



Hedgehog Rescue NEWSLETTER

Spring 2024

MESSAGE FROM YVONNE

It's been a rollercoaster of a season at Hedgehog Rescue. Many of you may know that we closed for a period during the winter due to the sudden and unexpected death of our baby grandson, Theo.

As a family we are all devastated, and grief has swept over us all. I would like to thank all those who gave us the space to grieve, but also be able to support our family through this. My heartfelt thanks have to also go to the volunteers who literally took over the running of the hospital in my absence. It shows what a fantastic and dedicated team we have that help to keep this place operational.

I would also like to thank Yate Town Council for their £750 grant and the four councillors, Cheryl Kirby, Louise Harris, Chris Willmore and Mike Drew who awarded us £1400 with the MAF grant scheme. These grants are for the new cages for the annexe which was built in 2022 (see article on expanding the hospital). We have a long way to go, but hopefully we can complete a first phase, if not all of it, this year.



In other exciting news, the BBC have contacted us about some filming. You may remember 'Wild Isles', which was so successful that they want to follow it with a programme about the wildlife in our own gardens. Watch this space for updates...

I'm so looking forward to the warmer weather, the longer days and the sunshine (hopefully). I'm definitely a warmer climate human being, but with that comes busier times at the hospital, I guess you can't have everything!

We are also getting out and about as the season warms up, so maybe we will see you at our outreach events, one of which is to celebrate our 25th year which will be held at the allotment. Of course, if anyone wants to volunteer to help with weeding, general maintenance, setting up and/or helping on the day you would be **very** welcome.

Yvonne



GREAT NEWS FOR THE LAZY GARDENERS OUT THERE!

Don't be too quick to go out in your garden to tidy up.

If you can, wait until the temperatures are consistently above 10°C, as many butterflies, bees and other pollinators have over-wintered in the leaves and stems that you kindly left out in the colder season. Please leave them just a while longer, until the weather is warm enough for them to be on the move.

HEDGEHOG SIGHTINGS ARE UP

BBC Gardeners' World magazine readers took part in a survey chronicling the wildlife in their gardens. The results show that hedgehog sightings are slightly up, with 33% saying that they'd seen one. It shows that the awareness raising that organisations like Hedgehog Rescue do is paying off. Details are here:

www.theguardian.com/world/2024/feb/19/uk-hedgehog-sightings-on-the-rise-after-years-of-decline-survey-finds



Come along to Hedgehog Rescue's 25th Anniversary Allotment Open Day

July 6th 2024 ~ 11am to 4pm

Plot 24, Goldcrest Road ('Birds') Allotments, Robin Way entrance, BS37 6JR



Entrance to the HR allotment





WHAT ARE HEDGEHOGS UP TO IN SPRING?

Perhaps the most well-known spring-time activity of the hedgehog is their emergence from hibernation, usually around late March.

With nature being continually affected by climate change, and therefore needing to evolve their routines accordingly, you may have noticed variations in when this spring awakening happens each year. At Hedgehog Rescue, as well as sightings reported from other rescue centres, we are seeing earlier sightings of hedgehogs waking up from hibernation.

For hedgehogs to be tempted out of hibernation, night-time temperatures need to be above 4°C, and for release above 7°C. With this consideration, we saw a big release of our winter boarders at Hedgehog Rescue in mid-March, and are expecting our spring intake of those needing a little help following wild hibernation any time soon.

If you are blessed enough with the presence of garden hedgehogs, or see them on your travels, do remember that they are nocturnal animals, so any daytime sightings are a concern and should be called into Hedgehog Rescue or taken to your local vet for a health check.



A hedgehog exploring its surroundings

It is only the presence of babies in the summer that may take them out of routine and into daytime foraging, so be aware of that too.

Spring hedgehogs commonly enter Hedgehog Rescue with lungworm, a parasitic worm which can cause an infection and affects hogs during hibernation; something that needs medical treatment.

If you hear a coughing hedgehog or notice a rattling/wheezing sound coming from their general area, this can be a sign they have the infection, so please call us or take them to local vets immediately.

A hedgehog's priority during spring will be to wake, regain weight and health, and mate – in that order! This is their typical behaviour in the wild during this quarter and they

only need a little help from us humans with access to clean water, some meaty cat or dog food, and a good clean out of any garden homes that you have provided.

With the exception of health-related concerns such as daytime feeding, lungworm or visible signs of poor health such as being underweight, dehydrated or an injury, most hedgehogs shouldn't require much intervention from us during this busy season.

Please just remember that hedgehogs may still be sleeping, need safe shelter from predators, or are likely to be pregnant this season and are particularly prone to injuries and disturbance as gardening begins across the country.

So take extra care and try to delay gardening and leaf clearing, removal of sheds or decking, and always check for hedgehogs when using any garden machinery. They are very garden active this month!



