



MESSAGE FROM YVONNE

As we say goodbye to the summer (what summer I hear you say)? As I write this, the leaves are turning to their beautiful autumnal colours, and falling from their branches. The nights are drawing in and are becoming colder, which starts the hibernation process for hedgehogs

Why do they hibernate? It's energy saving. Insects are the main staple diet for a hedgehog, and during the colder months often die or bury themselves deep into the soil, making it difficult for hedgehogs to find food as they use more energy finding it than the nutrients it would provide.

When do they hibernate? It's a tricky question to answer as our seasons are so varied, with Indian summers and white Easters! The general consensus is they hibernate when night time temperatures drop to about 4°C. Males often hibernate earlier than females because the females may still have hoglets they are caring for.

How about autumn juveniles? This is always a busy time of year for rescues as people start finding little hedgehogs out and about during the day, or spotting them on the night cameras. Hedgehogs need to be 450g to hibernate so if they weigh less than this they need our help. Please keep feeding them as this will greatly increase their chances of survival. If you have lots of cats or foxes around, having a feeding station will allow your hedgehog to eat peacefully and keep the other animals out. It's very similar to a hedgehog house except made from plastic so it's easy to clean.

What food should I feed? Wet cat, dog or hedgehog food - preferably white meat based as the other varieties can be a bit rich; cat biscuits or hedgehog biscuits; some will eat a raw egg cracked in to a bowl, a few calci worms (but not mealworms). Once the colder nights settle in I use dry food so if the hedgehogs don't call the food isn't wasted.

LITTER PICKING CHALLENGE FOR EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS

Until November 20th, HedgeHog Friendly Campus is challenging universities, colleges and schools to pick up as much litter as they can from their communities...

You can sign up here:

www.hedgehogfriendlycampus.co.uk/litterpickchallenge

Autumn/Winter checklist

- Place your hog house in a sheltered part of your garden, with the entrance pointing away from the open garden
- Choose a hedgehog house with a tunnel entrance or dividing wall, to stop other large animals going in.
- Don't tidy your garden, and leave nesting materials like leaves nearby for hedgehogs to collect
- Keep feeding/water stations separate from hog houses.
- Leave the hedgehog house alone once you have placed it. Any looking in will disturb the hedgehog.



Yvonne and Carol meet Chris Packham at Rockaway Park

In other HR news, we have been chosen to be part of the next round of the Co-op Local Community Fund which will enable us to gain valuable funding from public donations to instal some new pens. See the article in this newsletter for more details and support us if you can!

The HR team took the stall to the fantastic "One for the Animals" Day at Rockaway Park in August, and I managed to meet one of my wildlife heroes, Chris Packham.

We asked Chris how we could get hogs protected in the same way as badgers, dormice, bats etc. His reply was, 'you are doing your bit, let the big organisations take this on, they have a million people on their database and the resources to do it'.

I felt very humbled by his response.

Yvonne



HEDGEHOG RESCUE CHOSEN TO BE PART OF CO-OP LOCAL COMMUNITY FUND

From the 18th October 2024 Co-op Members can officially support Hedgehog Rescue. Our funding period lasts for 12 months, the more members that choose our cause the more money Hedgehog Rescue will ultimately receive.

Being chosen as part of the Local Community Fund also enables our cause to win bonus funding through the "Winners Share it all" monthly prize draw.

To do this, members first need to have selected Hedgehog Rescue as their chosen cause.

For every £5 a co-op member then spends with co-op their chosen cause gets 1 free entry into the prize draw.

Every month 10 members are selected to receive £500 for themselves and £5000 for their chosen cause.

A co-op member does not need to be based locally to support our cause so please spread the word with your family and friends near and far.

If you are a co-op member please:

1. **Select Hedgehog Rescue as your Local Community Fund cause. This can be done via the co-op website or in the app. (Cause ID 91144)**
2. **During the funding period visit a Co-op near you and spend a minimum of £5 or online via shop.coop.co.uk – every time you do this Hedgehog Rescue will be entered into the monthly prize draw.**
3. **Scan your membership card at the till and your cause (Hedgehog Rescue) will automatically be entered for a chance to win big for you and your community**

Thank you!

Anne D

CHOOSE US AS YOUR LOCAL CAUSE

Co-op Members can support us through the Local Community Fund
membership.coop.co.uk/causes



OWNED BY YOU.
RIGHT BY YOU.

