As we all know, hedgehogs are insectivores and insectivores need feeder insects. But which insects do you choose? Should you keep your own mealworm farm, should you buy them from a pet store or should you feed your hedgehog other types of bugs? Here you will find a brief guide to the types of insects that are commonly used as hedgehog food, their nutritional analysis and what it takes to keep them. This is not a complete guide and you are advised to consult with your veterinarian before making any changes to your hedgehog’s diet.

You Are What You Eat:  A General Guide to Hedgehog Feeder Insects

By Gioia Kerlin

You are what you eat

Meet a Hedgie

Hedge Hero—Hugh Warwick

Maisey’s Costume Corner

Thoughts from the CVO

The Literary Hedge

HWS Committee and Officer Reports

Lucy Laughs

British Hedgehog Preservation Society news release

Uist press release

Lord Punky Platinum / Hedgeie Birthdays

Pog Chit-Chat

Starting your own Mealworm Farm

Hedgehog Emergency Food Kit

Continue on page 2...
complete list by any means—you may feed your hedgehogs other insects. This is a list of the most well-known insects that may be purchased easily either online or in pet stores. The advantages and disadvantages of keeping and feeding each type of insect are included.

**Mealworms:**

Mealworms may be purchased from many commercial farms online, as well as from your local pet store. They vary in size from half an inch or less to giants measuring approximately 1½ inches. Note that the giant-sized mealworms are likely to have been treated with a growth hormone that may not be good for our hedgehogs. Internet prices range from approximately $6 to $10 for 1,000 worms plus shipping costs. You may choose the size you want to feed your hedgehogs according to their particular preferences. Mine prefer larger worms—the larger the better!

The advantages of feeding your hedgehogs mealworms include:

1) They’re inexpensive and easy to keep
2) They may be stored in the refrigerator for up to a week at a time to slow their life cycle.
3) You can start your own farm and save money (see “Starting Your Own Mealworm Farm” in this issue of the HWS Newsletter)
4) Nearly all hedgehogs like them.

The disadvantages are few: if you do start a farm, you will need to replace bedding and clean out dead and decaying worms and beetles periodically. You will have to watch out for too much humidity or else the worms will die. The crude protein content of a mealworm is approximately 20.77%, crude fat content is approximately 12.7%.

**Meals:**

The mealworm (*tenebrio molitor*) is the larval stage of a type of darkling beetle. According to Wikipedia:

Darkling beetles are a family of beetles found worldwide, estimated at more than 20,000 species. Many of the beetles have black elytra [the hardened, outer wing of the beetle] …The larval stages of several species are cultured as feeder insects for captive insectivores and include the very commonly known mealworms and superworms, and the lesser-known mini-mealworms.


Superworms:

Superworms (*zophoba morio* or sometimes *zoophoba morio*) are the larval stage of a type of a different species of darkling beetle than the one that produces mealworms. They are large worms, usually measuring approximately 1-1½ inches in length and are plumper than mealworms. Unlike their more passive cousin the mealworm, these worms can deliver a painful bite. Always be careful when handling and feeding them to your pets. If an animal does not chew food thoroughly, it is possible to be bitten inside the mouth as the insect is ingested. Internet stories exist about how someone’s reptile was killed by a zophoba that chewed through its stomach! Veterinary confirmation of this happening frequently, or to other animals such as hedgehogs has not been found. To err on the side of safety, you can always damage or cut the head off the worm before feeding it to your hedgehog. Most hedgehogs chew their food rather than just swallowing it as reptiles do so the risks are minimized. The advantages of superworms are:

They’re large and juicy, therefore pretty tempting treats for hedgehogs

Continues on page 3...
They are kept at room temperature and don’t have to be refrigerated. You don’t have to buy as many because they’re so large that one worm goes a long way.

The disadvantages include:
1) They bite
2) They are more difficult to raise than mealworms
3) They are twice as expensive as the largest mealworm available online (about $10 for 500 worms).

The crude protein content of the superworm is 17.4-20%. Crude fat is 16-17.0%. They are fatter than mealworms but their chitin (insoluble fiber) is more easily digested than that of mealworms. If you want to raise your own superworms, you must keep them at 70-80 degrees F all the time, provide an adequate substrate (organic wheat bran works well) and a source of moisture (water dish with cotton, fruits and veggies, or a gel like Fluker Farm’s Cricket Quencher), and separate them from each other after they pupate. Many people place pupae in old film canisters (one pupa per canister). The pupae morph into beetles, which are then removed from the film canisters to breed and lay eggs that will hatch into beetles.

