



Hedgehogs



Hedgehogs are easy to recognize. They are **small** (between 14cm and 30cm in length), **brown** and round, and have spines on their back..

They sleep during the day and come out at night or late in the evening.

Hedgehogs hibernate from around **November** to early **April**. (It can depend on how cold it is).

You might hear them snuffling around as they search for food.

They love to eat insects - big juicy worms and slugs, and crunchy beetles. They also eat snails, eggs and soft fruit.

If you want to leave food out for them, you can leave cat food or dog food. You can buy special hedgehog food from pet shops (that is what the one in the picture is eating.. You should also leave a little bowl of fresh water for them to drink.

DON'T GIVE THEM MILK AS THIS WILL MAKE THEM POORLY.

Did you know?

1. Hedgehogs can live for six-seven years.
2. People used to call them **Urchins**.
3. They spend most of their lives on their own – except when they are very young. (one night we had five in our garden – two adults and three babies)
4. A baby hedgehog is called a **hoglet**.

5. A group of hedgehogs is called an **array**.

It might be hard to see, but there are 4 in our garden in this picture.



6. They can have between 5000 and 7000 spines on their backs. They are not *very* sharp but they *are* sharp enough to stop other creatures trying to eat them.
7. When they are frightened, they curl up into a ball. This helps protect their tummies, legs and head from other predators. Unfortunately, it doesn't protect them against cars.
8. They like to hibernate in a nest of leaves or logs. Sometimes they can be found under compost heaps. You have to be careful when moving wood piles or compost heaps in your garden (just like in the book).
9. Hedgehogs can swim but they can't climb up the slippery sides of a swimming pool or pond. A piece of netting or pile of stones will help them climb out.
10. Sunday the 2nd of February is National Hedgehog Day.