



# Animal Rescuers

## DISCOVERY ACTIVITY

### ACTIVITY OBJECTIVES

- To understand what we mean by 'rescue', 'rehome', and 'release'
- To explore some of the responsibilities of caring for animals to make sure they are healthy, happy and their needs are met
- To identify ways to make open spaces better habitats for wildlife

### KEY QUESTIONS

- Why might the RSPCA need to rescue and rehabilitate different animals?
- What do animals need to be happy and healthy?
- What happens to rescued animals?
- How can humans create better habitats for wildlife?

Due to the topics covered in the Compassionate Class programme, it is important to consider how different children may react. For more information on creating a safe teaching and learning environment, see guidance on pages five to seven of the Teacher Overview downloadable at: [rspca.org.uk/ccresources](https://rspca.org.uk/ccresources).

These resources have been developed with our SEN specialist, Helen Rutherford.



# Animal Rescuers

## INTRODUCTION

Introduce the group to the RSPCA. You may have done some of our modules before but if not, use this opportunity to use the link below and discover the type of work we do.

**SLIDES  
2-5**

**[rspca.org.uk/whatwedo](https://rspca.org.uk/whatwedo)**

**Slides 2-5** can help to guide your explorations. You may wish to skip some slides (such as 'helping with legislation') depending on the needs of your students.

## STIMULUS

Open the discussion by exploring what 'rescue' means for the RSPCA. What kind of scenarios might the RSPCA have to deal with? Share the images on **slides 6-10** to give an idea of what these situations might look like.

**SLIDES  
6-10**

For example:

- a swan injured by a fish hook
- a seagull caught in netting
- a cat who isn't being looked after by its owners
- a seal that has been stranded

## DISCUSSION

**SLIDES  
11-13**

Can your class think about what might happen if they came across an animal that needs rescuing? What do they think they would do? Who might they ask for help? Use **slides 11-13** to guide them.

Even if the RSPCA can't help, they will be able to guide you to someone locally who can, such as a rescue centre.



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### STIMULUS

**Short animation about two animal rescues by RSPCA inspectors**



Watch the animation before you watch with the class so you can create a word bank and ask the class to listen out for the words as they watch. Show the animation by clicking the link on slide fourteen. You can add any other words they might be unsure of to the word bank after watching. Use the prompt questions below to check their understanding.

If you have time, present a box containing two toys to represent the rabbits and the other items listed as necessary to care for them. Set a timer and go through the process of cleaning the box, preparing the rabbits' meal and feeding them. This will give your class insight into the time involved in caring for this type of pet. Make sure to cover the five welfare needs of animals - shelter, food and water, opportunity to engage in natural behaviour like running and jumping, to have company, and be protected from harm.

**SLIDE  
14**

Explore how long a rabbit can live for. Can the class work out how old they would be by the end of the rabbit's life? For some students this may open wider discussions about where they might be at that age.





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## WHAT HAPPENS AFTER A RESCUE?

**SLIDES  
15-17**



Introduce what the RSPCA means by rehabilitation. Click the link on **slide 16** to watch the video about **Nibbles the dog**, who has been rescued and needs some time being looked after to make him healthy again.

Use **slide 17** to explain that when animals are better we can either rehome them (pets) or send them back to their natural habitats (wild animals).

## WILD ANIMALS: WHAT HAPPENS AFTER REHABILITATION?

Once an animal has had the care it needs, if it is a wild animal it will be released back into the wild.

**SLIDES  
18-19**



Show the short film featuring **a heron being released** after becoming tangled in netting on **slide 18**.

Remind the group of the Animal Rescuers animation. What did the RSPCA need to think about when releasing the hedgehog?  
Make a list and tick off any that your school or class have done.





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### WHAT OTHER THINGS DO THE RSPCA HAVE TO THINK ABOUT WHEN RELEASING ANIMALS?

Look through the images on **slides 20-25** and encourage the group to think about the different conditions.