Waxworms:

Waxworms are the larval stage of the wax moth. There are two species: The greater wax moth (*galleria mellonella*), and the lesser wax moth (*achoria grisella*). Both moths deposit their larvae in bee honeycombs so are considered pests by apiculturists (beekeepers). Most people purchase waxworms as needed from their local pet store or from an online source. Breeding them isn’t as straightforward as breeding mealworms. Waxworms (and their moths) should always be kept at room temperature if you want them to reproduce. But if you just want to feed the worms keep them refrigerated and free of moisture. Prices average from $11-$13 for 250 worms. You can buy 1,000 from http://www.wormman.com for $28.87 delivered.

The advantages of waxworms are:

  - They are soft-bodied. This is beneficial if your hedgehog is dentally challenged or has other oral problems.
  - They pack a lot of calories into one worm (good for sick hedgehogs).
  - They don’t require food if they are kept refrigerated.
  - They’re inoffensive and don’t bite.

The disadvantages include price, fat content (if your hedgehog is overweight), and the fact that they can climb out of a smooth-sided container if you leave them out at room temperature.

Wax worms have a crude protein content of approximately 15.7% and a crude fat level of approximately 12.7-22%.

If you want to try raising wax worms, here is a brief overview of the process (full information is available at http://www.wormman.com/cat_wax.cfm):

1. Buy a cup of wax worms.
2. Prepare an escape-proof container such as 3-5 gallon sterilite (cut a hole in the lid and install a mesh screen) or a fish tank with a screened lid (tape it on later—you don’t want any leaks).
3. For substrate mix bran and honey together, if possible grate some beeswax into the mixture. Crumble the mixture into the tank.
4. Put the wax worms in the container with the bedding.
5. Add a few crumpled balls of wax paper
6. Keep the wax worms at room temperature.

The wax worms will eventually begin to spin cocoons. They remain in their cocoons for approximately two weeks before the moths emerge. The moths live for about a week, mate and lay their eggs in the wax paper. A couple of weeks after the moths have died you will see tiny worms. Remember that these worms grow quickly so put them in the refrigerator once they reach desired size and before the cycle begins again. You can store them in the fridge in a ventilated plastic container with bedding like tiny wood shavings. The bedding helps control moisture. They will not eat while cooled down.

Silkworms:

Ah, the soft-bodied, placid silkworm! Silkworms are the larval stage of the silk moth (*bombyx mori*). Sadly, it is no longer found in the wild, although its cousin
the _bombyx mandarina_ lives in the range between northern India and northern China, Korea and Japan. The domesticated silkworm was probably native to northern China thousands of years ago. Its preferred food is white mulberry leaves. In fact, the only thing silkworms will eat is mulberry leaves, or a mash made from the leaves. At least you don’t have to decide what to feed your silkworms!

Silk production has been a major economic endeavor in China for over 5,000 years. _Bombyx mori_ is probably the most selectively bred, heavily domesticated animal in existence apart from domestic hybrids such as the mule (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Silkworm).

Silkworms are wonderful feeder insects. They don’t climb out of the container so they can sit on your countertop without being covered and with no risk of escape. They are highly nutritious for insectivores, and are virtually odorless and parasite free. They don’t require bedding but, like every other living thing, they poop. Silkworm poos may be cleaned up just like you would clean hedgehog poos (although they’re not as large or smelly). They are amazing creatures. One cocoon can yield between 1,000 to 3,000 feet of silk strand and the worms can grow up to three inches in length. Silkworms should never be refrigerated; they should always be handled carefully with clean hands. Always wash your hands before handling or feeding your silkworms. You can generally get 20-50 silkworms of varying sizes online for approximately $10 plus shipping.

When you purchase your silkworms, they will be packed in a protective container. You will need to gently remove them from the container (don’t pull too hard!) and place them in the storage container you prepare for them at home. You can use a plastic cat litter pan with a screen stretched across a wood frame. I have used fiberglass mesh stapled onto a thin wood frame which sits about three inches down inside the cat litter pan. Place the worms on top of the screen. The screen functions to give the worms somewhere clean to hang out and as a place for you to put their food. They poop through the holes. so you just have to wipe out the bottom of the cat pan once in a while.

