



Erinaceus europaeus
the European Hedgehog

They come in other shapes and forms as well



I come from Africa
and I am an African Pigmy Hedgehog



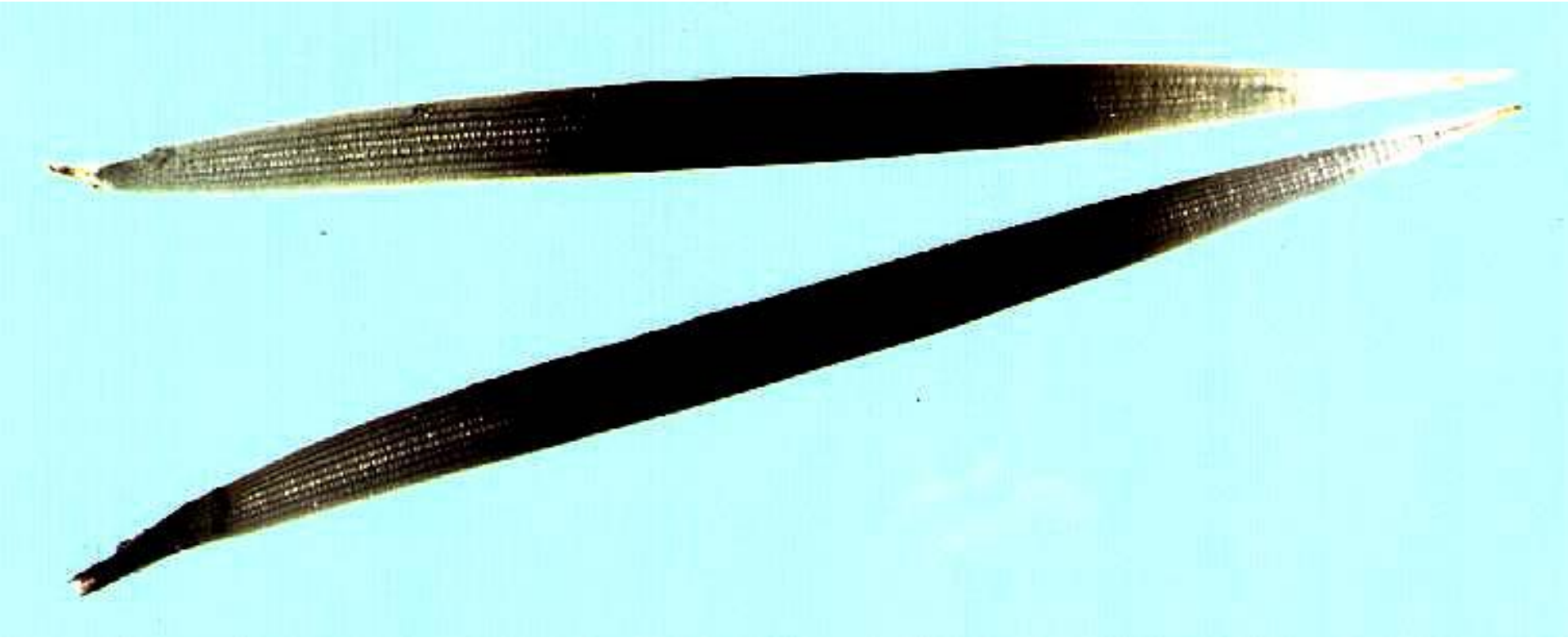
I come from Iraq
and I am a Long Eared Hedgehog

... and other colours, honey, blonde
and shades in between plus albino





The most noticeable thing about the hedgehog is its prickles



The prickles are specialised hairs and an adult hedgehog can have between 5-7000 prickles

Here is one we counted earlier –
no seriously this one had a skin
condition and after treatment the
prickles grew back



