



### MESSAGE FROM YVONNE

Our Open Day was a huge success... after many days of preparation (thank you work party!), the weather was kind and we had a fantastic turnout, raising vital funds for HR, just over £1000! Thanks to all those volunteers who made this possible... and to my ever-supportive husband John who did a lot of the heavy work to get the allotment ready. It was exhausting but very worthwhile to see so many people enjoying the space. Visitors were very complimentary about the allotment and the work we are doing for wildlife and, in particular, hedgehogs. I'm now looking forward to sitting and watching the wildlife come and explore the newly planted allotment and pond!



The pre-Allotment Open Day working party

Fly strike season is upon us, with admissions of hogs suffering with it... so *what is it?* Flystrike is when blue and green bottle flies lay eggs on animals which hatch into maggots and begin to eat away at the animal. It happens when the animal has a wound. The flies

smell this and land on the wound or on other wet areas such as the eyes, ears, nose and anus. It can happen when an animal is sick and becomes hyperthermic. Flies think the animal is dead or dying so are preparing to eat the body. Grim isn't it? So if you see a hedgehog 'sunbathing', it isn't... and needs help immediately.

Shortly after the Open Day I contracted ringworm (yet again!) due to a combination of the stress of preparing the allotment (my immune system was low) and I probably got a prickle from a hedgehog I was injecting. Unfortunately I have no immunity to this fungal skin infection. Ringworm also affects hedgehogs and we currently have a lot in with this - symptoms include spines falling out, bald patches or crusty skin. We treat the hedgehogs with baths and sprays to help them get better.

A common question this time of year is 'There is a hedgehog out in the day, is it ill?' Hedgehogs are nocturnal so should only be seen at night. If seen during the day they are generally in need of assistance. However, there is an

exception to this and that's a female who is pregnant or nursing. She may come out during daylight to collect nest materials, take away faecal matter or a dead hoglet. If they are very busy then that's probably what they are up to.

*What if a hedgehog is circling?* If a hedgehog is circling it has an eye issue, possibly blind or an eye infection. They often walk in circles when one eye is out of operation and walk using the good eye. If the sight is in the right eye they will walk clockwise and if the left, it's anticlockwise.

Yvonne

### WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE A HEDGEHOG COURIER?

The demand for our volunteer hedgehog couriers increases in the Summer due to a higher number of hospital admissions during our busy 'baby season'.

A courier provides vital support to Hedgehog Rescue by collecting public-reported injured and abandoned hedgehogs across Bristol, South Gloucestershire and, occasionally, Bath & North East Somerset; bringing them into HR or taking them directly to our local veterinary surgeries. Couriers also collect medications, transport hedgehogs to designated release sites and more.

We welcome new couriers all the time, especially during the summer season, as the increased reliance on our volunteer drivers can sometimes mean that sick and injured hedgehogs can be waiting longer to be collected and taken into our care.

*"Supporting local communities with rescuing and maintaining the hedgehog population gives me a sense of satisfaction and plays a part in helping the environments in which they thrive. Helping an endangered species that often go unseen in the built up areas especially"*

Tor, one of our hedgehog couriers

If you drive, have access to your own vehicle and you can spare a few hours a week on an adhoc basis, then please get in touch with Yvonne to join our WhatsApp group of hedgehog couriers



Mum and babies, collected by Tom



## HOG OF THE MONTH: ZEPPELIN

Zeppelin came in to Hedgehog Rescue on 8th April, weighing 804g and suffering with Balloon Syndrome; a thankfully rare, life-threatening condition in hogs in which gas is trapped under the skin as a result of injury or infection, causing the hedgehog to inflate to up to twice its normal size.



Zeppelin was painfully bloated with Balloon Syndrome when he arrived

Yvonne inserted a needle under the skin to take the air out, but as he was still so bloated the following day he went to the vets to have it drawn off under anaesthetic. He returned the same day but still needed further air drawn off for the next few days.

Zeppelin had a 14-day course of antibiotics, anti-inflammatories and pain killers for the first four days and was also treated for lungworm.