You can feed silkworms fresh mulberry leaves (which they really prefer) or a mulberry-leaf mash which you can purchase online from a variety of feeder insect farms. You can buy pre-cooked mash or cook it yourself. Always remember, though, that your utensils, hands, and the container you cook in must be clean! If you cook the mash yourself, put a layer of plastic wrap on top of the mash then cover the container with a lid and keep it refrigerated. This helps control the growth of bacteria. To feed your worms, cut off a small chunk of the mash and grate it onto the screen for the worms to eat. Only feed as much as the worms will eat within about four hours because you don’t want bacteria to grow on their food or the mash to dry out.

Silkworms are nutritious for hedgehogs because they are high in crude protein (63.8%) while being low in fat (10.6%). The only drawback to silkworms is that they are sometimes difficult to care for and not all hedgehogs like them. Baby silkworms must be kept in a very warm and somewhat humid but not overly moist environment. They thrive in temperatures between 80-90+ degrees F. Not many of us keep our houses that toasty all year round so you can place them in a warm area such as on top of the stove, in a warm room, etc. Just don’t let condensation build up in their container and don’t let them be baked by the sun. Adult worms need somewhat lower temperatures (between 70-80 degrees F). The general rule of thumb is that the larger the worm, the less heat is needed. Always be very careful about the chemicals you use in your house when you’re keeping silkworms. I once sprayed flea spray on some of my hedgehogs in a room separate from where I kept my silkworms and several hundred silkworms died within two days. These are fragile, beautiful worms. If you try to keep a silkworm farm, you will notice that somewhere between 30 and 50 days of life, the silkworms will enclose themselves in a cocoon. When ready, the new silk moth will release proteolytic enzymes that make a hole in the cocoon so that it can emerge. The moths are white, soft, and have long, feathery antennae. They do not eat or fly. All they do is mate and die. Many animals like eating the moths as much as the worms.

The advantages of silkworms include:

1) most hedgehogs like them
2) they are easily available from a variety of places
3) they are easy to keep especially if you freeze them (duh!).

If you try to keep a silkworm farm, you will notice that somewhere between 30 and 50 days of life, the silkworms will enclose themselves in a cocoon. When ready, the new silk moth will release proteolytic enzymes that make a hole in the cocoon so that it can emerge. The moths are white, soft, and have long, feathery antennae. They do not eat or fly. All they do is mate and die. Many animals like eating the moths as much as the worms.
The disadvantages of crickets only come into play if you keep them alive for feeding:

1) they are noisy
2) they are messy—they poop everywhere in their habitat
3) they are very likely to escape in your house.

If you freeze them, you might want to consider gut-loading them for 48 hours after their arrival at your house. Put them into a Cricket Keeper with an egg crate for them to climb and hide in. Feed slices of apple, carrot, and other fruits and vegetables, as well as *Fluker Farms’ Cricket Quencher* (this is calcium-fortified and will not drown your crickets). After two days, put the whole Cricket Keeper in the freezer for several hours. The crickets will die and you can transfer them into plastic containers for easier storage. How you get them into the Cricket Keeper is up to you—it’s not always an easy task and you may lose a few in the process. I put a box of 1,000 crickets into a large trash bag and before opening the box. Then I close the bag around my wrist and shake all the crickets from the box and shipping egg crate. I then remove box and crate while keeping the trash bag snug around my hands and tip the bag with its mouth inserted inside the Keeper to transfer the crickets. Then, I give them some egg crate and feed and water them. Crickets contain approximately 11.4-21% crude protein and 6-22.7% crude fat.

You can raise feeder crickets if you want but, as I said, they are messy and require weekly cage cleaning. They are also noisy—their chirping is part of the mating process, they have to sing in order to breed. They will need a large sterilite container with a lid with a meshed-in cut out for air circulation. They’ll also need to be kept warm in order to breed—around 75 degrees F or warmer. You’ll need to give them a separate place to lay eggs—preferably a plastic container several inches thick, packed with wet bedding like peat moss or bonsai tree soil. When you begin to see eggs hatching, transfer the egg container to an incubating box (not as large as the adult bin but enclosed) kept on a heating pad. It is a lot of work for the yield you will get, especially since feeder crickets are so readily available. Let someone else raise them unless you just want to experiment!

**Malagasy Hissing Cockroaches (Sssssss!):**

Hissing cockroaches are easy to keep, reproduce readily when kept warm enough, and are juicy eating. They are some of my favorite insects to raise. However, the hedgehog approval factor is hit or miss. My hedgies who do like them prefer that I keep and feed the roaches then freeze their babies for treats. You DON’T want to feed these guys live unless you have a deep bin to house your hedgehogs and bugs during treat time.

