

## Chapter 1 : African Pygmy Hedgehogs –“ Emergencies | Hedgehogs as Pets

*The most common species of domesticated hedgehog is the white-bellied or four-toed hedgehog, also called African pygmy hedgehog (Atelerix albiventris). The Algerian hedgehog (Atelerix algirus) is a separate species of hedgehog.*

About Hedgehogs Hedgehogs in the wild are shy, nocturnal, insectivorous mammals. The closest living animal related to the hedgehog is the shrew. Hedgehogs are more closely related to shrews and moles than rodents like porcupines , rats, mice, or hamsters. Like shrews and moles, hedgehogs have poor eyesight and use a keen sense of smell and hearing to find insects and other prey. The species most often kept as pets is the domesticated African pygmy hedgehog , one of the smaller species. Hedgehogs As Pets If you are considering getting a hedgehog as a pet, here are some things to keep in mind: They need an exercise wheel, and will run on it at night, making some sound. They eat at night and make crunching noises as they munch their kibble. They also will attempt to burrow and play with whatever materials they have available. A pet hedgehog is going to make various noises through the night. They need a mature caretaker. While kids may enjoy playing with a hedgehog, the hedgehog will need a very responsible individual to meet their needs. They need their homes to be regularly cleaned, nails trimmed, food and water replenished daily, bedding cleaned very regularly, heat carefully maintained esp. If you want a friendly pet, they require a lot of patience and regular attention to socialize them. Once they reach a certain length they will bother the hedgehog who will be less inclined to walk or exercise on their wheel, and eventually not run on the wheel at all. Some owners find their hedgehogs are more relaxed after a bath, making clipping easier, but this is not universal. Knowing what your habitat will need, and having that set up before bringing your hedgehog home will make life easier for everyone. When a hedgehog is happy their quills will be relaxed, will lay flat, and they can be touched and held without getting poked. When they are upset they will quill up, pointing their quills out and bracing their quills against each other to form a sharp prickly ball. While this is very unlikely to draw blood unless you are really careless , they do form spiky balls. You can safely scoop them up and if they are socialized they will relax, but part of owning a hedgehog is getting poked sometimes. The biggest quill risk is accidentally stepping on a shed quill. Cat food seems to be a fair approximation. There are many types and research should be done into what are better types. Hedgehogs can be very picky eaters who might reject a food for mysterious reasons. Some hedgehogs will eat crickets or mealworms, or sometimes freshly cooked scrambled egg. Ours only eats some types of cat food. Hedgehogs need socialization to be good pets. If they are not socialized when you go to pick them up they will quill up, hiss, and pop, and will not calm down. If they are socialized they might still quill up, hiss, or sometimes pop, but they will relax when they smell your hands and will be friendly. A breeder should be able to give you a pedigree. There is a genetic disease called Wobbly Hedgehog Syndrome that can afflict pet hedgehogs. Getting a hedgehog from a pet store or classified ad might turn out fine, but without a good pedigree you will live with the risk of wobbly hedgehog syndrome. You also might need to work harder to build up trust with your pet. If you get a female you also have some greater risk that they are pregnant, which can be very difficult to deal with and is not something any new owner would enjoy dealing with. We got our hedgehog from Janda Exotics. Ashley was great to work with and an excellent breeder, our hedgehog was healthy and very well socialized when we got her. Here is a list of breeders: If hedgehogs get too cold below 70 degrees they may attempt to hibernate. Since pet hedgehogs do not build up the needed fat stores that they would in nature before hibernating, this can be fatal. This makes sense, since they eat cat food. As they get older they will get more control over these things, and some hedgehogs can be litter trained. They will play in limited ways tubing, maybe tug-of-war, hiding things for them to find, burrowing around in various materials , but are very unlikely to learn to respond to their name , or to learn tricks. They also have poor eyesight and can walk off the edges of tables or furniture if not watched. This is just a short list to help set expectations and not anything like a complete guide. Have questions or comments about hedgehogs, manners, grace, delightfulness, space travel, pirate adventures, founding a startup, grammar, etc? Contact us at theprincess [at] princesspricklepants. This book covers the aspects of keeping a pet hedgehog that a new owner most needs to know, and gives a very accurate and reliable account. They also run photo contests

throughout the year that are a lot of fun.

