

Hogwatch

from The Lancashire Hedgehog Care Trust

Registered Charity No. 1092285

Patron: Nick Park CBE



Providing specialist care, treatment and rehabilitation for sick, injured and orphaned hedgehogs, with the aim to release when fit and healthy back into the wild.



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THINGS NOT BACK TO NORMAL JUST YET

URGENT APPEAL

The only fundraising events the charity is able to do over the summer months are only with the help of our Trustee Sandra Duckworth. Sandra is taking over the running of the charity shop—one week beginning 16th July and another week booked at the end of August. We have hardly anything to go in with so please, if anyone has any items we could sell to raise funds we would be very grateful. We urgently need items such as clothing, handbags, shoes, toys, books, Dvd's, CD's, very small items of furniture and any good quality bric-a-brac.

Thank you to all who can help.

Due to ongoing problems with my ankle I am still on crutches and hobbling around, so things I'm afraid are still a way off from being back to normal.

I had the first call regarding babies this year at the beginning of April which was much earlier than previous years. Maybe the early warm Spring weather had something to do with it. A nest containing five babies only a few days old had been accidentally disturbed in a barn, but luckily the finders had the sense to quickly cover the nest back up without leaving any of their scent on it. The Mum had disappeared, but we thought there just might be a chance she was coming back to the nest to feed the babies, as they did not appear to be stressed at the time – ie: no squeaking, so we took a chance and waited.

Sure enough, a call the following day confirmed the Mum had returned to the babies. The vicinity of the nest is holding up building work, but I am very pleased to say no one is going to disturb it for the next six weeks or so while this little family is there, after which time the babies will have become independent and will disperse naturally into the surrounding area.

This years Hedgehog Awareness Week ran from 1st – 7th May. This special week allows various rescues up and down the country to publicise their work and to give advice and information on hedgehogs. Also to highlight the dangers hedgehogs face in gardens, especially as garden season was just starting. It also encourages hedgehog lovers to fundraise for their local rescue centre.

Helen Randle from Radio Lancashire contacted me and did an interview in conjunction with HAW, which has helped (we hope) to get the message out to gardeners in particular to be aware of hedgehogs in the garden where there are so many dangers for them. The interview went out on May 2nd and hopefully we still 'did our bit' even though we were not able to organise any fundraising events ourselves that week.



Welcome to our new volunteer

We are very grateful to Sandra Graham who has very kindly volunteered her time every morning to help out in the Hospital Unit.

Due to our current circumstances, we are not able to organise any fundraising events this year apart from the shop. Keeping funds coming in is going to be very difficult as we are relying on regular donations, Ebay sales and sales from our website shop to keep going. We would be so very grateful if anyone, or a group would be willing to fundraise for us—a sponsored walk, coffee morning, bring and buy, car boot sale etc. Please contact me if you can help.

Tales from a Stanah garden—by one of our members.....

Looking at the garden now it is hard to imagine that anything survived those cold winter months. Apart from one or two perennials everything else is doing well, especially with the warm April we have had. The blue-tits have been inspecting the bird boxes and the great-tits have taken up residence once again in the plastic heron. One bird box of a friend of mine was used in the winter for roosting wrens and she counted at least 17 coming out one morning! The moorhens have had little ones again but only two this time, maybe she accidentally damaged other eggs getting in and out of the nest or they were just infertile but the two are doing well and are now climbing out of the pond to explore the garden.

The frogs visited the pond in March for their noisy mating and lots of frog spawn was the result, so hopefully some small frogs will emerge in the summer as most get eaten by newts, dragonfly larvae or birds. I kept a small amount and now have about 20 in a small mini-pond (plastic bowl) and it is interesting to watch their development. I've put plenty of pond weed in and a few large stones and ramps so they will be able to jump out when ready.

The dwarf comfrey and berberis bush provided early nectar for the bumble bees and the early flowering honesty and cuckoo flower attracted various butterflies. As I am writing this a face has appeared at the patio door. It's a blackbird, now have I trained her or has she trained me to now go out and give her a handful of sultanas? Soon blackbirds will be eating the berberis berries - the result of which is 'purple poo' everywhere. Talking of poo - lots of hedgehog trails in the garden and bat poo in the shed. So more survivors of the cold winter - let's hope we all enjoy a good summer!

I had a little male hedgehog brought in two weeks ago—he was shaking uncontrollably, absolutely reeked of chemicals and was starving and dehydrated. He was a sorry sight. I do wish people would stop using chemicals in their gardens and then hedgehogs and other wildlife wouldn't suffer and I wouldn't have to deal with the consequences.

After a lot of intensive care, 'Chemical Ali' is now making excellent progress. This one was very lucky to have survived. There are thousands out there that are not so lucky.

Gardeners please don't use chemicals, weedkiller or slug pellets. If you must, then use the environmentally friendly ones.

THE LANCASHIRE HEDGEHOG CARE TRUST

Registered Charity No. 1092285

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'Stroppy' the baby hedgehog

Meet 'Stroppy' - a tiny rescued baby hedgehog. This little guy was found alone in his nest after it had been accidentally disturbed following garden clearance.



Little Stroppy is less than a week old and is 52 grams worth of pure attitude! He

was very distressed and squealing when he was brought to the Rescue Centre so he was settled into a warm incubator and given a soft cuddly toy hedgehog. This gives a baby hedgehog comfort and we find it works well especially with single orphans. I have never ever come across a baby as bad as this one. Stroppy huffed and puffed and bounced around like a spring-loaded spiky golf ball when I tried to pick him up! In fact for the first twelve hours or so it was just impossible to feed him! I couldn't get anywhere near him, he remained defiant and would not uncurl. I was getting worried he would have had to go on drip fluids as he was getting dehydrated. But the following day, he kindly relented a little and allowed me to drip feed him with a syringe—very carefully as I valued my fingers!

Two days later and Stroppy is now getting used to me and his new routine. He has calmed down a lot thank goodness and now only occasionally 'throws a stropp'. He is taking his two hourly feeds really well, so hopefully this feisty ball of attitude will make it and go on to be released back to the wild. It's always the feisty ones that have that 'extra something' which makes them survivors. The only thing I can say is thank goodness there is only one of him. Half a dozen siblings like Stroppy in a litter just doesn't bear thinking about!

Can you help?

I am currently looking for a volunteer who has had experience in PR and could take over the media and publicity side of things for me, with the aim to raise the profile of the charity. If you think you could help please contact me.

I am also looking for a volunteer who would be interested in putting together a presentation and give talks when asked to local schools and various youth / adult groups. Again if this is you, and you would like to take on this role for me then please get in touch.



Dexter our three-legged hedgehog who hibernated over winter at the Rescue Centre has now gone to a new home—a lovely secure garden in Poulton with Karen where he (who turned out to be a she) seems to have settled in very well.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

If your copy of "Hogwatch" has a cross below, it means that your membership subscription is due for renewal. Your continuing support is vital to enable us to provide care and treatment for many future hedgehog casualties that will need our help. Thank you.