Malagasy hissing cockroaches (*gromphadorhina portentosa*) are a long-lived insect that is native to Madagascar. They eat anything (except cucumber which may be toxic to them) and can be kept in a large Critter Keeper or sterile bin with a meshed-over hole in the top. They can climb just about anything so do not leave the lid off the container! They can be kept as pets as well as feeders, and are relatively slow-moving and amiable (as insects go). If you buy some as babies, you need to realize that they will not reproduce until they are at least six months old. They can live for approximately two years. If you want feeders right away, it’s better to buy adults of each gender. Sexing your roaches is easy—the males have larger bumps on the top of their heads than the females do and their antennae are fuzzier. Females can produce 15-40 eggs from one mating so they are fairly prolific. To house them, use a bran bedding about ½ inch thick inside a large Critter Keeper or equivalent. The males are territorial and need their own space for attracting the females so give them pieces of egg crate for hiding and climbing. They need to stay warm—at least 75 degrees F, if not warmer. Their metabolism slows down when they are cool and reproduction can stop when the temperature is below 75 degrees. They eat fruits and vegetables, as well as pieces of cat or dog food. It’s important to have a protein source (cat food or dog food) because otherwise you may find them snacking on each other. I have also used *Cricket Quencher* for my cockroaches in addition to their fruits and vegetables. It offers extra calcium which is good for the cockroach as well as the hedgehog, since it helps the insects’ exoskeleton harden after molting. Hissing cockroaches molt five times in their lives before reaching adult size. They are very vulnerable (but tasty!) when they are white and soft. I have not yet been able to verify the crude protein and crude fat content of hissing cockroaches.

**Butterworms:**

Butter worms (*chilecomadia moorei*) are like silkworms in that they eat only one thing: the leaf of the trevo bush found in Chile. Since it’s easier to find mulberry leaves than trevo leaves, I wouldn’t recommend trying to keep a butter worm farm. You can order butter worms from many online venues. The best thing about them is that they are very high in calcium (more than twice as much as most other feeders!) and they keep for a long time in the refrigerator (for maximum lifespan keep them in the door, not on a shelf). Butter worms are not overly high in protein—only around 16.2%, less than all other feeders except crickets. However, they are high in fat. I’ve read that they have about 30% more fat than silkworms but have yet to find a reliable nutritional analysis that corroborates that exact figure. They have an orange color, have a sweet smell that may be attractive to many animals and are soft-bodied like silkworms. This makes them a good choice for dentally challenged hedgehogs. You don’t need to remove butter worms from the refrigerator to feed them and they

Continue on page 6...
won’t reproduce in your home. This makes them good treat bugs that you don’t have to mess with.

Earthworms:

The common earthworm (*lumbricus terrestris*) is our last feeder on the list. I must admit that none of my hedgehogs like them because they are full of dead organic material (although one tried valiantly to eat them just ‘cause mom wanted him to). If you could have something soft and juicy like a butter worm, mealworm, or silkworm, why would you want something that tasted like compost? Nevertheless they are very low in fat and nutritious: Approximately 10.5% crude protein and only 2.0% crude fat. It’s possible to raise earthworms but somewhat complicated and time-consuming. You have to build a wooden box, tilt it so that water drains out, fill it with peat moss and keep it wet all the time, feed them a little corn meal daily and mix the leftovers into the peat moss. Unless your hedgehogs really like earthworms (and you have a lot of hedgehogs) you go fishing often or have a large garden, I would recommend buying them from the pet store and keeping them in the refrigerator. If you’re interested in raising earthworms, here’s a site you may want to reference:

Conclusion:

The benefits of feeding insects to our hedgehogs cannot be underestimated. Some people assert that since animal proteins are different from insect proteins, all the chicken, turkey, salmon, etc. that we feed won’t compensate for real insect protein. Not feeding our hedgies at least some bugs would be akin to not feeding your cat a high-quality protein source, or your dog an omnivorous diet. Eating insects is what hedgehogs are supposed to do. It is not only good for them physically but mentally as well. Whether you buy or breed your own feeders, keep in mind the nutritional analysis of each type of insect as well as your particular animal’s preferences. Not all hedgehogs will like the same things. Sometimes there may be reasons to feed or not to feed a specific bug. It may be too high in fat or protein for a particular animal’s needs or maybe the animal is calcium deficient. Whatever you do, it is always good to keep in mind that just as our hedgies “are what they eat,” their feeders depend on proper nutrition and husbandry to be at their healthiest too. And healthy feeders make for healthy hedgehogs!