He was released back to his finders' garden on 7th May at 872g looking like a totally different hedgehog than the one that came in.



Zeppelin on release day



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

If you are a nature-lover, here are some great wildlife events coming up in the area... and events where Hedgehog Rescue will be taking our stall.

**1 June - 31 August • 11am-4pm**

### STROUD NATURE 2023

A large programme of nature-related events including the *Nature Festival in the Park* (Stratford Park, Stroud) on 2nd July.

[stroudnature.org/stroud-nature-2023-brochure](http://stroudnature.org/stroud-nature-2023-brochure)

**2nd June • 2pm - 4pm • Free Entry • All Welcome**

### HEDGEHOG HEROES LAUNCH

Hedgehog-themed activities & talks. *HR attending!* Brockridge Centre. Frampton Cotterell. BS36 2LQ

**3rd-4th June**

### GET GROWING TRAIL 2023

Get inspiration from Bristol's community-run wildlife, fruit and vegetable gardens. Participating gardens throughout Bristol are listed here:

[www.bristolfoodnetwork.org/blog/get-growing-garden-trail](http://www.bristolfoodnetwork.org/blog/get-growing-garden-trail)

**9th - 18th June**

### FESTIVAL OF NATURE 2023

Talks and family-friendly events all month, culminating with the Wild Weekend in Millennium Square on 17th -18th June. The full programme can be found here:

[www.bnhc.org.uk/festival-of-nature](http://www.bnhc.org.uk/festival-of-nature)

**2nd July • 11am-4pm**

### VALE WILDLIFE HOSPITAL & REHAB CENTRE OPEN DAY 2023

The only day of the year that one of the UK's largest wildlife rehabilitation hospitals is open to the public. Beckford, GL20 7AN. Entry £5 (on the door)/£4 (early bird).

<https://www.valewildlife.org.uk>

**19th July • 11am - 2pm**

### YATE AGEING BETTER FESTIVAL 2023

On the square next to Yate Leisure Centre. Stall holders, entertainment & food. An opportunity to meet new people and promote ageing better in our community. *HR will be there!*



## ALLOTMENT OPEN DAY

To mark the arrival of Hedgehog Awareness Week (30th April - 6th May 2023), and to bring the local community together to witness the progression of our allotment space here at Hedgehog Rescue, we opened our doors to a fun-filled yet educational day on Monday 1st May.

With some volunteers staying in the hedgehog hospital to help treat the hedgehogs in our care, the majority of our dedicated volunteering team created tombolas and lucky dips, interactive kids' arts and crafts, plant, cake and homemade craft selling stalls, wellbeing tents that included oracle card readings, healing and Bach flower remedy advice, adhoc and scheduled educational talks on wildlife, hedgehogs, medicinal plants and more, to make this a fun day for all the family. Other volunteers also helped to design all of our event media and to spread the word to the wider community; essential roles for the success of such days.

This year we were pleased to welcome Ellis and Tom and their guinea pigs, Draco and Rupert (who are awaiting their forever foster home) from Little Wheelers Guinea Pig Rescue to join us in raising vital funds and awareness for their small self-funding local rescue centre too.

The event took place on our peaceful allotment, Plot 24, Robin Way, Yate, which Hedgehog Rescue's founder Yvonne and her husband John have been working hard to evolve into a designated habitat for local wildlife, a potential release site for hedgehogs in our care, and to free up valuable space in our hedgehog hospital, especially during the busy summer 'baby season' and winter



hibernation season when some hedgehogs don't meet the desired weight or health requirements for safe release.

Since last last year, the hard work at the allotment has seen the thoughtful planting of lots of medicinal, sensory and pollinator-friendly plants, a pond to welcome local wildlife, places for birds to eat and bugs to shelter and so much more. Once these plants and ecologically-friendly inputs become established we hope this will become a flourishing sanctuary for all of nature in the area to thrive.





