

British Hedgehog Preservation Society

Hedgehogs In Enclosed Gardens



HEDGEHOGS SHOULD ONLY BE KEPT IN ENCLOSED GARDENS IF THEY CANNOT COPE IN THE WILD BECAUSE OF AN INJURY (eg AMPUTATED FRONT LEG). FULLY FUNCTIONING HEDGEHOGS CAN TRAVEL UP TO TWO MILES A NIGHT IN THEIR FORAGING AND WOULD NOT SETTLE IN A CONFINED ENVIRONMENT. IF YOU HAVE AN ENCLOSED GARDEN AND WISH TO OFFER IT AS A SAFE RELEASE SITE FOR A RECUPERATED HEDGEHOG THAT CANNOT BE RETURNED TO THE WILD CONTACT YOUR LOCAL ANIMAL SANCTUARY OR HEDGEHOG CARER (THE BHPS SHOULD BE ABLE TO GIVE YOU AN APPROPRIATE NAME AND CONTACT PHONE NUMBER).

Part of the
Know your Hedgehog
series

*PUBLISHED BY THE BRITISH HEDGEHOG PRESERVATION SOCIETY,
HEDGEHOG HOUSE, DHUSTONE, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 3PL
www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk*

If you are lucky enough to acquire a hedgehog in need of a safe environment the following will help you to look after him/her.

HOUSING YOUR HEDGEHOG

Line box with thick newspaper on base and fill with dry straw. Sprinkle a little "Head to Tail" flea powder, made by Coopers or Rid-Mite by Johnson's onto newspaper (and on hedgehog if possible), or any flea powder that contains Pyrethrum and is suitable for cage birds, to deter fleas and ticks. See BHPS leaflet 'HEDGEHOG HOMES' for further ideas on making a suitable house, or the BHPS Hologogue for ready made homes.

Emergency house - short term. Bag of straw, knot open end, punch hole at ground level and poke 3-4 holes with finger on top. Place on ground.

YOUR GARDEN should be 'Hedgehog friendly', i.e. no pesticides or slug pellets used, escape ramps of chicken wire or rocks placed in ponds and no netting to trap delicate legs. Ensure that swimming pool covers are well attached in winter and that the pool is checked EVERY DAY in summer. Polystyrene floats left on the top of the pool can sometimes help to save a life.

NB: NEVER SPRAY HEDGEHOGS FOR FLEAS. NEVER USE ANY ORGANO PHOSPHATES IN GARDEN AS THESE ARE LETHAL TO HEDGEHOGS.

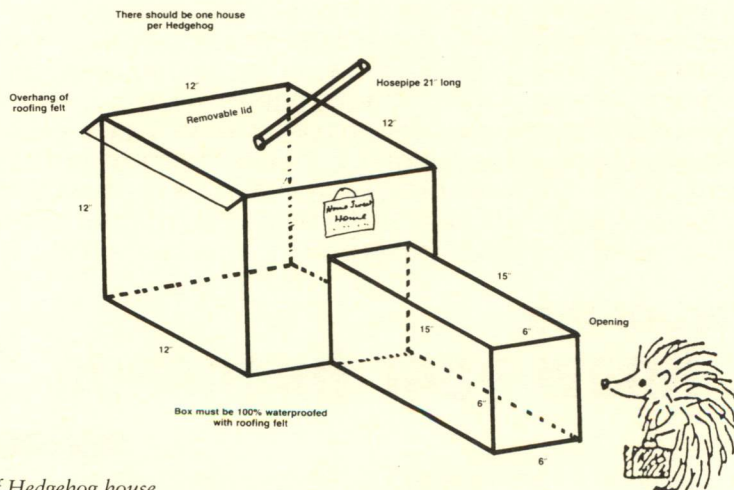


Diagram of Hedgehog house

CAPTIVE HEDGEHOGS MUST BE FED EVERY NIGHT, EVEN WHEN YOU ARE ON HOLIDAY. THEY WILL EAT GARDEN PESTS BUT WILL ALSO NEED A SUPPLEMENTARY FEED. THE FOOD SHOULD BE GIVEN AT DUSK - AFTER ALL FLIES HAVE GONE, AND ANY LEFTOVER FOOD REMOVED EARLY IN THE MORNING BEFORE FLIES ARRIVE.