OTHER WAYS TO DONATE

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

PAYPAL: www.paypal.com/paypalme/HedgehogRescueYate

WEBSITE: www.hedgehogrescue.info/support-us

Find us on easyfundraising.org.uk

www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/hedgehogrescue

or download the App



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WITHDRAWAL OF UNSAFE HEDGEHOG HOUSES



WARNING: Please avoid hedgehog homes like this

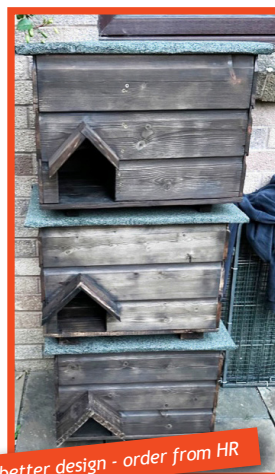
Hedgehog Rescue are pleased to see that Lidl recently withdrew hedgehog shelters from its Northern Ireland stores after Loughgall Hedgehog Rescue highlighted safety issues, and we hope that this remains the case.

The small igloo-shaped hut with a wire frame was advertised as a safe winter shelter but is alleged to endanger hedgehogs by allowing dampness to freeze their nesting material and trapping them within the wire frame, potentially leading to fatal outcomes.

Local rescues voiced their concerns, describing the huts as “death traps” that provide inadequate weather protection.

In response to feedback, Lidl removed the product (albeit temporarily). Although there had been no safety complaints in other European markets, and Lidl stated that all necessary EU and National Regulations were followed prior to stocking, they withdrew the item and say that the company is consulting with experts before determining the product’s future availability.

At Hedgehog Rescue, we encourage people to avoid the igloo types of shelter, as we have also encountered issues with them. If you are thinking of installing a hedgehog house in your garden, there are plenty of better designs, like the ones on the right, which are far more solid and waterproof... and therefore a lot cosier. You can order one like these via Hedgehog Rescue.



A far better design - order from HR

DIARY DATES:

Yvonne is always busy doing talks for Brownies, WIs and Garden Clubs, as well as taking the stall out to various events with others from the Hedgehog Rescue team.

If you have a community event that you would like us to attend, or would like to book in one of Yvonne’s talks, please do get in contact.

16/11/2024 • 11am-2pm

**Brimsham Green School
Christmas Fayre**

Brimsham Green School, Broad Lane, Yate BS37 7LB

24/11/2024 • 11am-3pm

**Warmley Community Centre
Christmas Fayre**

Warmley Community Centre, 20 Deanery Rd, Warmley BS15 9JB

1/12/2024 • 11am-5.30pm

**Chipping Sodbury Christmas Sunday
(formerly Victorian Day)**

Broad Street, Chipping Sodbury

Father Christmas float arriving at 5.30pm

<https://www.steamheritage.co.uk/steam-rallies-and-events/event/chipping-sodbury-victorian-day-dec>



Out and about with the Hedgehog Rescue stall at the MOD



A SAD SUMMER FOR HOGLETS

Summer has brought sadness to Hedgehog Rescue, as in amongst the joy of many new arrivals during our busy hoglet season we saw a decline in our hoglet rearing success.

Year upon year we see an increase in hoglets needing our care and this Summer was officially our busiest baby season, with orphaned hoglets needing round-the-clock handfeeds and many fosterers and volunteers taking on some of the strain that HR just couldn't house alone. We are a small, self-funding hedgehog rescue and ultimately outside of 'office hours' Yvonne is left feeding many mouths alone.

This year, we even called on the resources and expertise of rescues such as Gloucester-based 'Wild Hogs' due to their success rates in raising hoglets. Thanks go to the team at Wild Hogs and to our volunteer drivers for making these long trips to get them there safely. As always, we have done everything we could to try to support these hoglets into juvenile and eventual adult status.

With the sadness of being unable to successfully rear as many hoglets as we are used to this year, it's a time when Yvonne and the team reflect on why this might have been. Hedgehogs like all animals don't do well in hospital environments as they are wild, prey animals and they cannot relax due to loud noises, necessary medical disturbances and generally being taken out of their circadian rhythms and the need and right to roam. But of course, sick and injured hedgehogs need to come into our hospital to access necessary veterinary care, so we have to do our best when they're here and keep disturbances and noises to a minimum.

We have also seen a lot of bugs, parasites, sensitivities and sickness within the hoglets this year (you wouldn't

believe the colour of their poo!), leading us to make multiple changes to the food and baby milk we provide, and a need for more antibiotics, which has been delayed and difficult to access at times due to the changes in medical legislation I mentioned in Autumn news last year.

I personally spent a week going into HR to support Yvonne with evening feeds and, whilst it was a wonderful and educational experience, it was inevitably heartbreaking when I learned that these hoglets I shared a bond with weren't making it through the night in some cases.



We often keep the newsletter light, but I felt it important to share the lows, demands and challenges that a rescue centre can face and the grief associated with some of the less successful cases as a volunteer.