# Hedgehog Rescue NEWSLETTER

Summer 2023

The open day placed a focus on our collective love of hedgehogs as a nation, and the subsequent expansion of Hedgehog Rescue’s vital work to meet the wider, holistic needs of the hedgehogs in our care, and to bring awareness to the local community of how they can help this declining species in their own gardens and in the wild. We also hoped to raise necessary funds and continued support for our self-supporting small charity, which we did thanks to all who came and co-created the event.

We received lots of positive feedback in the form of many “amazing day”, “interesting talks”, “kids loved it” and “thank you”s, and received a constant footfall throughout the day from those living in surrounding South Gloucestershire, as well as Bristol and further afield. This included people who already had a love and awareness of hedgehogs, and others who were only just finding out about the work we do and how they can help. Draco and Rupert also possibly secured a potential new home from those they met at the allotment, so the day was a real success.

Julie, who is one of our regular volunteers, shared this feedback from the day:

*‘I really enjoyed the open day. There was a lovely relaxed, happy ‘festival feel’ about it, perhaps because it was held on the allotment. As a regular volunteer on the craft table, I really enjoy meeting and engaging with the children and their parents. Art is a lovely way to connect with people and opens opportunities to talk about how Yvonne set up the hospital and the work we do there to help the poorly hedgehogs and get them back out into the wild. People are always very interested to see how they can help hedgehogs in their own gardens too’*

Raising around £1,000 (a total which is still rising with last minute donations) for the hedgehogs in our care, we would like to thank all volunteers for their hard work and diverse skills offered at this event, as well as an extended thank you to all who shared the event on social media, came to support us on the day and continue to follow and support our ongoing work.

*Ami*



Ami in the Healing Tent



Alyssa on the Medicinal Plants stall



Julie on the Craft Table



Karen in the education shed



Cheryl and Katie on the Lucky Dip



Tom and Ellis of Little Wheelers



## SUMMER SEASON IS HOGLET SEASON!

We are noticing the effects of global warming here at HR, with sightings of hedgehogs waking up from their winter slumbers as early as February now. This means that our usually anticipated busy 'summer season' is getting earlier, with suspected pregnant hedgehogs coming into our hospital as early as the end of April/beginning of May.

Hedgehogs usually mate 2-3 weeks after waking from hibernation, which used to be in mid-late March, and with a gestation period of 37-39 days, they would be expected to give birth around June/July, and onwards into mild autumns. This makes for our busiest season as mums can have litters of anything up to 10 babies, although usually only successfully weaning 2-3 on their own.

The presence of dogs, predatory animals and humans tidying up their gardens can disturb their nests, which cause hedgehogs to abandon their young. Mums who have been killed or badly injured elsewhere will also cause hoglets to be left alone, and with little to no chance of survival. All of this makes for small mouths to feed by hand and families to care for rather than single hogs in HR. One summer we welcomed 7 hoglets and their mother, which made for longer days for our volunteers.

### Some of the things you can do to support hedgehogs this Summer:

- Consider leaving grass longer and 'wild patches' in the garden to provide shelter for hedgehogs, and always check for hedgehog activity before gardening, strimming and removing old sheds/decking etc
- Be aware of small, abandoned nesting babies making 'bird like' calls from low on the ground. Bring them into HR or nearby vets if there is no appearance of mum after 24 hours (as they will need immediate warmth, predator protection and support to feed)
- Continue to report sightings of thin/small or injured looking



hedgehogs out in the day, in dangerous situations where harm or injury could come to them, and when reporting an injured hedgehog take a look around the area you find them in to see if babies are nearby



(usually nests are within a 1-3 mile radius of where mum is found) so that the whole hedgehog family come into rescue and access care together

- Leave out water and food to support the weight of a nursing mother and leave single hedgehogs and family units undisturbed as much as possible. Keep dogs away, as unnecessary human disturbances and intervention can cause a mother to become fearful and abandon her babies. Keep an eye on your cats too, as this is the one time of year they will show an interest in hedgehogs, when squeaking babies are unprotected by any quills

Hoglets take up prolonged and valuable space in our hospital because they can take some time to leave us, due to needing to be in good health and at optimum weight to release. The time of admission and the subsequent time of year is also a factor in releasing them. We often release mum first, split up the babies and release them individually to continue their natural cycle in the wild.