Feeding your Hedgehog

DIET:

- 1) Cat Biscuits
- 2) Tinned dog food - white meat flavours eg chicken, turkey, rabbit etc., not in gravy
- 3) Pet shop brawn for dog/cat - not fish flavour
- 4) Spikes Hedgehog Food, other specially prepared Hedgehog Food
- 5) Raw mince
- 6) Any raw or cooked meat leftovers - not liver or pork
- 7) Chicken - raw or cooked, excluding the bones
- 8) A little muesli or chopped digestive biscuits - unsweetened and moistened

The daily meal should consist of meat from any of the above and 2 sorts of fibre from the above list. FRESH WATER MUST ALWAYS BE AVAILABLE in several different places in the garden.

The dish of food should be placed on newspaper well into a tunnel (74cms (29") long by 16cms (6") diameter piece of drain pipe, bricked each side to deter other animals (e.g. cats) from eating it.

During hibernation cat biscuits should always be left in the tunnel. When these are eaten give fresh food for 1-2 days and then return to biscuits. Hibernation is not continuous and hedgehogs do sometimes wake up - this uses up energy which will need to be replaced, so they look for food.

Caring for the health of your hedgehog

- **Do not allow them to get too fat.** The maximum weight for a female hedgehog is 1.361kg (3lb) and 1.588kg (3½lb) for a male. The minimum weight for hibernation is 500 - 700g (1-1½lb). Try to ensure that the hedgehog is near or over this. If your hedgehog appears poorly check ears for septic infection and / or maggot infestation. Go to the vet at once. S/he will remove maggots and eggs and treat infection.
- **Eyes** - sometimes white, fatty tissue appears from under eyelids when hedgehog opens eyes wide. This is fat deposit and will go if hedgehog dieted for 1-2 weeks, i.e. cut food by up to ½ for 1-2 weeks. These fat deposits can obscure vision so must be got rid of by dieting.
- **Dust around the ears and eyes** is probably mange mite. Inject IVOMEK for pigs 0.03ml per 1.0 - 1.5kg (2-3lb) hog weekly for 4 weeks. See vet.

• **Baldness** is usually ringworm. Bath in IMAVEROL (obtained from your vet) twice weekly and give GRISEOVAN tablets for 6-12 weeks (from vet 1/4 of 100g tablet daily) powdered on food or powder 1/2 teaspoon on food (powder strength 7.5 w/w griseofulvin ph.eur) can do both together and is very effective. Continue for three months or will recur.

• **Worming** - Hedgehogs will pick up worms from slugs and snails so they must be wormed regularly. During March / April and again in September / October sprinkle 1 good (1/4tsp) pinch per hedgehog of PANACUR granules, (again obtained from your VET), on food 3 times a day, a fortnight apart (eg Sunday, 2 weeks later on Sunday, 2 weeks later on Sunday and stop) or IVOMEK as above but only one injection needed.

• **FOR VET:** to examine a hedgehog - Anaesthetise with Halothane Gas. Ketamine will give hallucinations and the hedgehog will be unhandleable for 7-10 days.

• **Pneumonia** - See vet. 0.5ml CEPOREX two times daily for 14 days or longer If very snuffly 0.1ml BETASOLAN 2 x daily for up to six days.

• **Wounds** - Most infections and wounds respond to CLAMOXYL 0.5ml 2 x daily for 3 weeks or longer. Long acting CLAMOXYL only lasts for 24 hours in hedgehogs as they have a very fast metabolism. See vet.

• **Traces of blood in faeces** - coccidiosis, KAOTIOTIC tablets from vet. Powdered and sprinkled on food. 1/2 1 tablet per hog daily for 7 days.

• **Bone infections** - (eg torn out claws) - 1/2 1 25mg ANTIROBE daily sprinkled on food for 6-8 weeks or longer in severe infection. See vet. Or 0.4ml SYNULOX 2 x daily for 3-4 weeks or longer. See vet.

Miscellaneous

Fleas - can be controlled by sprinkling hog on back with 'Head to Tail' / Rid-Mite or any organic powder containing pyrethrum. Hedgehogs do not need their fleas. Hedgehogs fleas will live on no other animal. **NEVER SPRAY HEDGEHOGS WITH DOG OR CAT FLEA SPRAYS AS THEY MAY BE TOXIC TO THE HEDGEHOG.** BHPS booklet about treating hedgehogs may be useful, in case 'your' hedgehog should become poorly, it gives basic advice, treatments and dosages for a hedgehog.

Remember - Hedgehogs are nocturnal, they are active at dusk and through the night. They are not pets, but can become quite unafraid and very grateful for the care you give.

Lifespan - In the wild with no human help their lifespan is much shorter than when kept in enclosed garden and well cared for. The longest living known hedgehog to date was fourteen years old when he died and was very much missed by his 'owners'.

For further information please send a s.a.e. to:-

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Price 25p