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**Time to Meet a Hedgehog**

An Autobiography

By Chance Jackson-Dempsey

I don’t think no pogs out there in pogland knows me. I never wrote about me before, I will try.

My new name is Chance. I say new ‘cause nobody knows my old name or if I use to have one. One of my new mommies says Chance is a special name. I keeps hearing them talking ‘bout a second chance. Does that means there’s two of me?

I reckon Chance is a good name since I was very sick when I got here. Someone left me out in the rain and cold. I didn’t even have no foods, and I itched everywhere there was to itch. But since I got founded and put in a place with lots of other animals, but there weren’t no other pogs. I couldn’t stay there ‘cause hedgehogs are illegal in that area.

Lucky for me, Miss Julie saw me on Petfinder and sent out a notice and Miss Sheila called right away to say they would help me. I did not know that meant I would have to gets a shot every week, but guess what? I don’t itch now and I always got food. And mealies, I like those.

So now I finally got to come out of my room and guess what else? I have a sister and a brother hedgehog! Plus a noisy little dog and a great big cat. There’s so much to see. My brother hedge is Leo and my sister hedge is Tru and guess what? They said they had to have help, too.

I just want to say a special thank you to my Momma Murfi for changing my bed everyday and spraying me with the nice stuff that Auntie Cyndy sent me for the itchies.

Well that’s my story!
In April of 2004, my family traveled to Germany for the European Hedgehog Research Group Conference. There we were introduced to Hugh Warwick, a charming gentleman from Oxford, who gave a seminar on the Uist Island hedgehog cull. Here in the USA, the hedgehog community has followed the situation of the culling of the Uist hedgehogs. It was enlightening to meet someone who was so deeply involved in that cause. Hugh and I became friends, conversed via e-mail, and eventually he wrote some articles for the HWS newsletter on his various hedgehog adventures in Europe. We kept in touch via e-mails, exchanged photos of our kids, and hoped that one day Hugh could visit the USA.

The chance for Hugh to travel to the USA will finally arrive this autumn! Hugh will be a guest speaker at the Rocky Mountain Hedgehog Show in Denver Colorado this October (http://rockymountainhedgehogshow.com). Attendees of the show will have the privilege of listening and learning from this incredibly dynamic speaker. Hugh will give a seminar on the history and recent developments of the Uist hedgehogs. You will all be pleased to hear of the recent progress, especially within the past year. For a preview, see the two press releases published in this newsletter!

Ultimately, Hugh would like to use his experience at the Rocky Mountain Hedgehog Show to produce a radio show in the UK on the subject of the hedgehog community in the USA. I’m sure he will also gain insights for his upcoming book.

Hugh is a fascinating and charismatic person. Arguably, Hugh’s two greatest accomplishments are his children, Matilda and Tristan (Pip). I must say that they are two of the most gorgeous children on the planet. Outside of fatherhood, Hugh is a freelance journalist/consultant/photographer specializing in environmental, social justice, and wildlife stories. For a real treat, you can view some of Hugh’s spectacular photographs (including photos of Matilda and Pip) at his online gallery: www.urchin.info/gallery. But perhaps the credential that is most impressive to us here in the USA is the fact that Hugh is a trustee of the British Hedgehog Preservation Society.

Hugh has a multi-faceted professional history including in-depth work with European hedgehogs in their natural settings. Here he describes his history with hedgehogs:

My first hedgehog work was the third year project of my degree – I spent two months of my summer holidays of 1986 on the island of North Ronaldsay, Orkney (the archipelago just north of Scotland). The bird warden had noted a decrease in the breeding success of ground-nesting birds, in particular the Arctic Tern, at the same time as a rise in the number of hedgehogs. Hedgehogs were only introduced (by the postman, John Tulloch) in 1972 in an attempt to control slugs in his greenhouse. The hogs escaped. The main aim of the work was to see if there were as many hedgehogs as people thought (newspapers reported 10,000!). I estimated about 500 hedgehogs were present on the small island. The bird obs organized an airlift and around 200 hogs were removed in the next five years.

I returned to the island in 1991 to see how things had changed. Over three months, I discovered that the population had plummeted to around 100. I am in regular contact with the bird obs and now they think there are no hedgehogs left on the island.