The sexes are easy to tell apart
– it is getting them to uncurl that
is the difficult bit



male



a female

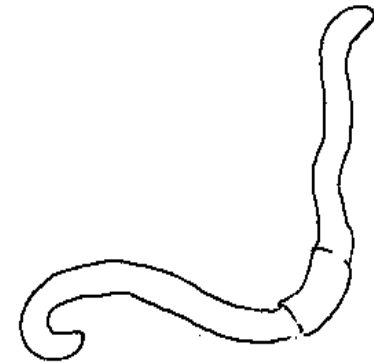
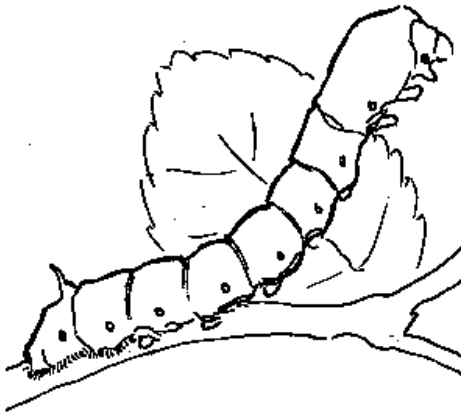
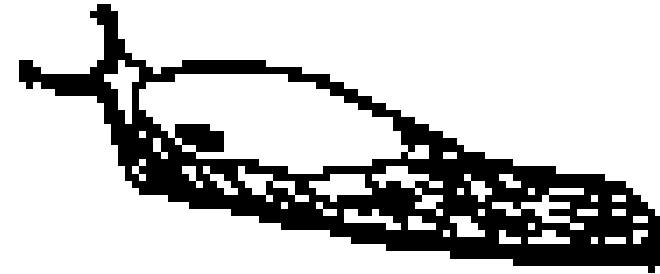


This is a hedgehog's nest. It will be built at ground level and under a bush or a shed, something that will stop bits blowing away. It will use leaves, dried grass, garden trimmings and even plastic bags.



The female hedgehog collects bedding material for the nest in her mouth. She forms a pile of material and goes inside, then turns round and round to shape the inside. She will keep adding to the inside making a nice layered nest. Sometimes they are seen doing this in the daylight – usually a indication that the birth is imminent.

WHAT DO HEDGEHOGS EAT?

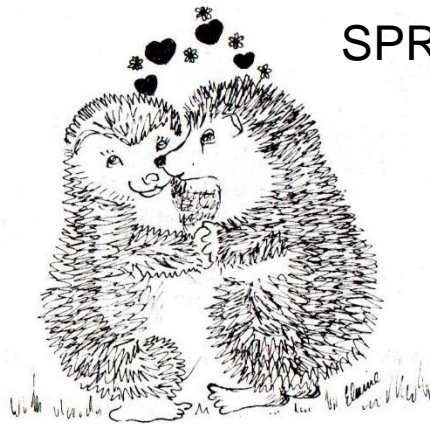


Almost anything they are opportunistic feeders.