Waking up to a new season after a long winter's sleep

Ami





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AWARENESS-RAISING & FUNDRAISING

Yvonne's been busy with outreach work, giving educational talks and raising awareness, including WIs, schools and nurseries.

Elsewhere the fundraising team attended Chipping Sodbury Victorian Day back in December... they missed the Winter newsletter deadline, but with our hedgehog ladies looking uncannily like four Mrs Tiggywinkles, and raising £320, this photo is too good an opportunity to waste!



The four Mrs Tiggywinkles... very apt!

The Seed Swap in at Doddington Parish Hall



On 8th February, the HR team took the stall to the Seed Swap at Doddington Parish Hall and raised a further £124. Thanks also to the Birds' allotment committee for the £66.50 from their cake stall.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

We are attending several community events in 2024. Contact Hedgehog Rescue if you have an event that you would like us to attend, would like to book in one of Yvonne's talks, or can offer to help with the stall.

Out and about with the fundraising stall

21st April 2024 • 2pm-4.30pm
Emersons Green
Spring Gathering
Emersons Green Village Hall.
Plants, crafts, cakes and people.

27th April 2024 • 10am-1pm
Spring Table Top Sale
Thornbury Methodist Church Hall

8th June 2024
Chew Magna
Village Pet Show
Details tbc. Keep an eye on our social media for updates.



20th July 2024 • 11am-3pm
Community Event,
Lincombe Barn, Downend
Details tbc.
www.downendfolkhouse.org.uk

6th July 2024 • 11am-4pm
Hedgehog Rescue
25th
Anniversary
OPEN DAY

Allotment, Robin Way, Yate
See front page for details.

Other regional events

26th-29th April 2024
City Nature Challenge
West of England (Bristol & Bath).
A global event to record and upload wildlife that you see.
www.bnhc.org.uk/city-nature-challenge

5th-11th May 2024
Hedgehog Awareness Week
www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk/hedgehog-awareness-week-5th-11th-may-2024/

1-9th June 2024
Festival of Nature
Bristol centre. UK's largest celebration of the natural world.
www.bnhc.org.uk/festival-of-nature



HOW TO CLEAN OUT YOUR HEDGEHOG HOMES

Spring cleaning is not only for humans. With hedgehogs now awake after wintering, they also appreciate a deep clean of their garden homes. The warmer weather allows for air drying, without wet wood and damp homes for them to return home to.

This practice of cleaning their houses is also advised during the autumn, pre-hibernation period.



Fantastic hedgehog houses are available to purchase from Hedgehog Rescue

Yvonne's Top Tips:

- Aim for early morning cleaning, so the box has time to dry. (Temporarily put your hog in a cat carrier with its nest material and keep it somewhere quiet and dry).
- Clean the hedgehog home with hot water, a scrubbing brush into every corner, and a good cleaning solution from pet shops. One that is marked safe for birds, rabbits and guinea pigs.
- Allow the house to completely dry naturally before returning to its spot. You will need to time this right with the British weather and the hedgehog's natural movements.
- Use a pet shop-based bird mite powder and sprinkle it down the joints, right into the corners of the hedgehog house, so as to keep seasonal fleas, ticks and mites to an absolute minimum.
- Replace old bedding materials with fresh chemical-free hay or straw, but remember to save a little of their old bedding to add in for familiarity and comfort.
- Release the hedgehog back into its house in the evening, when the box is dry and it can snuggle into a nice clean, dry home before the evening's foraging.

WARMLEY NATURE ACTION ZONE

Exciting news in our catchment area, a new project to transform some of Warmley's gardens and green spaces for nature has been launched, bringing communities closer to the wildlife on their doorstep.

Avon Wildlife Trust (AWT) have launched the project in Warmley, South Gloucestershire, in partnership with South Gloucestershire Council, to support local people to make a difference for wildlife – the Warmley Nature Action Zone!

The nature action zone is where we come together to create a village where both people and wildlife can flourish. AWT are supporting local people to make space for nature in their own way – whether that's planting for pollinators in front gardens, creating an orchard along a whole street, building a hedgehog highway, or encouraging our neighbours to delight in the wild creatures we share our neighbourhoods with.

To get involved and register your garden, go to:

www.avonwildlifetrust.org.uk/warmley-nature-action-zone



Avon
Wildlife Trust





CAN YOU HELP US RAISE £19,000 TO EXPAND OUR HOSPITAL?

As mentioned in previous newsletters, we have an annexe at Hedgehog Rescue which is separate to our main hospital, currently used to house hedgehogs who are nearing release.

With the increasing demand on HR, due to more hedgehogs in need, we are hoping to turn the annexe into a mini hospital wing by creating an additional fifteen pen facility furnished with new pens that are similar to what we already have in the hospital itself.