Continue on page 8...
In 1992 I went to the bird observatory in Dungeness, Kent - to see if there was any evidence of hedgehogs on the shingle spit. A paper had been written 20 years previously that suggested hedgehogs were taking black-headed gulls eggs. Two weeks of searching and I found no evidence of any hedgehogs! 1993 I was employed to radio-track hedgehogs around farmland in Devon. The animals were all juveniles, being released after a winter in care, in unfamiliar surroundings. We were trying to see if they survived. They did - apart from the ones that were eaten and run over! [Note: You can read Hugh’s article about radio-tracking in Devon in the HWS Newsletter, issue #11, July/August 2004.] Then in 2003 I entered the fray of the Uist debate - including the radio-tracking in 2005 - and was invited to be a trustee of the British Hedgehog Preservation Society in 2003 as well. And now – well, I talk to groups regularly about hedgehogs, I am on national and international media whenever the subject comes up (recently CBS breakfast news!) and am generally pretty involved. I have a book treatment with an agent and a radio programme idea with the BBC - just need one of them to say yes!”

Hugh’s environmental and activist endeavors extend far beyond hedgehogs. He received his BSc with honors in Science & the Environment from Leicester Polytechnic, and MSc in Wildlife Management & Control from Reading University. He has been the editor of Splice, the magazine of The Genetics Forum. He was an environmental consultant and co-organizer of a lecture program for engineers from Tanzania’s electricity generating company, dealing with the environmental consequences of large-scale hydro-projects. He worked for BBC Natural History Radio where he was responsible for finding and researching stories for the weekly broadcast as well as researching special programs. The list goes on and on.

Hugh has published extensively on a multitude of environmental and social issues. Just a small sample of his recent publications includes:

- Author of Climate Change: Catastrophe for the world’s poor? booklet for Practical Action (2005).

• Author of Greenpeace’s *Annual Review 2004*

• *Smoke - the killer in the kitchen. Indoor Air Pollution in Developing Countries*. Published by ITDG in 2003. Available from [www.itdg.org/smoke](http://www.itdg.org/smoke)


At the *Rocky Mountain Hedgehog Show* you will have the chance to learn from Hugh’s professional experience, as well as to spend time getting to know him on a personal level. Here is a brief introduction to Hugh (I think he will fit right in with the USA hedge crowd!):

My perfect work-free day would probably start, after an organic and vegetarian breakfast, with a session in the garden splitting the logs a tree surgeon friend dropped round for me. I have just been given an amazing splitting axe and am getting a little obsessive. Then coffee with friends at the nearby vegetarian café followed by mid-morning session catching up on the piles of books I just have to read. Obviously this day will have to involve faster than light travel to accommodate all that is needed, as I need to get to the best beach in the UK, if not the world, on the Gower peninsula in South Wales, where the waves are just perfect for beginner surfers like me. Then a walk up the fabulous hill over-looking the beach to enjoy skylarks singing their hearts out. Back home to Oxford for an evening game of ultimate Frisbee followed by a swim in the Thames and a drink in a riverside pub with a spontaneous session of folk music.

This, of course, is all impossible, apart from the eight hours of driving I have included, I have a family! My wife, Zoe, an investigative film-maker who has a habit of getting herself into quite remarkable situations, is an amazing woman, but a lousy cook, so I have my work cut out in the kitchen. Actually, that is one of my hobbies - cooking. And then there are two startlingly gorgeous children - Matilda (4) and Tristan (1). I was late to the idea that having kids was a good idea - I now wish I had cottoned on about ten years earlier when I had more energy.

I hope this article gives you all a glimpse into the world of Hugh Warwick, so that you will know what a treat is in store for you at the show in Denver this October. You will all enjoy the company of a true international Hedgie Hero and all around great guy!

If you have suggestions or ideas for items you would like to see in the newsletter, e-mail the editor at newsletter@hedgehogwelfare.org
On Thursday, June 8, 2006, the idea for the Hedgehog Red Hat Society began formulating in the minds of three breeders, two rescuers, and three hedgie slaves at the base of Pikes Peak in Manitou Springs, Colorado. These nine hedgehog enthusiasts decided to recognize special hedgehog ladies who have reached the grand age of four years old or older. After several meetings and hours of crafting, the Hedgehog Red Hat Society was officially launched on October 10, 2006.