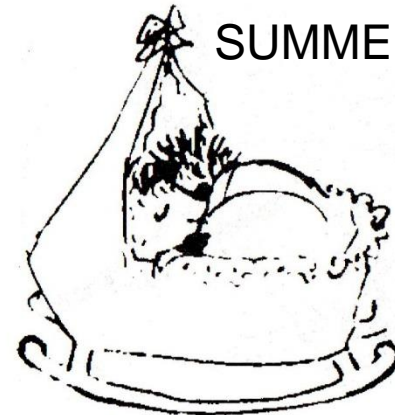
THE HEDGEHOG'S YEAR



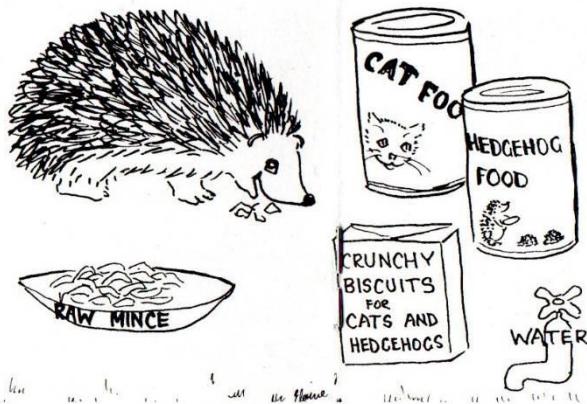
WINTER = hibernation



SPRING = love



SUMMER = new life



AUTUMN = feeding up for hibernation



WINTER = hibernation

**BABY
HEDGEHOGS ARE
CALLED ?**

HOGLETS - After a pregnancy of 32 days Mum gives birth to 4-5 hoglets. They weigh around 18-20gms each. You can also see it has a short tail.



They don't have any prickles that you can see. They start to push through the skin within about 2 hours and are white. There are around 200 in straight rows down their backs.

At 36 hours of age the brown, usual coloured prickles start to push through



There are 2 collective names for a group of hedgehogs either an array or a prickle.





When the hoglets are 8 days old they can curl into a ball



When they are 14 days old
their eyes open and the
ears open up soon after



Mum looks after the hoglets for around 8 weeks. At 4 weeks they start to come out of the nest with their mums to forage. Dad does not play any part in the rearing process.

If a female gives birth in care the hoglets grow very quickly and can reach 450-500gm by the time they are 8 weeks old, compared to 250gms in the wild.





In care new born hoglets need feeding every 90 minutes but as they grow they only need to be fed every 4 hours from 7am until 11 pm. They are fed a special milk formula and not cows milk.



Female hedgehogs stimulate their hoglets to wee & poo by licking them. Carers prefer to use a cotton bud dipped in some baby oil and rub the tummy with that. Same effect!



Once they get the hang of the hand feeding they are given a dish of special milk in a jam jar lid, they sneeze and splutter a bit but soon get the hang of it and then some solid meat based cat food can be added to the milk. This picture also shows how long a hedgehogs legs are. Usually they move around like a hovercraft but if in danger they can sprint away at 5-6 miles an hour.

motor-mall.co.uk
PULL it, PEDAL it, to Motor Mall...
If it's got wheels we'll give you a
PART EXCHANGE

Jersey Evening Post
Motoring
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AUGUST
USED VEHICLE



When they get the taste of a new flavour or a new smell they may self anoint. The one on its back is doing this.



Self anointing. They salivate and spread the saliva over their prickles. It is almost an urge and they often topple over in their attempt to reach as far back as possible. At the moment it is not known why they do this.

In care when they reach 6 weeks of age the milk is stopped.





In care hedgehogs are weighed regularly. For the hoglets, this is to check they are doing well when being hand reared. For older ones we need to know whether they are large enough to release especially in the winter when they will soon have to hibernate.



Hedgehogs are the gardeners friend. They eat lots of different pests



However they can be injured when we turn our compost heaps – so take care.

They can become entangled in our netting – so keep it about 9-12 inches above the ground so the plants can grow up to it and the hedgehogs can go under it. This also applies to tennis nets, blown over badminton nets, children's football nets and any other form of netting.





This is a relatively safe way of burning rubbish but a pile of rubbish on the soil is an open invitation to a hedgehog to make a nest in it and sadly if the fire is lit the hedgehog burns to death. So move any piles of rubbish before you burn them or better still recycle as much as you can.



Try not to use chemicals and if you must then do use them safely.



We strim them with our strimmers – try cutting the grass down to about a foot off the ground and then check for hedgehogs, frogs etc before cutting to ground level



Hedgehogs are good swimmers but drown if they cannot get out. Put some plastic coated wire netting to go down into the pond to act as a scrambling net – or when constructing a new pond have a slope at one end so hedgehogs can walk out. In hot weather keep the pond level topped up.



Keep drains covered to stop hedgehogs falling down and becoming trapped. Any new holes for fence posts, footing, bean trenches etc should be covered or a plank placed in the hole to act as a ramp for them to use to climb out.



Keep bags off the ground so hedgehogs don't climb in and get put out with the rubbish, or sent to the charity shop.



