



CORK NATURE NETWORK

The Hare

Hares are very recognisable, but can easily be mistaken for rabbits. Although similar, hares are much larger. Hares can frequently be seen 'boxing' on their hind legs.

Irish hares can be found in a wide range of habitats. Hares live in homes called forms, which they build in areas such as tall grass or thick hedgerow. A hare's form is designed to protect it from predators such as foxes, and from the weather.



Hares are herbivores, which means their diet consists of plants. They mainly eat grass, but will also eat heather and gorse where available. Hares do not hibernate, and will forage for food all year long.



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Hares can be solitary, but in  quality habitats, 4 or 5 hares may share the same territory. Hares are known for 'boxing' with each other during mating season. Males fight over females, however often females can be seen boxing males.

Baby hares, called leverets, are born with all their fur,  and their eyes already open. Mothers will feed leverets only once a day. Often, a leveret can appear to be abandoned, but it is best not to approach  as the mother is likely nearby.

Hares mature very rapidly, however many do not survive their first year. The maximum lifespan of a hare is nine years.

Hares in Ireland

Hares are legally protected in Ireland. However, they are classified as game and can be hunted during open season. Hares are also at risk of having their habitats threatened by farming.

For further information:



Cork Nature Network
WWW.CORKNATURENETWORK.IE
Email: corknaturenetwork@gmail.com
Tel: 087 2282040