### Chapter 2 : About African Pygmy Hedgehogs as Pets | The Pleasantries of Princess Pricklepants

*The hedgehogs commonly kept as pets in North America appear to be a mix of species, originally native to Africa. The term "African Pygmy Hedgehog" is a descriptive term (coined by breeders), rather than a true species name.*

Sometimes called the four-toed hedgehog, it is the smallest member of the hedgehog family. The African pygmy hedgehog is covered in tiny, non-barbed spines. These spines are different from the spines on a porcupine as they are permanently embedded in the skin of the animal and are not shed. *Atelerix* has a generalized body plan and, like most insectivores, a small brain and a simple gastrointestinal system. They have blunt, broad molars and a relatively low metabolic rate that is attributed to their largely insectivorous diet. Where is the Four-toed Hedgehog found? Hedgehogs can be found on the continents of Africa, Asia, and Europe. *Atelerix* is widely encountered in savanna and steppe zones of equatorial Africa from Senegal to Ethiopia and south to the Zambezi River, and it is sporadically found in drier regions of Africa. They occupy a variety of habitats, including grasslands, woodlands, bush, thickets, plains, agricultural land, and even suburban gardens they have also been encountered in stables and food storage buildings in suburban areas and areas where livestock are kept, which attract insects. *Atelerix* prefers elevations at or below meters and require areas with dry soils; they are not encountered in marshes or dense forests. Important habitat features include a plethora of shelters to choose from they usually change their resting site each day, including matted grass, leaf litter, rocky crevices, termitaries termite mounds, or previously-dug burrows. They tend to prefer grassy areas with light undergrowth. Behavior The four-toed hedgehog is solitary and only comes together with conspecifics animals of the same species during the breeding season. These animals are territorial and will engage in aggressive behavior if their territory is encroached upon. In a territorial attack, the animal will erect the spines around its head and snort, grunt, hiss, and butt heads with the offending individual. *Atelerix* has been known to attack predators by erecting its spines and lunging at its attacker. African pygmy hedgehogs are primarily nocturnal but can be crepuscular active at dawn and dusk. During extreme weather conditions, they will aestivate a form of summer hibernation initiated by extreme heat whereby they will go into hiding, lower their metabolic rate, and subsist off of fat reserves until environmental conditions improve. Vocalizations include a repertoire of snorts, hisses, grunts, and twitters. During courtship, males serenade females with a birdlike call, and she will respond with hisses, snorts, and evasive movements. Like all hedgehogs, the African pygmy exhibits an interesting behavior known as self-anointing. This curious behavior usually occurs when the animal encounters an irritating substance; the hedgehog forming a bubbly foam substance in its mouth and subsequently rubs the mixture over its spines. One individual was observed chewing the parotid glands of a toad and self-anointing with the toxic mixture perhaps a defense against predators? The true reason for self-anointing is still unknown to scientists, but it has been hypothesized that it is used to attract attention, males from females and juveniles from their mother. Although its specific origin is unknown, scientists know that this is an innate instinctual behavior as it has been observed in juveniles whose eyes have not yet opened. Reproduction African pygmy hedgehogs have no apparent mating season and breed throughout the year. They become sexually mature at approximately one year of age. Gestation lasts 30 to 40 days and litters range in size from two to ten young with females typically having one litter per year. Neonates babies are born blind and naked; white spines emerge after two to three days. Between 8 and 18 days, the eyes will open and the white, infant spines are shed and replaced with spines of the adult coloration. At 40 days the young will accompany the mother on foraging trips and will eat increasing amounts of solid foods until they are completely weaned. The four-toed hedgehog is an insectivore and primarily eats insects termites, beetles and other arthropods spiders, scorpions, millipedes. They do consume a variety of other foods as well, including invertebrates snails, earthworms, slugs, land crabs small vertebrates snakes, lizards, frogs, young birds, and eggs and plant material roots, fruits, fungi. Some have even been observed consuming venomous snakes! Prey is typically located by sight, scent, and sound and can be located as far as 4 cm deep in the soil. Live prey is snapped up into the mouth and chewed noisily followed by muzzle licking. Larger live prey is shaken to death before consumption. *Atelerix* will readily consume carrion, and in suburban areas, they have been observed

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scavenging road killed carcasses. To learn more about this interesting critter, we encourage you to check out the following link:

### Chapter 3 : How to Care for African Pygmy Hedgehogs: 9 Steps (with Pictures)

*The African pygmy hedgehog is by far the most common species of domesticated hedgehog. There are two other more rare types of domesticated hedgehogs; the Egyptian long-eared hedgehog and the Indian long-eared hedgehog.*

