

Hoggie News



from The Lancashire Hedgehog Care Trust



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Hedgehogs now on the Government's list of endangered species

Many people assume that this time of the year is a quiet time for us. Quite the contrary!

We take in as many juvenile hedgehogs as possible, as it's these that would not be able to survive the winter months without help.

These start coming in around late October time and then we keep them all warm and well fed over winter and release them all fat and healthy the following spring.



So not a quiet time at all really, in fact come to think of it, we don't actually ever **get** a quiet time.

Well now it's official—hedgehogs are for the first time on the Government's list of endangered species. Hedgehogs, house sparrows and harvest mice are among the 1149 species that have been identified as being under threat and in need of help to survive. The hedgehog has taken such a hit in population size, that continuing trends would lead to its extinction by 2025.

Hedgehog numbers are dropping due to a number of factors including the removal of hedges – the creatures are a “hedge-loving species” – the use of chemicals on arable fields which has killed their insect diet, garden make-overs and building on brownfield sites.

Everything is fighting for space because we are building on so much and taking away more and more of what was the hedgehog's natural habitat. Hedgehogs now rely more on urban gardens for their food and shelter, and consequently are coming across many more dangers, such as falling into garden ponds, getting trapped down drains, garden netting, slug pellets, bonfires, strimmers and lawnmowers.

They die in carelessly discarded items of litter such as ice-cream tubs, after getting stuck inside them looking for a potential meal, or suffocate when they investigate the contents of an empty yoghurt pot or tin can. They get caught in plastic can holders, poisoned by pes-



ticides, slug pellets and weedkiller in fields and gardens.

And that's before the carnage that we all see on the roads. The hedgehogs form of defence is to roll up into a ball, which of course is no match for the motorcar.



People are concreting over their gardens, putting down decking and taking all the natural substrate out of the garden. Gardens are over-manicured and we are not helping hedgehogs by keeping everything spick and span, when there is not a leaf to be seen and no nesting material. Hedgehogs like the unkempt scruffy areas of a garden.

Hedgehog numbers have more than halved in the last 5 years. Everyone can do a little bit to help them. Leave a small area in your garden to grow wild. Do not use chemicals / pesticides in your garden—try environmentally safe products instead. Drive with more care, especially at night down country roads, and give wildlife a chance. Leave a small dish of cat food and a bowl of water out for your late night visitor.

It would be a tragedy if we were to lose this endearing little animal now—so please, before it's too late—**help us to help them.**



To all our readers

We will have the use of the Charity shop in Poulton for two weeks which this time will run from 1st-14th March 2008. We urgently need items to sell such as clothing, bric a brac, books, toys and small items of furniture. If anyone has any items they would like to donate, could they please contact me to arrange collection. Thank you

CAT FOOD APPEAL

A huge thank you to Bill Hamer and Terry Bates for responding to our appeal for tins of cat food.

The annual Xmas draw took place on 14th December 2007. The winners are as follows:
Adult Draw:
1st prize—Xmas food hamper—Mrs C. McDonald
2nd prize—Framed water colour hedgehog painting—Colin Draper.
Children's draw:
1st prize—Hedgehog designed backpack—Ava Harrison
2nd prize- Ceramic hedgehog moneybox—Mark Lucas
Congratulations to everyone!



Welcome to our new members Susan Davies, and Anne Leung. Also to Jacqueline Beare all the way from Switzerland!

Tales from LHC

This little hedgehog was found wandering along a busy main road. I say 'wandering', but the lady that had spotted him and stopped her car to take a look said he was trying to walk, but then kept falling over on his side. At first she wasn't even sure if it was a hedgehog or not, because this poor little thing hardly had any fur or spines. She wrapped him in her jacket and drove him to our Rescue Centre for some much needed attention.



What a sorry sight 'Tufty' was. I called him that because he had half a dozen tufts of fur left on his forehead and everywhere else was completely bald! Most of his spines had fallen out too, a condition usually caused by mites / ringworm. He was weak and exhausted and barely had the strength to stand up. We gave him replacement fluids and then popped him into a warm incubator.

Tufty will need weeks of treatment if we are to return him to his former handsome self. He will remain in our care now until Spring when we hope to release him back into the wild again. He is currently responding very well to treatment.

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Thank you to everyone that sent in a donation for the hedgehogs this Christmas. All but two of our residents are still awake, and these are demolishing almost half a tin of cat food each per night. Your donations are helping tremendously with the food bill, so thank you.

And finally.....our thanks to everyone that has supported our work during 2007. There are too many people to name individually, but we hope you all know who you are. We hope you will continue to support us during 2008.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

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

Empty square box for membership renewal.