

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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HEDGEHOGS AND THE REAL TRUTH ABOUT SLUGS



Many people assume that by having a hedgehog visit their garden or allotment it will automatically solve their slug / snail problem. We now know that this is simply not true - it is just another 'Old Wives' Tale'. The truth is that slugs and snails form less than 5% of a hedgehog's natural diet. The rest comes from earthworms, caterpillars, beetles and other insects. The truth is that they will only eat slugs and snails when they are starving and there is nothing else for them to eat.

Slugs are known to carry the intermediate stage of lungworm. Lungworms are deadly parasitic nematode worms that live in a hedgehog's lungs and the hedgehog becomes infected after eating infected slugs. A hedgehog with lungworm will be underweight, have severe breathing problems and also have secondary infections / pneumonia. Once the worms are well established, there is little that can be done to save the hedgehog and it will die a slow and agonising death as it struggles to breathe.

We have learned over time that lungworm is extremely prevalent amongst Autumn juveniles at exactly the time when there is little or no other natural food for them to eat in the wild - during the Autumn / Winter months. Lungworm accounts for a high percentage of hedgehog deaths and if not treated quickly the hedgehog will soon die.

There is another danger hedgehogs have to face when eating slugs and that is when the slug has consumed deadly slug pellets. This can cause secondary poisoning when the slug is eaten by the hedgehog. PLEASE DO NOT USE SLUG PELLETS, USE AN ALTERNATIVE OPTION which is WILDLIFE FRIENDLY. If people could only see a hedgehog that has been poisoned by slug pellets and the agony it has to endure.

Please help the hedgehogs in your garden by regularly leaving out a dish of meat-based cat food and fresh water every evening, so they will not be forced to eat slugs and snails which are potentially fatal.

OUT OF ACTION FOR A WHILE.....

You may be wondering why it's so quiet. Two weeks before Xmas I had a bad fall which left me hospitalised with three fractures in one ankle and the other badly sprained. So that was me out of action for the next four months.

A decision had to be made. All the hogs that were a good weight were released during a mild spell of weather - leaving all but three. One of these had already gone into hibernation, but the other two were still too small and would need to put on a bit more weight before they could be released. Two weeks later and now weighing almost 600gms they too were released, leaving Dexter - our three-legged hedgehog as the only resident, deep in hibernation.

I have to say a huge thank you to Sandra D - my 'second in command' for immediately stepping into the breach running to and fro with hospital visits, looking after Mollie for ten weeks which meant she wouldn't have to go in kennels, and caring for all the hedgehogs on top of everything else. Thank you also to Sandra G for all her help. I am still on crutches at the moment and although I am unable to take in any hedgehogs just now, I will be available via phone / email to give advice when needed. Hopefully it won't be too long before I am back on my feet and things get back to normal. After doing this work for nearly eighteen years I was considering taking a well earned break, but this was not exactly the break I had in mind!



2012 Calendar photo competition



Following the huge success of our very first calendar, we are inviting entries for a photography competition. The thirteen winning images will be used in our calendar for 2012.

We are looking for all sorts of interesting photos / artwork of hedgehogs. They will need to be submitted in landscape digital format at 300 dpi (minimum) - obviously the higher the resolution the better the image quality.

All entries must be received by 1st September 2011, so there is plenty of time to get those cameras clicking. The entry fee is just £1 per picture and cheques to be made payable to: Lancs Hedgehog Care. The thirteen best images (12 plus the cover photo) will be submitted for print in the new calendar. We hope the calendar for 2012 will be every bit as successful as 2011 in helping to raise much needed funds.

We hope you like our new cartoon hog on the front page courtesy of the very talented Yvonne Ashman, one of our members all the way from Australia. We would like to integrate him in various poses on our website too, so thank you Yvonne - he's perfect and you're a star! We now need a name folks, but please— not Spike, Henry, Harry , Sonic.....

I am looking for someone with ideas on how to re-design the homepage on the website as it needs updating. Someone with experience in graphic design. If you think you can help, I would be very grateful if you would please contact me. Thank you.

Thank you to everyone that sent in donations for the hedgehogs at Xmas. Especially to the kind person who sent us a £100 donation through the Charities Aid Foundation and wanted to remain anonymous.

Charity Shop.

Because I was out of action, we were not able to do the shop in February as originally planned, instead we are now booked in for the week beginning 16th July.

If anyone has anything to donate to help us raise funds, we would be very grateful.

THE LANCASHIRE HEDGEHOG CARE TRUST

Registered Charity No. 1092285

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New release programme

Every year we take in many sick, injured and orphaned hedgehogs. Once these hedgehogs are made well and are fully fit and healthy, our aim is that they are returned to the wild. A lot of time, effort and expense goes into making our little patients well again, and so obviously we want them to be released into an area which is as safe as possible and where they will thrive. There has been a drastic decline in hedgehog numbers across the UK and they could become extinct in little over a decade's time. This year we would like to try a different approach when releasing rehabilitated hedgehogs, and hopefully we can get you involved.

We are currently looking for volunteers to help us by joining our Release Programme. We need you and your neighbours to join together to create 'hedgehog friendly areas'. However, there are certain criteria that must be met before you can apply.

- Your house/garden must not be near a main road.
- Your garden must be **insecure** allowing a hedgehog access to roam freely in at least ten other insecure gardens. This means linking your garden with those of your neighbours (small hole in bottom of fence etc) to increase the area over which the released hedgehogs can roam.
- There must be plenty of ground cover, bushes, trees etc in your garden to provide nesting material and shelter for a hedgehog. Ideally, a purpose-built nest box could be suitably sited in your garden, although there is no guarantee that it will be used.
- You must be prepared to leave out supplementary food and water for the hedgehog every evening.
- There must be no badgers in your area.
- If you have a pond, it must have an escape route via a shallow end.
- There must be no use of slug pellets, pesticides, rat poison or weedkiller in your area.
- You must have your own transport and be able to collect a hedgehog from the Rescue Centre for release when necessary.
- Your neighbours must be made aware about the ongoing release programme, and if at any time a hedgehog is seen out in the daytime it will need to be rescued and advice sought from the Rescue Centre as soon as possible.
- You must be a Member of LHC. It costs just £10 a year and you will receive our quarterly newsletter 'Hogwatch' keeping you up to date with all the happenings at LHC.

By joining our Release Programme, you will be playing a vital role in rehabilitating a fit and healthy wild animal back to where it belongs - in the wild. If you would like to be involved, give me a call and we can discuss this further.

Always needed please—kitchen rolls or anything similar, also fleece blankets. Thank you.

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.