In New Jersey and Wyoming , a permit is required. In Wisconsin , an import permit from the state department of agriculture is required to bring a hedgehog into the state. In Fairfax County , Virginia, all hedgehogs are illegal. In practice, enforcement of this law has been rumored to be arbitrary and ill-informed. Hedgehogs of all kinds are illegal, along with other exotic pets such as iguanas , tarantulas , scorpions , and snakes. European hedgehogs are protected and cannot be kept as pets. African Pygmy hedgehogs may not legally be kept as pets. Enclosures[ edit ] In the wild, a hedgehog will cover many miles each night. Without room, a hedgehog will show signs of depression, such as excessive sleeping, refusal to eat, repetitious behaviour, and self-mutilation. Due to their small size obesity is a very dangerous problem and hedgehogs require a fair amount of exercise to avoid liver problems due to excess weight. A wheel is necessary to provide hedgehogs with exercise. Some hedgehogs refuse to run in a wheel, so other forms of exercise must be substituted. When choosing a wheel, it must have a solid floor. If an open-wire wheel is used, the hedgehog will continually fall between the bars and possibly break a leg. Wheels with crossbars can also cause facial injuries as hedgehogs have been known to look sideways out of the wheel while running. For this reason "bucket" type wheels are preferred by many hedgehog owners, and they are available from many breeders. DIY articles are also readily available for those wishing to attempt making one themselves. A domesticated baby hedgehog Pet cages with a floor area measuring 5 square feet 0. Cages with wired floors are dangerous for hedgehogs because they can easily slip and get a limb caught in the wire. Multi-level ferret or rabbit cages can allow a hedgehog more room to explore without taking up extra floor space, but when using multiple levels, keep in mind that a hedgehog has poor eyesight, can climb easily, but has difficulty descending and often does not seem to understand heights, so it is highly recommended that ramps and levels be completely enclosed to prevent a fall. Some people use large glass aquariums but these can be heavy and awkward to clean and offer little ventilation. Very large plastic totes are a common DIY cage and are inexpensive, easy to clean, and versatile, but they must be of a considerable size and must be ventilated properly. Vellux blanket material is preferred for bedding by many because it does not fray and is easy to clean up. This is a plush velour-like material often used for hotel blankets. Fleece blankets can also be used, but the edges should be sewn so that there are no stray threads in which a hedgehog could catch itself. Aspen shavings are also a popular choice, due to the convenience of being able to change them instead of washing. However, pine and cedar are not recommended as they contain oils that are harmful to the lungs and skin of a hedgehog. Careful research is necessary before using any unusual bedding materials. As insectivores , hedgehogs need a diet that is high in protein and low in fat. They also require chitin , which comes from the exoskeleton of insects; fiber in the diet may be a substitute for the chitin component. There are prepared foods specifically for pet hedgehogs and insectivores, including foods made from insect components. Also available are alimentary powders to sprinkle on other food which provide chitin and other nutrients. Hedgehog caretakers should read labels on packaged food to ensure a basis of protein, rather than a basis of carbohydrate. Most hedgehog owners feed their hedgehogs cat food. A dry cat-food mix can serve as a daily base food. Normal cat food is high in fat and iron, so indoor or light formulations are generally more appropriate. Most breeders also suggest foods derived primarily from chicken. There are hedgehog foods available at many pet shops, but most do not seem to be good quality formulations and will not provide the quality and level of nutritional contents necessary for a healthy hedgehog. One should always check the ingredients list for good quality ingredients and nutritional information for high protein and low-fat content. Pet hedgehogs may eat such table foods as cooked, lean chicken , turkey , beef or pork in moderation due to fat content. Hedgehogs will often eat small amounts of vegetables and can be given small amounts of fruit as treats. Baby food is a common way to feed treats. Hedgehogs are lactose -intolerant and will have stomach problems after consuming most dairy products, though occasional plain low-fat yogurt contains bacteria that naturally process lactose or cottage cheese