Some babies can be with Hedgehog Rescue for anything up to a year. For example, Jesse came in as a baby, and, unlike her siblings, suffered from several recurring infections such as ringworm, causing her to lose a lot of her protective spikes. She was eventually released a long time after her siblings and admission.





### WHO'S IN.. WHO'S OUT?

A short catch up on just some of the hedgehog visitors we have had over winter.

#### BELLE

Belle came in on 6th December, weighing 329g, with hypothermia and a wound by her ear. She had antibiotics and started lungworm treatment on 2nd January as she was coughing up phlegm.

She was slowly gaining weight, but then contracted ringworm in February and started losing her spines and fur. She got another nasty cough and restarted all her meds. Her weight was dropping and she was not doing well so she went home with me where she started 10 minute aloe vera massages to encourage spine growth.

I had to syringe feed her a watered down mousse for a few weeks and a high calorie supplement with vitamin and mineral supplement an appetite booster. By 26th April she was getting very fed up and trashing her box,



her spine growth was going well so she went into the outside hutch, she is now outside rewilding before her release. Baldy Belle turned into Beautiful Belle!

#### HENRIETTA SCARFACE

Henrietta Scarface was found on 16th December in a pile of leaves being pecked by crows, Hedgehog Rescue was full so she initially went to the vets but came to us the following day. It was -9°C that night so it was lucky she was found, she had broken spines, a wound on her nose and only weighed 347g.

She had all medications but wasn't doing very well. We noticed blood and a wound underneath her lip so she went back to the vets, but they couldn't find anything wrong so we brought her home on 7th January. We

started Renasan on her nose, the scab came off four days later, and underneath she had a hole that went all the way through to the roof of her mouth (which had bubbles coming out when she breathed). It was clearly infected so we kept her on continuous antibiotics and the nebuliser, with Renasan on the hole so as not to clog it up. The wound finally closed over but we kept her in for treatment as, although it has healed on the outside, it would normally take longer to heal inside. Additionally, she had ringworm, probably caused by the stress.



She was put outside to rewild on 24th March and was finally released 7th April, weighing 1145g. There were a few tears when she went as I'd got quite attached to her. She will always be snooffly and have a bit of a twisted nose but she was as good as she was going to get and still beautiful to me.

*Karen*



## WHAT IS IN A HEDGEHOG'S DIET?

There's a great article on the Butterfly Conservation website about how important butterflies and moths are to a hedgehog's diet.

Although the belief is that hedgehogs mainly eat slugs, studies show that invertebrates such as caterpillars, beetles and earthworms are much more important to their diet.

In one study of 137 hedgehogs in England, 74% had beetles in their diet, 49% had moth and butterfly caterpillars in their diet and 34% had earthworms – only 23% had recently eaten slugs. Slugs and snails typically provide less than 5% of a hedgehog's energy requirements, while caterpillars and beetles can each make up one third or more.



A study, carried out on a golf course near Heathrow airport, revealed dramatic changes in hedgehog diets through the year. While beetles and earthworms were fairly consistent in the diet through the year, caterpillars were important prey items in late summer and autumn. At this time of year, which is important for hedgehogs as they build up their fat reserves for hibernation, around 50% of a hedgehog's diet (in terms of energy intake) can be caterpillars. One single hedgehog dropping in this study contained the remains of 56 individual caterpillars, most likely noctuid moths.

To get information on how to make your garden butterfly and moth friendly, take a look on their website.

[www.butterfly-conservation.org/news-and-blog/hedgehogs-need-butterflies-and-moths](http://www.butterfly-conservation.org/news-and-blog/hedgehogs-need-butterflies-and-moths)

And see next page for our article on how to create a "moon garden" to attract moths to your garden at night.



