



Hedgehog Welfare

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What to do if you disturb a Hedgehogs Nest

If you know you have hedgehogs in your garden, please never disturb the nest to see the hedgehog/s, if they have young, sometimes they will leave them or even attack them. If it is the winter and they are hibernating you could be breaking the thermal properties of the nest.

If you ever accidentally disturb a hedgehog nest and the Mother is still with her hoglets (baby hedgehogs), please can you pick up the Mother immediately, if not she will run away, place her in a large box (cardboard or plastic) which has newspaper in the bottom and close the top or cover it, to make it dark inside the box and making sure she cannot escape. Then, wearing gloves pick up the nest with all the hoglets in it, careful not to drop any of the hoglet from the nest. Place the nest and hoglets into the box with the Mother, put a small dish of water in the box (and some cat food if you have any) remembering to do the box up again. Do not try to touch the hoglets or look in the box as this will disturb the Mother and she may attack or kill her babies. Telephone Hedgehog Welfare 07940 714830 Grantham/Newark Area (or your nearest Hedgehog Carer, list of carers are on www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk) straight away. That way the mother will hopefully look after her own babies, Hedgehog Welfare has special cages that has been especially made for Mum and hoglets and the carers will get some sleep, of course we will keep an eye on things which is possible in our cage and if necessary take over the feeding. We will only have to keep the feeding area part of the cage clean and the mother fed and watered, no nightly feeds. Of course once they are all big enough, the mother and hoglets will be returned to your garden were they belong.

If of course, you do not realise that you have disturbed a nest until it is too late and the mother has left the nest, please do not leave it too long before you contact us or another carer, the quicker we have them the more success we are likely to have. We suggest you pick them up in the nest, put them in a cardboard or plastic box which has newspaper on the bottom, making sure they cannot escape; even new born hedgehogs can move around and escape a low level box. Put a screw top wine bottle (or similar glass or plastic bottle which has a good screw top), filled with HOT water into the box, wrapping the bottle in newspaper to conserve the heat and stop the hoglets from getting too hot, remember to close the box as this will also keep them warm. This bottle is really important as they are small and cannot keep themselves warm, they will need this even on a really hot day. Then please phone for help as soon as possible, you do not know how long it is since the mother left and they could be dehydrated, so often we hear that they had been left for two or three days and then we do struggle to save them, especially if they are really tiny. Remember to keep the box covered to as this stops the flies laying their eggs on the hoglets which then turn into maggots.

If you are ever unsure what to do, please give us a call - do not leave it until it is too late.

It is of course better that nests are not disturbed, so between early May and end of September why not just do other types of gardening, like cutting the grass, a little pruning and weeding, then sit back and watch the wildlife in your own garden.