By joining this elite club, your hedgehog will receive:

- Decorated Red Hat
- Beautiful Thick Red Hat Lap Pad
- Decorated TP Tube
- Laminated Membership ID Card
- Red Hat Poem
- Membership Certificate
- Welcome Card
- Photo Page in The Red Hat Album

Each member will receive a special gift and card on her succeeding birthdays. The committee will also be sending out a monthly newsletter. Once a hedgie girl joins and receives her packet, take a picture of the grand lady in her Red Hat finery and submit it to the committee. That picture along with all the stats will then be placed in a The Red Hat Photo Album. The album will be taken and displayed at all hedgehog functions that a committee member attends.

Come check out the Red Quill Shop. There you will find other nice items to purchase that follow the red hat theme. Candles, pencil holders, bags and photo frames are just some of the things you will find there.

--- advertisement ---

Every month, Maisey travels the world to find the latest and greatest in fashions for hedgies and is showcasing her finds here in Maisey’s Costume Corner.

Send your pictures to hedgiemom@comcast.net

Want to see your Hedgie in the newsletter?
Send your photos in now so that they can be used in future issues.
I've been asked to write a bi-monthly column for the newsletter about whatever comes to mine. I thought this month I would address the question of pet health care insurance for your hedgehogs since there's been some talk about it on some of the lists lately.

We have health insurance on all of our hedgies through VPI Pet Insurance. I believe that's the biggest in the country, but I know there are others, including one that I think is brand new through the ASPCA.

Our last hedgehog, Payton, was quite sick for the last year or so of his life. First he was diagnosed with Dilate Cardiomiopathy. Once we got that under control, he developed Fatty Liver Disease, presumably from not eating. He had gone from 700 plus grams down to about 350 when he died if I'm remembering correctly. I never really sat down and added up all the vet bills, but they were somewhat over $1000 total...probably closer to $2000. At that point we decided to start thinking about health insurance for our other two (now three) even though it was too late to take out insurance on Payton.

I found VPI (Veterinary Pet Insurance) on the Internet which is also the insurance that our vet now recommends. I contacted a couple HWS members that had insurance and asked some questions. It came highly recommended. I e-mailed the company to find out some information about what is and isn't covered. They don't cover routine health exams (at least not on exotics) but do cover pretty much all illnesses. I believe there's a rider available for dogs that will also pay for routine exams and shots. It's a $50 deductible per illness or accident, and then they pay according to their schedule of covered amounts. When you get your insurance packet there's a very detailed list of illnesses and what amounts they will cover. They do have a separate "exotic" policy. The paperwork is very easy to fill out. With the new forms that just came out, the vet doesn't even have to sign them. You can just fill in the date of the visit, the name of the veterinary clinic and the probable diagnosis. If you get additional bills later for the same illness (follow-up exams, meds, etc.), you just fill out another form and reference the first. If you do have a question, the support staff that mans their phones is very helpful and knowledgeable.

So far we've sent in two claims for Bucky. The first was when he had problems with his foot and had a toe amputated after he chewed it up. The claim was for $219.60. After the $50 deductible it left 169.60, and they paid 108.61. They paid within 2 weeks. Right now we're going through probable cancer with him. I just turned in a claim for $858.01 and another for $524.11, but we haven't yet received payment on them. I think it's well worth the $8.65 we pay monthly for each of them. You do get a slight discount for multiple animals, and they don't insure pre-existing conditions, so you have to plan ahead and not wait until an illness becomes apparent. If you’d like to check out the website, it’s www.petinsurance.com. There’s a section for exotic animals and a place where you can enter your information and receive a quote from them.
This children’s book presents a day in the life of a six-month-old hedgehog living at the base of a hedgerow in southwestern England. The hedgie curls into a tight ball when a noisy tractor mows the field near her hedgerow, feasts on spiders, beetles and grasshoppers in the freshly mown grass and freezes as a fox pursues an unlucky rabbit.

Other animals common to British hedgerows are introduced as they interact with the little hedgehog. A song thrush plucks snails from the underside of the hedgerow, cracking the shells on the rocks. The hedgehog eagerly feasts on the remains. The naïve young hedgehog wanders too near a draft horse who is grazing peacefully in the field. The edge of one of the startled horse’s hoofs catches the hedgie and sends her flying across the field, frightened but unhurt.

Beautifully drawn, colorful double-page illustrations capture the beauty of the English countryside and its inhabitants. The hedgehog is shown in all the usual poses hedgehog fanciers know and love. But she is also shown in some unusual situations—somersaulting through the air after her encounter with the horse and even swimming in a stream after sliding off slippery rocks. The latter picture is a side view which manages to show the hedgie both above and beneath the water.