The current hospital pens are bigger, allow easy access for deeper cleaning



Of course, Hedgehog Rescue is self-funding and we are currently finding that we have more money going out than we have coming in, so the dream of a hospital extension, which would cost around £19,000, seems somewhat unobtainable.

So, if you are able to help this project by donating construction time or money,

fundraising for us or even creating a go fund me page on our behalf then we would be grateful. As always, everything we do at Hedgehog Rescue is done with a love for our dear hedgehogs and a view of increasing their numbers in the wild.

and have electric provisions for using heat mats to treat sick hedgehogs in our care. Having these in the annexe would support our overall vision to rescue, rehabilitate and release even more hedgehogs back into the wild.

WHAT SIZE IS A HEALTHY HEDGEHOG?

With spring being mating season, it won't be long before we can expect our next intake of pregnant hedgehog mums needing some extra help at HR, and their soon-to-be accompanying (or in some cases orphaned) hoglets.

It can be hard for people outside of HR to imagine just how small hoglets can be and what a healthy weight is for babies, juveniles and adults.

So our hedgehog fosterer and campaigner, Claudia, has created this great visual using some of her cupboard staples to help explain the size and weight of healthy hoglets through to adults.



This is a great aid to understanding what age some of your visiting hedgehogs may be, as well as how to know when you may need to call HR for advice or care, if they are looking smaller than these rough guided weights and sizes.

The size and weight of a hedgehog is so important when understanding potential health issues, age identification, working out medication dosage, and what to feed them, so we rely heavily on these statistics at Hedgehog Rescue.

Later this season you can expect to see some spelt flour bags and baby avocados in your own garden!

Thanks Claudia, we love this artwork at HR!



HOG OF THE MONTH - GIN

Gin was originally released into Helen's garden in December 2019 with her two siblings, after coming into Hedgehog Rescue as hoglets. She was featured in last Autumn's newsletter after having a litter of four, all of which survived - she was a wonderful Mum.

She turned up again in Helen's garden, in November last year, at 832g looking very thin and poorly, with what appeared to be a broken and slightly infected toe, so she was brought into HR. She had green slimy poo and was put on medication but continued to lose weight. After a week, all four limbs swelled up, with pus coming out of one of her back feet, and the toe had gone necrotic and fallen off. A trip to the vets and two weeks of antibiotics saw a significant improvement, as at times we didn't think she was going to pull through. She went back to Helen's hutch where it was quieter for her and had tribiotic daily on her small toe wound until it healed completely. Helen was a bit worried as Gin had got back up to 1300g but was very lethargic, so asked me if I could take her to assess and build up some stamina in my garden.



Gin's Journey through Hedgehog Rescue



Gin has been here for nine weeks now, whizzing about the garden and even trying to get into the house through the cat flap. She put on a bit more weight 1480g (oops, a bit too cuddly!), but is now back to a more respectable 1315g and being released into the wild soon!

Karen

WHO'S IN, WHO'S OUT...

WESTIE

She arrived at just 313g, with lungworm and a bad chest, and has blossomed a bit too much - currently weighing 1400g and unable to curl up safely - so is off to Liz's rewilding area to slim down before release.



Westie poses for her photo

FROSTY

He weighed just 239g, with lungworm, so had the usual treatment and was fostered by Sam, one of our students, over half term. After a slow start he is now 807g and ready to be released.



On the way to recovery...

FLOPSY, FLIPPER & FLOPPER

Flopsy had a late litter of five hoglets in 2023. Sadly three of them passed away and the other two needed medication for a worm burden. After a lot of care, Flopsy was released into the wild, and her surviving hoglets, Flipper and Flopper, hibernated in Alan's hutches over winter, as they were larger but still too small to be safely released. Weighing 644g and 590g, the pair were finally released on 20th March.



Mum and the surviving hoglets



Prior to release



WHO'S IN, WHO'S OUT CONTINUED... IT'S BEEN A BUSY SEASON!

WHISPER & WALTER

Whisper and Walter came in together on 3rd December, weighing 386g and 310g, but we aren't sure if they are siblings. Both were very chesty so they had medications and the nebuliser.

We had to split them up at the end of December as Whisper was 536g, but Walter had fallen behind and wasn't putting weight on (weighing only 316g).

At the beginning of February Whisper was found to have an unexplained gash on her stomach, so we took her to the vets where the wound was glued, she had some dissolvable stitches, received antibiotics, and had a mixture of activan and intrasite gel.

All that did the trick and both hedgehogs are doing well. They are both now ready for release at 835 and 894g.



Walter and Whisper came in together

KAREN

In September, Karen turned up at Tom and Ellis's house, badly dragging her rear right leg. She weighed in at just 274g.

She was very chesty, with an awful worm burden, and was put straight onto medications and had regular sessions with the nebuliser.

