

LO: To answer comprehension questions independently.

ALL ABOUT HEDGEHOGS

Hedgehogs are one of the most known of British mammals. They are a largely solitary, nocturnal species. In the daytime, they spend a considerable amount of time asleep under hedges and bushes. Sadly, hedgehogs are steadily disappearing from the wild in the UK.

Fascinating Facts

The hedgehog got its name because it roots through hedges searching for food (hedge), while grunting like a pig (hog).

They have about 5,000 spines. Each lasts about a year then drops out and a replacement grows.



Answer in full sentences.

1 What type of animals are hedgehogs?

1

2 What do they do during the day?

1

Where do hedgehogs live?

Hedgehogs can be found in almost all areas of the UK, except some of the Scottish islands, across Europe apart from the far north, across Russia. They have even been introduced to New Zealand. They tend to be scarce in wetland areas, pine forests and highland areas, where food and nesting sites are harder to find. Hedgehogs prefer moist habitats and live either on the ground or under the ground. They make habitats in hedgerows, fields, parks, town and country gardens. They live in nests under hedges or where ground-dwelling insects and other invertebrates are in large quantity.

Hedgehogs are noisy animals, snuffling loudly as they shuffle through the undergrowth. They have poor eyesight but an acute sense of smell, touch and hearing.

3 List **three** places that hedgehogs can live.

3

4 Why won't you find hedgehogs in wetland areas, pine forests or highland areas?

1

Hedgehog's favourite foods

Hedgehogs have a reputation for being the 'gardener's friend' as they love eating many garden 'pests'. They are insectivores and eat all sorts of invertebrates including slugs, snails, insects, and centipedes. They have been known to eat bird's eggs, mice, frogs, soft fruits and even snakes.

Hedgehogs may roam over 2-4km in a night in search of food. As they search for food they may climb short stone walls, fences and even swim across water. In the autumn hedgehogs must eat much more food than the rest of the year. This is so they have enough body fat to survive the cold winter months, in which they hibernate.

Some people like to put food out for hedgehogs- they are quite partial to cat food and water. You should not feed them milk and bread because they fill them up but do not give them the nutrients they need.

4 Why do some people call hedgehogs 'the gardener's friend'?

2

5 What do hedgehogs eat? (Circle all that apply.)

slugs	bird's eggs	fish	insects	mice
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1

6 Why must hedgehogs eat lots in the autumn?

2

Staying Safe

Hedgehogs have sharp spikes on their back, and when they are scared, they curl up into a ball. As it rolls into a ball a hedgehog's spines will straighten. This spiky ball is normally enough to stop most animals from attacking the hedgehog. However, a determined fox can open one. The hedgehog is the only mammal native to Britain that has spines.

7 How do hedgehogs stay safe?

1