seem to be well tolerated. Sugar intake should be restricted to fruits, and treats with added sugar should be avoided. Fresh, canned, or freeze-dried mealworms , waxworms , and crickets are appropriate as limited treats though in moderation, as many feed insects are high in fat. Many pet stores carry these feed insects. Hedgehog caretakers should avoid bait -shop or wild caught insects, which may be contaminated with insecticides. Hedgehogs can easily become obese. Hedgehogs vary in size so there is no "goal weight" for a hedgehog, but if they can no longer roll completely into a ball it is a clear sign of obesity. Due to their mouth shape hedgehogs should not be fed any nuts; as they prove to be a choking hazard. Nut butters are acceptable but are very high in fat so they should probably be avoided. Hedgehogs should never be fed avocados[ dubious â€” discuss ], onions, grapes or raisins, chocolate, any raw meat or egg yolks, or any canned or processed food. Hedgehogs often stop eating under situations of stress such as when adjusting to a new home. New owners will see that their hedgehogs will be eating very small portions if at all, during the first couple of days. If the lack of appetite persists, a good way to encourage your hedgehog to begin eating is to mix their cat food with foods that would be considered treats. Allergies[ edit ] Hedgehogs produce very little dander. After handling hedgehogs, some have claimed that pink dots on their hands is an allergic reaction. If a hedgehog is not clean, the pricks can become infected. The infection is from contaminants on the hedgehog or on the surface of the hands, not from an allergic reaction to the hedgehog. Hedgehogs are commonly allergic to wood oils. Wood bedding should be avoided, specifically cedar. The oil found in cedar can cause severe upper respiratory problems. Aspen however is widely accepted as a safe substitute. Diseases[ edit ] Hedgehogs are prone to many diseases, including cancer , which spreads quickly in hedgehogs, and wobbly hedgehog syndrome , a neurological syndrome. Some symptoms of wobbly hedgehog syndrome resemble those of multiple sclerosis MS in humans, therefore the condition the animal experiences can be compared with what MS patients experience. In many cases, the form of pneumonia that affects hedgehogs is bacterial in nature. If acted upon quickly, antibiotics can have a very positive effect. Signs to watch for include bubbles, excessive dripping, or constant sneezing. Hedgehogs should be bathed once a month with baby shampoo, a toothbrush, and warm water. You can bathe your hedgehog in your sink by simply brushing its spines with the toothbrush and some baby shampoo. If their nails are too large they could hurt themselves. There have been several reported cases of hedgehogs who have scratched their eyes and caused significant damage. Hedgehog nails can be trimmed with a cuticle cutter or baby scissors. Cages should be cleaned every two weeks and bedding should be changed just as often. If your hedgehog has a wheel in his cage, then the wheel should be cleaned every other day or so since hedgehogs tend to do their necessities while on the wheel.

### Chapter 4 : The prickly issue of pet hedgehogs | Environment | The Guardian

*Hello Hedgehog is a website that will help you decide if an African Pygmy Hedgehog is the right pet for you and if so we can direct you to the best breeders and products for your new little friend. We give you all the information you need about buying a pet hedgehog and how to care for it.*

African Pygmy Hedgehog Portrait of an African Pygmy Hedgehog The African pygmy hedgehog is the species of miniature hedgehog most commonly kept as a pet. Hedgehogs are not rodents, they are seventeen species of small animals in their own family. Hedgehogs have coarse hair on the face limbs and underbelly, and spines over the back and sides. The spines, also called quills, are modified hairs that are hollow and hardened. The hedgehogs quills are controlled by muscles running the length of the back. When threatened, the little hedgehog will raise its spines to look larger. The spines are sharp, and can effectively deter less determined hunters, but eagles, owls and weasels are their most common predators, and are willing to withstand a few piercings for a meal. African pygmy hedgehogs are nocturnal creatures that sleep during the day. They come out at night in search of an assortment of foods including frogs, worms, eggs, fallen fruit and other vegetation. They are voracious eaters and root about through leaves, soil and sand for their favorite insects, grubs, roaches, beetles and larvae. African hedgehogs in the wild also eat a lot of berries seasonally. How do hedgehogs mate? Hedgehogs are solitary animals and only socialize during mating season. Then they will pair off for what is often a very noisy courtship. A hedgehog male needs the female's full cooperation to avoid being pierced during mating. It sometimes takes several hours of circling each other during which they will be quite vocal, snuffling, chuckling and squeaking. If another male comes along, sparring may occur, and this is even louder. Damage is rare, but males will head butt, jaw and even wrestle like cats. The mating itself is careful with the female staying very still and the male climbing cautiously aboard. Both males and females may have multiple partners during breeding season. The female is pregnant for about 4 weeks, and has a litter of 4 or 5 babies typically. Baby hedgehogs are called hoglets, and they are born with their quills just below their skin to prevent injury to the mother. Within an hour or two of being born, the baby hedgehogs' spines actually break through the skin, and within a day or so they are hardened and quite sharp. Baby hedgehogs stay with their mothers for about five weeks before heading out on their own. The African pygmy hedgehog is actually a hybrid of two species, the North African or Algerian hedgehog, and the white-bellied or four-toed hedgehog. They have been bred in captivity for many years and are effectively domesticated animals. They are fun to watch, however, and with patience can come to enjoy being handled as well. African hedgehogs do well in large cages with exercise wheels provided. They are very active and curious, however and enjoy getting out to explore. Some people have even trained their little hedgehogs to walk on a harness and leash. This Form cannot be submitted until the missing fields labelled below in red have been filled in [Vote Here for Your Favorite Animal!](#) What do you think of these fabulous animals? Leave a comment in the box below.