She went into volunteer Karen's garden to build up strength in her leg and so that we could check that she was using it properly, but she quickly went into hibernation. She's doing really well and is now ready for release back to where she was found.



Karen is ready for release after a over-winter stint at HR

JUNIPER

Juniper is a recent arrival, who came at the beginning of March, smelling very badly of fox. She was extremely dehydrated and had a nasty eye injury. She was so hungry when she arrived and has since eaten very well. After nine days of fluids is now 622g and well on the way to being released into the wild again.



Juniper was a likely victim of a fox attack

BERTIE



Released today!

MICHELLE





SPRING REMEDIES AND NATURE'S LEAD

At 3.06am on Wednesday 20th March, the wheel of the year turned once again to welcome the spring equinox for those in the Northern Hemisphere. This coincides with the beginning of the astrological new year, when we welcome Aries season, the first sign of the zodiac on the same day. We of course then see the clocks 'spring forward' on the 31st March. Are you noticing a theme of new beginnings this season?



A hedgehog spotted in Glastonbury!

There is somewhat of a universal upgrade that happens with the arrival of spring, which we as sentient beings subconsciously plug into. Relieved are many to be moving away from the darker energies and lessons of winter, to propel into the lighter season of hope, renewal and innocence. Spring is an opportunity-rich season, inviting us to take the lead of nature once again by joining them in the earth's awakening from winter slumber, exploring a connective quarter of rebirth and fertility. It's a bountiful and plentiful season, with a playful air, providing all that we need, both within and around us, if we are brave enough to leave the nest and start exploring once again.

The spring order of service for our dear hedgehog friends will be to wake up, fatten up and mate! So, this is again an invitation to consider ways you yourself may take their lead into a new season, to recharge and refresh after your own hibernation, to revisit those self-care routines that were somewhat neglected over winter, and to get out and about in order to reconnect, whether that be in self-love or in the hope of finding love elsewhere.

3 Bach flower remedies to support you this spring:

Gorse

– traditionally made on the spring equinox, these bright yellow flowers restore hope and optimism, supporting us to move away from those residual winter low moods.

Chestnut Bud

– a remedy that supports the breaking of unhelpful cycles, patterns and behaviours that keep us living small. A spring tonic for new beginnings without the hangover of the past.

Larch

– an essence bright in pink buds promoting confidence. Especially restorative for those who have a fear of failure or looking 'silly' when the spring calls for us all to try new things and to connect with things outside of our comfort zones.

This won't replace the benefits of a bespoke Bach blend, but four drops, four times a day, will no doubt keep you going until summer's arrival!

Ami

(HR volunteer Ami is a Bach Centre certified and qualified practitioner)



Nourishing flower essences to support a new season

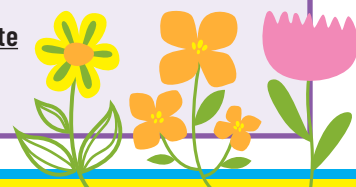
WAYS TO DONATE

EASY FUNDRAISING: www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/hedgehogrescue

AMAZON: www.amazon.co.uk/registry/wishlist/1667YMU5IY05P

PAYPAL: www.paypal.com/paypalme/HedgehogRescueYate

WEBSITE: www.hedgehogrescue.info/support-us





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HEDGEHOG FRIENDLY FOOTBALL

The British Hedgehog Preservation Society have teamed up with professional football clubs that recognise the significance of hedgehog welfare and have committed to placing their “check for hedgehogs before using” warning stickers on their ground’s maintenance machinery.

They say,

“Whilst there may not be many hedgehogs at the stadiums, there certainly will be in fans’ gardens and maybe at training grounds too. We’ve been delighted with the response, with some teams agreeing to hand out leaflets, feature us in match programmes, and share photos of their players supporting the campaign on social media.”

So, if you are a football fan, why not ask your team what they are doing to ensure hedgehog safety... and encourage them to take part if they aren’t already doing so! In the meantime, in your own garden, don’t forget to take the netting off your goal if you can, or pack the goal away when you aren’t using it, so that hedgehogs don’t get tangled up in the netting. It’s surprisingly common!

For further details, and to see if your team is already active, visit:

www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk/hedgehog-friendly-football-league



British Hedgehog Preservation Society
Tel: 01584 890801
www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk

PLEASE CHECK AREA FOR HEDGEHOGS BEFORE USING THIS EQUIPMENT



EMERSONS GREEN TOWN COUNCIL

Spring Gathering

a host of people, plants, seeds, crafts, talks and cakes

Sunday 21st April 2 - 4.30pm
Emersons Green Village Hall

hear Yvonne from Hedgehog Rescue

swap plants and seeds

find out about our new community energy company

news about this year's Earthfest

butterfly painting and other crafts

enjoy tea and cakes

Find us on easyfundraising.org.uk

www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/hedgehogrescue

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