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## A 'MOON GARDEN' FOR MOTHS... AND HEDGEHOGS!

A moon garden is specifically designed to be enjoyed after dark, with pale or white flowers that are intensely fragrant and produce a lot of nectar. This attracts night-flying pollinators such as moths, bees and insects. Food for hungry hedgehogs, and bats too of course!

**Moths:** These fly to flowers which show up well in moonlight. These creatures have a fantastic sense of smell and love highly-scented blooms. Some moths, like Hawk Moths, hover over plants like Honeysuckle to sip nectar with their long tongues, and others land on flowers while they feed.

**Bees:** Although most bee species, including domestic Honeybees, pollinate during the day, a few native bees, such as Sweat Bees, work by night, navigating the garden by moonlight and pollinating plants such as Evening Primrose, Monarda ('White Bee Balm') and White Campion.

### How to create your own moon garden

A moon garden should include flowers in pale hues of yellow, blue, purple, green, pink, white or cream, along with plants with silver or gray foliage. The pale blooms and silvery foliage reflect the light of the moon and the stars, giving the garden a delicate glow.

### Good plants for a moon garden

It's important to plant a variety to ensure that your garden flowers throughout the year. Good pale plants for pollinators include Lavender, Stachys, Star Jasmine,



©Keith Baldie, Butterfly-conservation.org



Magnolias, Snowdrops, Night Phlox, Sage, Sea Kale, Evening Primrose, Climbing Hydrangea and autumn-flowering clematises.

Of course, you don't have to have an entire garden of white flowers to bring in the moths... Just an area, or even one or two pale plants should help, but for inspiration for a pale garden, take a look at Vita Sackville-West's pale garden at The National Trust's Sissinghurst Castle Garden.

Here's some online articles to inspire you.

[malverngardenbuildings.co.uk/how-to-create-a-moon-garden/](http://malverngardenbuildings.co.uk/how-to-create-a-moon-garden/)

[toolazytoweed.uk/2020/10/17/moon-garden/](http://toolazytoweed.uk/2020/10/17/moon-garden/)

[theconversation.com/moths-do-the-pollinator-night-shift-and-they-work-harder-than-daytime-insects-138472](http://theconversation.com/moths-do-the-pollinator-night-shift-and-they-work-harder-than-daytime-insects-138472)

### Turn off your outside lights

After creating your garden, don't forget to switch off as much outside lighting as you can at night. This will help moths and other night-time creatures find their way around the garden.

Liz



The White Garden in June at Sissinghurst Castle Garden, Kent | © National Trust Images/Andrew Butler





## MAKE YOUR OWN LOW CALORIE CHOCOLATE HEDGEHOG CAKE!

Our lovely volunteer Karen made this beautiful 'low calorie' chocolate cake, complete with a hedgehog topper for our May Open Day, maybe you were lucky enough to try a piece?

Here is the recipe, so why not try it for yourself and tag HR into your social media photos. We would love to see your hedgehog bakes!



### Cake

- 175g Self Raising Flour
- 150g Golden Caster Sugar
- 2 level teaspoons Bicarbonate of Soda
- 2 tablespoons Cocoa Powder
- 2 eggs
- 150ml Semi-skimmed Milk
- 150ml Sunflower Oil
- 2 tablespoons Golden Syrup

Place all dry ingredients in bowl and mix. Make a well and place all wet ingredients in. Whisk for 2 minutes. Place in 2 x 7/8 inch round cake tins. Cook in preheated oven at 180°C for 25 minutes (adjust according to your oven).

### Chocolate Ganache

- 225g Dark Chocolate
- 100g Butter
- 142ml Double Cream

Heat a pan of water. Place a bowl with the chocolate and butter in it over a simmering heat until it has all melted. Take it off the heat and add the cream. Stir well until mixed in. Leave to cool for 30 minutes. Add over the cake and leave to set. Decorate cake! Can be put in the fridge.

## ON THE PLOT...

Here's just a few of our hedgehogs that were overwintered in the allotment shed, just before they were released...