*The African pygmy hedgehog is a hybrid of the four toed hedgehog and the Algerian hedgehog, and is the most popular species of domesticated hedgehog in the world. The practice of domesticating hedgehogs and keeping them as pets began in the 's, a relatively recent timeframe in animal husbandry terms.*

Be prepared Photo by Michelleness via Flickr A variety of issues may well arise with your hedgehog. The very first step you should take is to prepare in advance. It is not only vital to have a trusted regular vet, but in addition you need one that is accessible for out of hours and weekend emergency situations. In cooler weather conditions, heat your car up in advance. To help keep your pet warm put a hot water bottle, or something similar under a towel. Very carefully put the hedgehog inside a travel cage or some other suitable carrier and also cover the container using a towel or blanket. Bleeding If your hedgehog has an injury that is bleeding, apply pressure to the wound using a clean towel or gauze. Vomiting and diarrhoea Take away all food from the cage and provide small quantities of water or an oral electrolyte solution. Should the vomiting and diarrhoea persist seek out veterinary treatment without delay. Hypothermia If hedgehogs experience low temperature conditions they could become hypothermic. Signs that all might not be well Outlined below are several typical situations you may find yourself in, when you will have to make a decision whether to take your hedgehog to the veterinarian or not. Watch out for the following indicators: Book an appointment with your vet within 24 hours. This, clearly, is most certainly not a very good sign. Take your hedgehog to the veterinarian as quickly as you can. Make sure that you always keep him adequately warm. This does not always indicate that there is a problem. Occasionally hedgehogs stop eating for up to 3 days, and then start again as if nothing had happened. Furthermore, if your hedgehog has not drunk any water for 24 hours, you should again take him to the vet as water is very important. Take him to the vet immediately. The same substances can be lethal should you wait. It is much better to be safe than sorry. Take your pet to the veterinarian immediately. This could be a sign that your hedgehog is going into hibernation. Put him beneath your shirt or on a heating pad, making sure there is a towel or a blanket between the pad and your hedgehog. You should seek advice from your vet as soon as you can to find out how to treat it. If your hedgehog has dry flaky skin and is losing a lot of his quills, he probably has a mite infestation or maybe a fungal infection. These problems can easily be diagnosed and treated by a vet. If it looks like your hedgehog may have broken a limb take him to the vet immediately. An untreated fracture will probably heal badly and cause your hedgehog a lot of discomfort. A runny nose or discharge from the eyes could be a sign that your pet hedgehog has an upper respiratory infection. This can be quite easily dealt with by your vet, but could kill your hedgehog if left untreated. Unfortunately hedgehogs are quite prone to cancer. They may also develop cysts. You should take your hedgehog to a vet as soon as possible. If the poop is sticky, take your hedgehog to the vet immediately. Green poop is frequently an indicator of serious internal problems. Loose stools could be caused by a mild gastrointestinal problem due to change in diet etc. Green stool is often a general symptom of a very wide range of problems, some that may be quite benign and some can be very serious.

**Chapter 6 : African Pygmy Hedgehog | Hello Hedgehog**

*The African pygmy hedgehog is the species of miniature hedgehog most commonly kept as a pet. Hedgehogs are not rodents, they are seventeen species of small animals in their own family.*

