earth; you made both summer and winter. Psalm 74:17

Welcome to this Winter edition of Green Matters. An occasional newsletter helping us care and celebrate God's world.

As the winter takes hold some in the natural world go to extreme lengths to avoid the cold - bats, dormice, hedgehogs, amphibians, reptiles and some insects (like bees) hibernate. Hibernation is not the same as sleeping, rather an extreme slowing down until the earth begins to warm up.

Rising temperatures in the UK and beyond are proving disruptive for hibernating species, as the warmer temperature spells are causing them to stay for longer periods in their 'active' breaks from hibernating, causing them to use up vital energy. If the cold snap returns and no food is around, their chances of survival are drastically reduced. This means that our gardens are becoming more and more important as refuges for wildlife.



Photo by: [Piotr Laskawski](#) on [Unsplash](#)

For example putting together a simple log pile will create a village for all things creepy and crawly. An in turn, this busy community will attract birds, hedgehogs and frogs.

The Wildlife and Wetlands Trust have more information on how to help wildlife survive the winter [here](#).

For particular tips around caring for hedgehogs see The Wildlife Trust advice [here](#).

PLUS for energy saving tips for keeping **YOU** warm this winter, visit the [Energy Saving Trust website](#).

Slow Cookers

With high energy prices slow cookers can be a great way to save on energy bills verses using a conventional oven.

More information can be found [here](#).

And for some tasty slow cooker recipes click [here](#).



Getting out and about - Hidden Gem Walks

Middlesbrough Council have put together a list of local walks to help us walk off the chocolates and turkey and encourage us to get out in the winter sunshine (or rain!).

All local and easily accessible - [more info here.](#)



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Caring for Creation - Get Involved!



FEBRUARY - This Lent
why not take part in
Climate Steward's Carbon
Fast?

The Carbon Fast helps us think about ways to live more simply, gives us new ideas to cut our carbon footprint and invites us to focus on God and consider the whole of his creation. From the 18th February you can sign up to receive a weekly email containing key facts, suggestions for how to reduce your carbon footprint and a prayer to lead you through this Lenten season. Each week features a different theme designed to help us take climate action in manageable ways that bear witness to God who has promised to restore all of his creation (Romans 8:19-21).

[Click here for more info.](#)



MARCH The Big Plastic Count 9th-15th March

The Big Plastic Count is the UK's biggest investigation into household plastic waste. The brief is simple: count your plastic waste for one week and submit your results online. The campaign is engaging, empowering, and educational for both children and adults. It aims to highlight the urgency and scale of the plastic crisis while enabling people to play a part in helping to solve this pressing issue.

Not only does this initiative help participants learn about the plastic problem by generating their own personalised household plastic footprint, but contributions also provide vital data that helps present the true scale of the plastic crisis to decision-makers in government and business.

[Click here for more info.](#)