As always Hedgehog Rescue strives to put the care of hedgehogs first, and we witness that every year when practices change and are reviewed - and every time we lose a life. Fingers crossed for next year!

Ami



Hedgehog Rescue NEWSLETTER

Autumn/Winter 2024

HOG OF THE MONTH - ESME

Esme came in weighing just 76g. Yvonne syringe fed her for the first 4 days, and she was then taken home by a volunteer. As she was found on her own, Esme had a heartbeat simulator put in with her to replicate that of her Mum's.

She only put on 15g in the first week despite all the feeding. She tried lapping out of a jar lid but couldn't quite do it. After two weeks of syringe feeding, she reached 135g and finally started to lap on her own, so the night feeds stopped. While introducing new foods like watered down mousse and baby food she did what comes naturally to a hoglet with new smells and tastes and started self anointing, her spines often ended up a completely different colour.

It is normal for hogs of all ages to self anoint. It is thought to be a way for hogs to cover themselves in a new smell. There are a lot of theories as to why they do this, although researchers are still not 100% sure why. Esme became quite a fussy eater, and it was a struggle to get her to put weight on for a while, not through lack of trying of an extensive menu. She had a course of panomec for internal parasites and since then steadily put on weight. She has now been released back to the garden she came from, after weighing in at 644g. Her finders have bought her a very expensive hog box, feeding station and the best biscuits, so she now has a luxurious life. She has been a joy to look after and has been such a little character who definitely deserves to be pampered now!



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

Karen

Guy, Gabby and Geri

Mum was found dead in the road. these three little ones were 68-84g were hand-fed for the first 2 weeks.



Jeremy

Came in thin and dehydrated at 196g, with ticks, fleas, a worm burden and ringworm. Making very slow progress.



The Thompson hoglets

Mum was disturbed and ran off. Came in at a week old. Fed every 3-4 hours for the first two weeks.



Roger

Came in at 148g and 750g at release.



Justine

Justine and her four hoglets, Jaimey, Jude, John and Janie. The hoglets' eyes were closed when they came in and they weighed just 85-99g. Now 176-228g and doing well!





CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF HEDGEHOG CONSERVATION

This summer, Hedgehog Rescue Yate, celebrated 25 years of saving hedgehogs and we marked the milestone at our annual open day, which we held on 6th July at our Robin Way allotment.

The Mayor of Yate, Ben Nutland, officially opened the event and thanked HR for the work they do for the community and local environment. Despite persistent rain, the event attracted around 100 visitors. Stalls included the ever-popular tombola - thanks to Elaine Hancock at Figures 4 Figures for the voucher for the tombola- plants, cakes, hedgehog information, hedgehog gifts, hedgehog-themed crafts and guessing games. There were talks on medicinal plants and foraging by Alyssa Oram and on hedgehog info by Yvonne.

Proceeds from this year's event have gone towards running costs and the provision of veterinary grade pens in the hospital annexe.

Co-ordinator Yvonne says:

"25 years ago I never envisaged Hedgehog Rescue would be where it is today. It started through a work placement at Secret World where I saw wildlife and abandoned pets arriving each Tuesday. My thoughts as my diploma came to an end were that I could alleviate some of their workload, little did I think this would be what it is today.

I have to thank and apologise to my family for their support and the sacrifices they have made for this to be successful. Then come the volunteers, where would I be and more so where would our hedgehogs be without this amazing team of people? They are the cogs to my wheel and we would not be here today without their help, support, love and dedication.

We have grown from an acorn to a huge oak taking 12 hedgehogs in our first year to over 500 a year today. Public support, such as donations, cash, papers, straw and food help us to continue, along with local councils' grants for our bigger projects, and local businesses that have supported us with tombola prizes, etc.

I'm very humbled by the kindness, help and support from all these people, you are what keep me going. Thank you all so very much."

Information on attracting hedgehogs into your garden and what to do if you find a sick or injured hedgehog is available at <https://hedgehogrescue.info/>

Ways in which you can show your support for Hedgehog Rescue can be found on their website at <https://hedgehogrescue.info/support-us/>

Alyssa's Medicinal Plants



Lauren's Hedgehog Tombola



Yvonne, with Yate Mayor, Ben Nutland



Anne D



HEDGEHOGS IN FOLKLORE

As hedgehogs have been around for around 15 million years it is unsurprising that they feature in folklore and mythology all around the globe. They are frequently associated with quiet wisdom, care and protection against evil, but they can also be quick-witted and astute.