#### **Season and weather**

Ask your class to think about what it might mean if an animal was released in winter. Hard ground makes it difficult for birds to get worms and less insects will be out and about. Some animals would already be hibernating.

#### **Time of day**

The RSPCA also needs to consider when the animal is active. Would it be better to release the animal during the day or at night?

#### **Place**

The RSPCA needs to remember to release the animal in the same place they were found. This will help them know where they are so they can go back to their natural home. If the area has become too busy with traffic or building work, the RSPCA might decide it's too unsafe to release them there.

**SLIDES  
20-25**



Ask your class how many animals they can think of that might need to be released at night. Introduce the word 'nocturnal' to your class. Can your class name any nocturnal animals?





## Animal Rescuers

### PETS: WHAT HAPPENS AFTER REHABILITATION?

SLIDES  
26-28

Introduce the concept of rehoming to your class and ask your class if all animals are suitable for living at home with humans. This is a good time for discussion about who has a pet, and what different pets need to be happy and healthy. What do they have to do to look after them? Ask your class if they remember any of the five welfare needs.

### TASK

SLIDES  
29-36

Go through each type of home environment featured on the slides and talk about the lifestyle of each owner and what type of pet would be most suitable for each scenario. You could suggest common and less common pets, e.g. cats, hamsters, dogs, horses, birds

### SESSION SUMMARY

SLIDE  
37

Ask children to suggest things they have learnt today. Can they think of one thing they can do which shows care for either a wild animal or a pet? You can record some of their answers on **slide 37**.

# Advocacy Activities

## SCHOOL GROUNDS WILDLIFE PROJECT

**Are your school grounds wildlife friendly or do they need some changes to make them a more friendly environment for wild animals? Organise a project to investigate and change things, using the ideas below:**

- Take a walk around your school grounds and make a list of all the things which are wildlife friendly, and a list of all the things that need improvement.
- Draw a plan of the grounds on the board, marking where changes could be made, and identifying which animals will benefit.
- If any changes might cost money, brainstorm how you could raise money with your class.
- Can you encourage the rest of the school to get involved? Can your pupils encourage their peers in school to become more compassionate towards animals?
- Don't forget to take a before and after photo! Make a list of any animals your pupils spot in the grounds at break time or even any evidence of animals (prints, tracks or poo!)

Search the internet for great ways to let wildlife thrive on your grounds:

- Bird feeders
- Bee hotels
- Sowing a wildflower patch
- Creating a small pond
- Fencing off an area to stop pupils playing there
- Removing sports equipment when it's not being used
- Litter picking





# COMPASSIONATE CLASS

## Animal Rescuers

### FURTHER ONLINE RESOURCES

#### **Good Practice Code for the Welfare of Rabbits in England**

Discover the welfare needs of rabbits in England to help you be the best owner for your rabbits.

#### **Code of Practice for Rabbits in Wales**

Find guidance in Wales to help you follow the law on the welfare of your rabbit.

#### **Rabbit Awareness Week**

Find out how you can contribute to Rabbit Awareness Week (RAW) by learning about rabbit welfare and improve the lives of pet rabbits in your community by spreading awareness.

#### **RSPCA advice and welfare - Hedgehogs**

Learn how to create a better hedgehog habitat in your garden by reading advice on hedgehog welfare on the RSPCA website

#### **Hedgehog Friendly Town**

Hedgehog Friendly Town rescue, rehabilitate and then release hedgehogs back to the wild. They also go to events and do talks to try and raise awareness of how hedgehogs are suffering and what people can do to help.

#### **British Hedgehogs Preservation Society**

British Hedgehogs Preservation society raise awareness of the practical steps we can take to help reverse the decline of hedgehogs in the wild, improve their welfare and safeguard the future of them.

#### **Hedgehog Street**

Hedgehog Street want to make sure hedgehogs remain a part of British wildlife. More than 90,000 ambassadors are registered with them, forming a vibrant and enthusiastic community dedicated to helping hedgehogs.

#### **Discover Hedgehogs - mammal.org**

Learn about more about hedgehogs by visiting Mammal Society