

## How about creating a dead hedge instead of a bonfire ?

### What is a dead hedge?

Dead hedges are made from mainly small dead branches and twigs arranged that form a linear barrier or hedge.



A 'dead hedge' is a nifty way to put woody prunings to good use and can offer more instant wildlife cover than a newly planted conventional hedge. It creates a habitat for insects and beetles as well as a rich feeding ground for small mammals such as hedgehogs and provides shelter from the weather and protection from predators.



In a garden, woody prunings from fruit trees, twigs from hedges and ornamental shrubs can all be used to create a dead hedge. (see 'Tip' -below)

Dead hedges are in effect a linear eco-pile and can be stand alone or a boundary.

### How do you make a dead hedge?

For an attractive and wildlife-friendly barrier, drive two parallel lines up to about a metre wide and as long as you wish, of upright poles into the ground every 1.5 metres.

Chicken wire can be used along the sides to define the space to be filled. Wire is not essential but if your hedge is a boundary and you use wire be sure hedgehogs have somewhere to pass through underneath so fix the wire 10-20cm above ground. **Pack the prunings lengthways.** Depending on the uprights, the 'hedge' can be up to around 2m tall.



A **dead hedge** will take a while to decompose, as the branches aren't touching the ground. You can top up the shrinking **hedge** with more non green cuttings and prunings when it starts to reduce in bulk.

**Tip:** If you add greenery (leaves) to your dead hedge it becomes less a dead hedge and more a compost so best to keep it to wood cuttings and thicker stems.

