



# Hogwatch

from

## The Lancashire Hedgehog Care Trust

Registered Charity No. 1092285

Patron: Nick Park CBE



*Providing hospital facilities with specialist care, treatment and rehabilitation for sick, injured and orphaned hedgehogs*



ISSUE 32  
Sept 2010

## Anyone for a spot of retail therapy?

### HELP!

**Kitchen rolls needed please!**



We are in desperate need of kitchen rolls (or anything similar which is absorbant). We use a lot of these for cleaning out cages etc. If anyone can help, we would be very grateful.

### Coming soon.....

We are currently in the process of installing a shop which we have called 'Wildlife World' for selling fundraising items on the website. It will incorporate a shopping cart and payment system using Paypal to make the whole buying process easy and secure. Other payment facilities will also be available. We hope to sell a wide range of wildlife themed items to help raise funds.

We are also about to launch our own mini auctions on the Forum. Anyone can post their unwanted items on the Forum to raise money for our charity. All you need to do is register as a member (which only takes a minute), then post a photo / photos of the item you wish to auction, together with a description and the time the auction has to run (usually seven days). Anyone wishing to place a bid can do so by replying to the post. It's as simple as that! These items can be anything at all—pet items, household, garden, clothing (new), books, collectables - they don't need to be wildlife related. Details about how much each item has raised will be listed on the Forum.

You can also donate items for the Charity itself to auction if you so wish. All contact details for posting the item out etc will be sent by private message which will not be made public. We need to get this up and running ASAP, so please root out all those items you don't need and help raise much needed funds for our Charity and hopefully have a bit of fun as well!

### Babies galore!

This year's 'baby season' was quite slow to start, but when it finally got going it was non-stop for weeks as orphan after orphan was in trouble and needed rescuing. We finished up with 32 babies in at one point and had to purchase another incubator to help to accommodate them all. The youngest was little 'Stanley' who weighed just 16gms! I haven't seen my bed much before 2am for weeks and I am now running on auto pilot! It's extremely exhausting work- but also very rewarding.

I am however, seeing the same pattern as last year—juvenile hedgehogs that are newly independent are just not coping on their own for some reason. On a nationwide scale, there must be an awful lot of youngsters out there that are dying if not rescued.



Baby 'Stanley' just two days old

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

Just come in from blackberry picking and everything seems to have come to life again in this last late flush of summer. A large dragonfly was darting about searching for insects and a few damselflies were gently flying around the pond. It is amazing to think that they spend the majority of their life under water to emerge for just a few short weeks to feed, find a mate and lay their eggs. Not many frogs came this year but plenty of newts, fascinating to watch them swimming about in pairs. The male gets a bright orange tummy and a lovely crest on his back to attract the females. There's always water boatmen and diving beetles to watch and I've now noticed a pathway which the hedgehogs have made to come and get a drink. All these goings on in such a small pond, I think every garden should have one.

All the birds in early summer did well, families were all over the garden and I was fortunate to see a family of blue tits fledge. It was lovely to see their little faces appear at the entrance to the box and then watch them bravely fly to the nearest branch. The great tits successfully raised their family in the 'plastic heron' and the moorhens hatched seven babies, three have moved on to a nearby pond, three are still with their parents and one was got by a cat. I was pleased to see a family of wrens about too, as a few weeks before I had found a nest of dead day old ones on the ground, think it had fallen because it had become too heavy and was not secure enough. There were as usual, lots of blackbird families. They are now eating the windfall apples, taking only one bite before moving onto the next one. They must be getting their own back, as I successfully stopped them from getting my strawberries!

Thank you to everyone that kindly donated items for us to sell during our charity shop week at the end of August which was very successful.

**Welcome to our newest members:**

Jennifer Bramley, Mrs C. Wheatley, Carol Martin,  
Brendan Cassidy and Mrs G. Moore.

**THE LANCASHIRE HEDGEHOG CARE TRUST**

Registered Charity No. 1092285

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**TRUSTEES** Sandra Duckworth, Bill Hamer, Terry Bates.

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*It took me a while to decide whether or not it would be appropriate to report this in the newsletter, but was advised to go ahead with it, if only to raise awareness. My apologies if you find this upsetting.*

Many of you will remember Becky, our special albino hedgehog we rescued six years ago and have been caring for ever since. Last year we reported how she had found her new role in life as a 'foster Mum'. Any orphans we had hand-reared which then needed outside experience before going on to be released, we put in Becky's garden. There she guided the youngsters, showing them 'the ropes' on how to survive in the wild—foraging for natural food, nest-building etc and even allowing them to sleep with her in her nest box. She would stand no messing though. If one youngster got a bit above himself (as teenagers do) she would soon sort him out with a quick shoulder charge to put him in his place.

This year we did the same. The first two hand reared babies of the season were put in with Becky, and sure enough she took them 'under her wing' for a couple of weeks until they were big enough to be released into the wild. Then two more babies were put in the garden. Everything was going well, but two days later I got a phone call from Bill the foster carer to say he had found Becky dead. I went down that evening to find a sickening sight - poor Becky with severe facial injuries, the remains of what was left of one baby which had been ripped apart, but no sign of the other one. The injuries were so severe I thought it had to be a fox, and this was verified the following night with a confirmed sighting of it.

It was previously thought that a fox may take a weak or sickly hedgehog in the wild, but generally speaking a healthy hedgehog was safe with its spines as protection. But now we know that foxes have learnt how to kill or maim hedgehogs and this is how they do it - the fox will pounce on a hedgehog which curls up defensively, the fox freezes, the hedgehog hears nothing, thinks its safe and uncurls. As soon as it puts out its back legs to run the fox grabs them and in a split second will break and crush the bones or bite the legs off completely. There is video evidence on the internet which clearly shows how it is done and at a speed you would not believe. Also reports from rescue centres up and down the country documenting cases of severe leg traumas, the same injuries being seen over and over again

This presents us with a big problem on just where is safe these days to release hedgehogs as foxes are now everywhere. The massive decline in the numbers of hedgehogs nationwide coincides with an enormous increase in the numbers of urban foxes over the same period of time. Six foot high fences are nothing to a fox, they can climb anything if they have a mind to. We thought the babies and Becky were safe, after all we had used this enclosed garden for the past twelve years or more, and nothing like this has ever happened before. I know that every wild creature needs to eat / provide food for a growing family, but this was killing for the sake of it—not for food, although the remains of the second baby were never found.

Becky will always be remembered and not just because she was an albino. Her injuries were so severe they showed that she must have put up such a fight trying to protect 'her babies' right to the very end.



RIP 'Becks'.

**Calendar for 2011**

We are in the process of putting together a calendar for 2011 containing photographs of some of our rescued hedgehogs together with helpful information. We hope this will be available October / November. More about this in the next issue.

**MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS**

If your copy of "Hoggie News" 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.