It has short legs, short tail typically around 2. The ears and whiskers are both relatively large, implying that the animal has good senses. However, in some individuals, a small bony lump may be present in place of the hallux, or there may even be a well-developed toe, especially on the hind feet. The fur on the body is speckled grey in color, with brown around the muzzle, and white face, legs, and underparts. The upper body is covered in spines varying from 0. The spines are variably colored, but always have a white base and tip. Distribution and habitat[ edit ] The four-toed hedgehog is found across a wide swathe of central Africa, from Gambia and Senegal in the west, to Somalia in the east, and also in eastern Africa, as far south as Mozambique. Because it prefers to shelter in dry rocky or grassy areas, it avoids dense forest and swampland. When it is hotter than that, it tends to find shelter in a burrow and go into a state of estivation , or when it is colder it goes into a state of hibernation in order to conserve energy. Behaviour[ edit ] The four-toed hedgehog is a solitary, nocturnal animal. It generally moves along the ground, but is capable of both climbing and swimming when the need arises. It is highly energetic, sometimes covering miles of ground in a single night as it forages for insects , grubs, snails , spiders , some plant matter, and even small vertebrates. It has a high tolerance for toxins and has been recorded consuming scorpions and even venomous snakes. When attacked, the animal can scream loudly, and males also produce a birdlike call during courtship. Aestivation rarely lasts for more than six weeks. It creates a large amount of foam by combining the aromatic substance with its saliva, and spreads it onto its spines. The purpose of this behavior is poorly understood, but it is thought to be a defensive action, as hedgehogs have been known to self-anoint with poisonous toads. The female typically gives birth to a single litter each year, which may contain from two to ten pups, with four or five being most typical. Males approach the female and court her with high pitched vocalizations. Ovulation is induced , occurring only in the presence of a male, normally within 24 hours of mating. The young are covered in a thin membrane to protect the mother from their already present spines, though it takes them some time to gain control over the muscles that move them. At birth, the young weigh about 10 grams 0. The spines stiffen within a few hours, and further spines emerge over the first few days of life as the skin, initially swollen and edematous , begins to dry and contract. The deciduous teeth appear at about three weeks, with the permanent teeth following at seven to nine weeks. The young are weaned by six weeks and leave the mother not long after. They can become sexually mature at two to three months of age, although in the wild they will not typically breed during the first year of life. Please help improve this section by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed. September Learn how and when to remove this template message The four-toed hedgehog is one of the most popular species of domesticated hedgehog sold in the exotic pet trade. It is bred extensively for color and temperament and is even displayed in competitive hedgehog shows. Lifespan is typically 4â€”6 years. Due to its energetic nature, many owners provide their hedgehog with a large running wheel. Some measure the distances their pets run every night, and some have claimed that their hedgehogs run upwards of 8 kilometres 5. When kept in captivity, at more regulated temperatures, this species does not typically display its estivation or hibernation behaviour. Due to the large amount of breeding stock available in captive collections, the four-toed hedgehog is rarely imported from the wild any longer. Several US and Canadian localities ban ownership of this species, or require special permits for them. Hedgehogs are generally hardy animals when kept properly, though they may be vulnerable to the growth of tumors as they mature. Mammal Species of the World: A Taxonomic and Geographic Reference 3rd ed. Johns Hopkins University Press.

### Chapter 7 : About The African Pygmy Hedgehog | Hedgehog Care

*The African pygmy hedgehog is a nocturnal creature that begins foraging at dusk and continues to do so through most of the night, but always in a solitary fashion. In fact, male African pygmy hedgehogs stay at least 60 feet (18 m) apart from one another.*