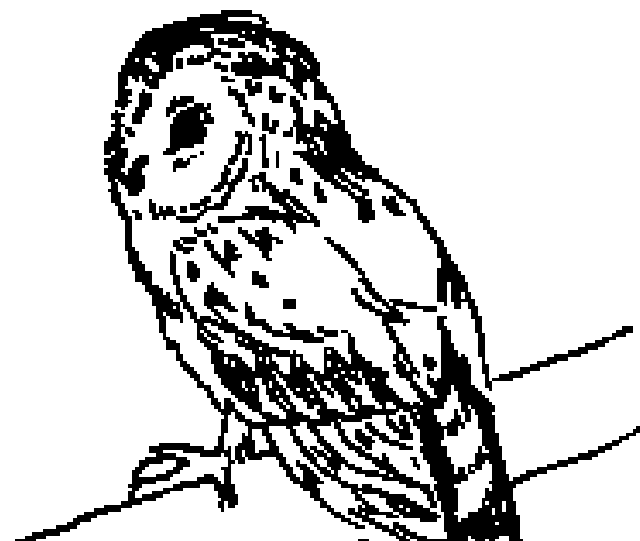
Keep dogs that you know will attack hedgehogs under control especially at night. Perhaps keep the dog on a lead when it goes out in the garden last thing at night.

and out and about
don't drop litter.



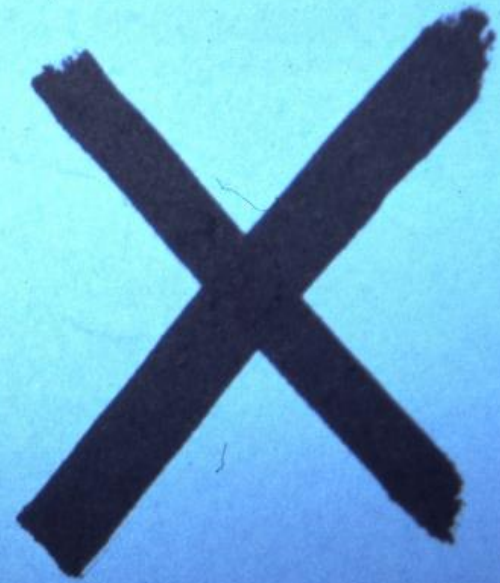


Some but not all cattle grids has hedgehog ramps so any hedgehog falling in has a way out. Check you local grids.



Although we can protect them in our own gardens and feed them there are still other dangers they have to face. In built up areas road traffic is a major killer and in the countryside their natural predators are badgers and some foxes and in Europe the Eagle Owl although in the UK there are only a few escapees of these owls at present.

HOW CAN
YOU HELP
YOUR LOCAL
HEDGEHOGS?



No milk as it can
cause tummy upsets
– so only give water.

So what can we do, other than making our gardens safer, to attract them.



Well we can provide them with food. Meat based cat or dog food, commercial hedgehog food or dry cat biscuits are all acceptable.



However that can also attract the cats.



So we need to put the food under something low ie under a shed that is raised off the ground or provide a feeding station. The feeding station needs to have a hole about 5 inches by 5 inches to allow the hedgehog access but not the cats.





Provide holes between gardens so hedgehogs can roam more freely



Try to make your gardens and your local environment safer for hedgehogs, if possible provide extra food especially in dry weather or coming up to winter and, maybe even build a nest box, so ...

That's all for now folks.

If you see any hedgehog, dead or alive, you can map its location on the following site

<https://bighedgehogmap.org/holes-for-hedgehogs-home/map-hedgehog-sighting>.

Or if you prefer, and it is in Minehead, let me know when and where you have seen it, provide address and postcode and I will map it for you.

Best wishes

Kay Bullen

kaybullen@sky.com



If you find a sick, injured or orphaned hedgehog
call the British Hedgehog Preservation Society
who keep a directory of hedgehog rehabilitators.
Tel 01584 890801