A Mongolian tale tells of a bright hedgehog outwitting both a wolf and a fox. When the three are faced with deciding who should eat the one and only luscious plum which they have, the hedgehog knows that he will be the loser if they run a race to settle the matter. Having no choice he agrees, but craftily grabs the fox's tail when the race begins. Approaching the finish the fox, who is leading, stops to look around to see where the others are. The hedgehog quickly lets go of the tail and hurries over the finishing line to sit waiting - and ready to claim the prize.

In some legends they are ascribed with having shown mankind how to make fire or plough their land, and in countries like Latvia and Lithuania, and others along the "Amber Road" from the Baltic Sea to the Balkans, there are various legends crediting the hedgehog with helping God to create the world. He helped by bringing clay from the bottom of the ocean on his spines and, in some lore, he even advised God to squeeze the clay so that it would fit under the sky and make mountains and valleys.

Egyptian folklore is particularly strong in its belief in the protection offered by hedgehogs. There are many surviving examples of faience rattles shaped like hedgehogs which were shaken to ward off evil spirits and animals. Similarly, people wore hedgehog-shaped necklace pendants for the same purpose. Hedgehog amulets were also found encased in mummies as they were believed to symbolise reincarnation, a belief possibly based on their hibernation and apparent rebirth when they re-emerged.

In Zoroastrian households in ancient Persia the hedgehog was considered to be holy and was kept as a household pet. It was described as "the dog with the prickly back and thin muzzle".

They believed that between midnight and sunrise it would kill any insects, parasites or snakes, and anyone who killed the hedgehog killed his own soul for nine generations.



Faience Rattle

In Greek and Roman mythology the hedgehog was similarly believed to be wise and to give protection, but they also believed that it could predict the weather. Aristotle in his "History of Animals", 350BC, wrote that they were able to predict the weather: "In regard to the instinct of hedgehogs, it has been observed in many places that, when the wind is shifting ... they shift the outlook of their earth-holes ... a man in Byzantium got into high repute for foretelling a change of weather, all owing to his having noticed this habit of the hedgehog".

Four hundred years later the Roman philosopher Pliny the Elder was still echoing this belief in his "Historia Naturalis" and in the thirteenth century the Dominican monk Albertus Magnus was still repeating it in his "De Animalibus". Pliny also recorded his belief (mistaken) that hedgehogs collected food for winter by climbing apple trees, knocking down apples and then rolling on them to impale them on their spikes to take them back to their burrows. This belief still persisted in illustrations in medieval manuscripts almost a millennium later, where the hedgehogs are also shown as collecting grapes in this way (*below*).

Anne P





AUTUMN REMEDIES AND NATURE'S LEAD

As the wheel of the year turned on 22nd September to welcome the Autumn Equinox, we meet again to share some seasonal reflections and Bach flower remedies for the last time. I will leave you here in this series, since we would have travelled a whole year together through the Sabbats.

Autumn is my favourite season. It teaches us the beauty in letting go. It's often the time when perhaps unashamedly we tap into our inner magic around Samhain, and it offers an invitation to begin a slowing down process by honouring the need for rest, reflective practice and to be more discerning about who and what gets our limited energy at this time.

It's not a season for doing, but rather a season for mindful being as we descend into the darker half of the year.

Together with so many astrological shifts and invitations of late to move into an ascended state of individual and collective consciousness, I think our dear hedgehog friends were long ahead of the Autumnal message here!

Despite holding many seasonal rituals, it is perhaps the Autumn habits of the hedgehog that are the most well-known, for it's time for them to finalise those fat-building activities, draw on their reserves and tuck up for the winter months of hibernation.

They do not fight the seasons' call to slow down, to prepare for the colder cycles, to rest and surrender. It's ingrained in them and it forms part of a necessary annual routine that keeps them alive.

See where I am going with this? We are not designed as humans to keep going,



Stop fighting the world and yourself with vervain



Time to slow down, rest and be more hedgehog

to be as stimulated 24/7 as we are, or to heal in isolation, we need help from nature and each other.

So, I thought I would focus on a few remedies that invite rest this season:

Olive – for when we reach burnout, physical and mental capacity or exhaustion. Utilising olive will either invite quality rest or give that boost of energy needed to keep going, whatever is in alignment.

Oak – for those who feel unable to rest, to stop or indeed to slow down due to others relying on their strength, their unwavering availability and resilience. Oaks find illness and rest an inconvenience, but this remedy is a must when our strong structure weakens.

Vervain – one for the activists who have a cause, a voice, a plight and a strong sense of injustice that must be fought and carried out at all cost, no matter the detriment to their weary mind and body. A few drops for restoration, peace and a quiet mind.

I hope you have found the remedy and seasonal reflections helpful this past year. Rest well, and I will see you in the spring.

Ami

(Ami is a Bach Centre certified and fully qualified Bach flower practitioner)