Hedgehogs for Sale We have babies available all year round Hedgehogs are remarkably cute little animals. Their backs are covered with prickly spines and their bellies are soft and furry. When threatened or scared they roll into a tight ball. When relaxed their spines lay almost flat. They make a good beginner exotic pet as they are easy to care for and just plain fun. Despite their impressive display of little spines they are easily tamed, and when they feel secure, their little quills feel like hairbrushes. Hedgehogs love to explore and run around. Our baby hedgehogs start weaning from mom at around 6 weeks of age and are then handled daily and socialized when they are sent to their new homes at weeks old. What is a Hedgehog? Is that a baby porcupine?? They look very similar, but they are not even related. An african pygmy hedgehog is an insectivore, not a rodent like the porcupine. African Pygmy hedgehogs have a thick coat of spines, varying in color. There is no fur under the spines, but soft white or dark fur covers the belly, neck, face, and legs. Sight is relatively poor, but hearing, smell, and taste are very well developed in most pet hedgehogs. Hedgehogs are easy going, non-aggressive and not attention seekers. They are great pets that can be handled by anyone and well adjusted hedgies go to strangers with ease. When you come back they will willingly go to you as if you never left. They are easy to keep as pets, all the supplies you need for them can be found at any pet store with the exception of hedgehog food order online. I have placed many of them in schools as classroom pets as they are cool animals that children are very intrigued by and can learn a lot from. Our hedgehog diet consists of our home-blended hedgehog food, Pokey Crunch. It is a hard kibble with added vitamins, dried fruit, insectivore diet, coconut oil and mealworms for additional protein that they need. It is a complete diet and there is no need for supplements. They are fed 2 level tablespoons of Pokey Crunch every evening. Healthy hedgehogs are normally no more than 1 pound, about the size of a softball or grapefruit. Hedgehogs should be provided a cage or container that is draft free, easy to clean and escape proof. We use a Sterilize container with the center of lid cut out to easily access our hedgehogs and to secure the water bottle holder guard in place. How to care for a Hedgehog Habitat: There are many options to choose from, I recommend a large plastic sterilite container with pine shavings, water bottle, food dish and one or more hide houses. We sell complete hedgehog cage setups for our clients who are local and picking up their baby, Their bedding should be changed at least every days. Inspect your hedgehogs for toe nail trimmings, you can clip long nails with baby finger nail clippers. Your hedgehog does need a form of exercise and although a wheel in the cage is an option I do not recommend them for the following reasons. An alternative is to have a seperate play pen area for your hedgehog. You can use another large sterilite container, a kiddie pool, an outdoor play pen or an indoor play pen. Exercise does not necessarily mean running on a wheel only. Hedgehogs also need activities, and enrichment. I like to set up their play area different every time they are put in it. Grab a couple twigs or leaves from outside and let them investigate the new smells. The hedgehog has something to do, they always seem like they are on a mission to explore and have fun in their play pen. Your hedgehog would enjoy several hours of play each evening in the pen. Hedgehogs are solitary and once they reach maturity they must be housed seperately. However if two females are raised together we find they will live together with little to no aggression as adults. Hedgehogs are omnivorous insectivores, and should be fed an appropriate diet. Their diet should also consist of dead or live insects, worms, protein kibble, and small amounts of plant matter. Feeding hedgehogs large amounts of fruit can cause loose stool, and hedgehogs do not seem to like many vegetables. I recommend finding a complete dry diet that will meet all of their dietary needs. Check out our Pet Supplies page for our hedgehog food. Hedgehogs are not cuddly creatures, and not just because they are full of sharp spines. They do not like to be handled, restrained, or toted around for extended periods of time. Hedgehogs are nocturnal and are awake at night. If you go to get your hedgehog out during the day you will most likely encounter some resistance and even a grumpy hedgehog. During the day, easy handling and even allowing

your baby to sleep in a pouch on your lap is best. No activities or extended play time. At night, typically when all the lights go off hedgehogs come alive! This is the time they would prefer to be handled and played with. This is also the time for them to go into their play pens. Actual holding and touching a hedgehog can be challenging at first but will quickly become an easy task to achieve. Yes they have sharp spines, however they are easy to handle and even novice owners will be playing and holding their babies in no time. Show More Do they need baths? Be sure to keep your hedgie warm until fully dry. Should I get two so my hedgehog will not be lonely? Hedgehogs can live fully happy lives as solitary creatures. If you do want a second it is recommended to get 2 females, or have them in separate cages. Do they require Vaccinations or shots? No vaccinations are needed. Can I take my hedgehog outside? Do they have an odor, or offensive smell? No, they do not have scent glands and do not produce an odor. How are they with other pets? Larger animals may frighten them, I would recommend not having direct contact with larger animals. What is their general personality? They are fun, curious, loving creatures. They enjoy being handled, going outside, and playing with their owner. Every hedgie has a very unique personality.

*The African pygmy hedgehog is one of 23 extant (currently living) hedgehogs in the world. Sometimes called the four-toed hedgehog, it is the smallest member of the hedgehog family. The African pygmy hedgehog is covered in tiny, non-barbed spines.*

