



Highgate Veterinary Clinic

Small Animal Case Study

Hedgehog - Adult Saved from Pond and Baby Orphans



Cleaning off the weed

We always treat a few hedgehogs during the summer, usually orphaned or left behind babies or those injured by mowers. Our latest casualty was slightly different. He had been found in the garden pond and was covered in weed! The photo shows us cleaning him off.

Fortunately hedgehogs are good swimmers, but they can't climb up steep sides very well to get out if they fall in. This hedgehog will make a full recovery and will be returned to his garden tonight, but many are not found in time and drown.

So what can you do to help?

Place a ramp or a shingle bank to produce a safe exit from ponds.

Cover ponds over if this is not possible, but provide an alternative safe place for wildlife to drink.

Provide cat food for hungry hogs, their natural food of slugs can be in short supply during hot weather

Other Hedgehog tips

Slug pellets may kill slugs, but they also poison the hedgehog that eats the slug! Use beer traps instead.

The best policy with all wildlife is to look but don't touch. Sometimes baby hedgehogs get left behind or orphaned. Watch for a few hours before stepping in just in case the mother comes back. The baby hogs below were orphaned after their mother was killed on the road.



A snack in the ward before going "home" to his garden.

It is unusual to see hedgehogs during the day. If you do there is usually something the matter. Go and check the hog, if it can curl up and has nothing obviously wrong the best thing to do is to provide some tinned cat food and water and retreat to let it feed.

For more information visit the British Hedgehog Preservation Society web-site at www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk



By Liz Dodd