African pygmy hedgehogs are beautiful, inquisitive little animals that require a high-protein diet in order to thrive. Many people struggle to realize that hedgehogs are, in fact, not even related to hamsters, mice or rats. Possessing incisor teeth, the optimum diet for a pygmy hedgehog is much more similar to that of a cat or a ferret. Pygmy hedgehogs may eat insects in the wild, but they are prone to obesity in captivity. It would also be nearly impossible to regularly provide them with a varied mix of insects, which they would need in terms of obtaining all their nutrients. Therefore, they are the healthiest when fed very high quality, dry cat food with a high protein percentage. Source *The Staple for Pygmy Hedgehogs: Dry Cat Food* Pygmy hedgehogs require a small bowl of dry cat food every night since they are nocturnal and eat at this time. It is essential that the cat biscuits are high in protein, good quality and poultry-based. They should never be fed fish-based cat food. When selecting a brand, you must look at the label. You want to see either chicken or turkey as the first ingredient listed, instead of cereals. If your hedgehog is extremely active or recovering from an illness, a slightly higher fat percentage will not hurt him, but pygmies are very prone to obesity and fatty liver disease when kept as pets. You want to do all that you can to ensure that they are mainly consuming protein, as this is what they need to maintain muscle mass, avoid illnesses such as diabetes and live into old age. You should strive to include as many brands as possible. None of us know exactly what pygmy hedgehogs require to be as healthy as possible regarding micronutrients, so it is safest to feed them a mix of as many different high-end cat food as possible. Notice that the above brands all include the word "light" in them. This is because they are low in fat and high in protein, which is ideal for your pygmy hedgehog. You must avoid the appeal of commercial "hedgehog food", such as the Spikes range. These products are designed for wild garden hedgehogs, and are usually very fatty and completely unsuitable for African pygmy hedgehogs. They are also lactose intolerant, so should never be fed anything containing milk. However, you should definitely supplement his diet with some exciting treats and snacks. This will keep his appetite keen and further enrich his diet. Feeding your hedgehog some fresh food while you play with him during the evening is a great way to bond with him, as he will associate you with contentedness and safety. Then, you can leave him his bowl of dry cat food and fresh water, of course! Some people feed their hedgehogs small amounts of fish, but it is generally not recommended. The general consensus is that owners should stick to meat. Other than this, they enjoy egg, some insects as a treat, a wide range of interesting fruits, vegetables and herbs. Source *Feeding Your Pygmy Hedgehog Cooked Meat* Every so often, you might like to feed your hedgehog some freshly cooked chicken, turkey or less frequently beef. It is advised that you avoid pork, as it is fatty and generally unsuitable. It must also be noted that pygmy hedgehogs are sensitive to blood sugar glucose spikes, and are known to be prone to diabetes, especially as they age. Therefore, you should limit the amount of fruit that they eat, and only offer them fruit once in a fortnight. Vegetables can be given every other day in small amounts, as they do not cause a rapid increase in blood sugar. Parsley also called cilantro is loved by many hedgehogs. This is because hedgehogs eat an incredibly varied mix of insects in the wild, and we cannot readily provide them with so many different species of insect while they are living in captivity. This is why they are best-suited to a cat-food-based diet that is high in protein, but insects can be great treats, and are readily accepted. I recommend that you buy some canned mealworms for your hog, as you can store these in the fridge and feed him a few every so often, mixed into other foods. A great example is "Can O Worms", which can be ordered from Amazon. My hedgehog absolutely adored these, even when he was very elderly and hardly had an appetite.

### Chapter 9 : Facts « African Pygmy Hedgehog | Hello Hedgehog

*Welcome to our world of Hedgehogs! BABY AFRICAN PYGMY HEDGEHOGS FOR SALE, RAISED IN MY HOME WITH TLC! MY GENTLE BABIES MAKE THE BEST PETS. We have been hedgehog breeders since and we strive to select our hedgehog breeding stock for impeccable temperament and personality!*

However, if you are looking to have a hedgehog as a pet, African pygmy hedgehogs are your best choice! Where do African Pygmy Hedgehogs come from? African Pygmy Hedgehogs originate primarily from Nigeria and close areas on the African continent. They are believed to be a mix of a couple of different breeds of hedgehogs originating from those areas. For more about where hedgehogs come from, [click here](#). This may seem short, but is quite an impressive lifespan when compared with other small pets. It is also an improvement on the lifespan of wild hedgehogs, which is typically about 2 years. African Pygmy Hedgehogs can weigh between 0. Hedgehogs are covered with a protective spine of quills on their back, and have soft, fuzzy bellies. When threatened, they are able to curl up into a ball, displaying their quills to ward off predators. These quills, however, are not particularly harmful to humans. This is why they are such sensitive animals; they must be very protective in the wild, so they do take some adjustment time to become comfortable with human owners. Once your hedgehog does adjust to you as their owner, however, they can make great little companions. Some hedgehogs have a very snugly personality, others are very active and extroverted, while others are a bit more content with solitude, and other still, can be quite grumpy and anti-social. However, if they are kept in temperatures much lower than 70 degrees F, they can be forced into hibernation, which can be extremely dangerous. In the wild, these hedgehogs are insectivores, so they eat mainly insects although they will eat a large variety of different foods. African Pymys are generally healthy animals, but they are prone to obesity. They are also prone to cancer and Wobbly Leg Syndrome, a condition that affects their nervous system. [Click here](#) for a list of the most common hedgehog health issues. To learn more about owning a hedgehog as a pet, [click here](#).