This lovely book is published by Soundprints, a small division of the Trudy Corporation which produces high-quality wildlife, natural science and social science books for children. Prior to publication the book was reviewed by Louis A. Walsh of the Department of Herpetology at the Smithsonian Institution’s National Zoological Park. The book is available in paperback, hard cover, and in a three-piece set consisting of the book, a reading of the text on audio-cassette, and a nine-inch, plush hedgehog.

For more information about this book as well as other excellent children’s books, please visit the Soundprints web site http://www.soundprints.com/.
HWS Committee and Officer Reports
2007, Quarter 2 (April-May-June)

Advocacy Committee - Jennifer Plombon, co-chair
The Committee assisted concerned HWS members in contacting the USDA to report poor conditions seen in pet stores. The Committee assisted others in determining the licensing status of pet stores and breeders. The Advocacy Committee, recognizing that some USDA requirements for hedgehog breeders have changed, is revising its stated Committee goals as listed in the bylaws.

Care Package Committee - Jennifer Plombon, chair
Between April, 2007, and June 30, 2007, the HWS Rescue Care Packages Committee shipped or delivered 12 Care Packages, hats, and/or food samples, to hedgehog rescuers throughout the U. S. and Canada.

Fundraising and Ruby’s Rescue Shop - Donnasue Graesser, manager
We are preparing for WHS awareness month, fundraising activities, and the annual Ruby Tuesday sale at Ruby’s Rescue Shop.

Health and Education Committee - Gioia Kerlin, co-chair
The committee has funded $200 in veterinary care for rescued hedgehogs this quarter. Committee Co-Chair Gioia Kerlin has written two Hedgie How-To articles: “Raising Your Own Mealworm Farm” and “You Are What You Eat: General Information about Hedgehog-Safe Insects”, and is planning a third one with information to help caregivers socialize non-social hedgehogs. The committee has also corresponded with HWS members and non-members concerning hedgehog health and rescue issues, and Co-Chair Gioia Kerlin gave an educational presentation to The University of Tulsa’s University Elementary School titled “Hedgehogs and Tenrecs: Who they are and where they come from.”

Membership Committee - Jennifer Sobon, acting chair
In the last three months we have had 39 people join our group. Welcome letters and membership cards have been sent.

Newsletter Committee - Jennifer Sobon, editor
We have successfully produced two newsletters this quarter.

Petfinder - Stephanie Hyne
The HWS Petfinder page listed two hedgehogs in two different states this quarter. Both were successfully placed in wonderful forever homes. Our Petfinder page averaged about 900 views per week.

Public Relations Committee - Tonya Thomas & Cindy DeLa-Rosa, co-chairs
No Report

Rescue Committee - Sheila Dempsey and Cyndy Bennet, co-chairs
The new adoption application was initiated and is now being sent out to all who inquire about adopting a hedgie. It is giving us more information about potential hedgehog guardians, so the change was worthwhile. Cyndy has been very busy taking in rescues and re-homes. She assisted in four rehomings, and two rescues which she kept at her home for a considerable time before finding them a forever home. Sheila assisted with two rehomings and one rescue has joined her household as a forever home. We have had two new rescue stations open – Andrea Kennedy in Ohio and Jennifer Muckenfuss in Indiana.

Chief Volunteer Officer - Linda Wooding
The following were accomplished during the second quarter:
• Continued updated website vet’s list
• Compiled list and held Healing Candle ceremonies
• Wrote several articles for the newsletter

Continued working on CD of Phil’s travels

Acting Chief Information Officer - Donnasue Graesser
The membership e-mail list has been maintained and utilized to distribute information on HWS programs.

Chief Organizing Officer - Vicki McLean
No Report

Chief Financial Officer - Donnasue Graesser
The HWS has been granted permanent 501(c)3 status by the Internal Revenue Service. Our yearly financial report has been filed with the Oregon State Department of Justice. Detailed monthly financial reports are available to any HWS member or other interested party, by sending a request to donnasue.graesser@aya.yale.edu. HWS yearly financial reports are submitted to the Oregon State Department of Justice, Charitable Activities Division, and are available for public viewing on the ODJ website (Registration # 31631) http://www.doj.state.or.us/charigroup/index.shtml
The sun and stars and moon above,  
watch over Danielle in heavenly love.

Mom and dad are filled with delight,  
their girl is here to make things right.

Congratulations Tonya and Rick Thomas on  
the birth of your beautiful baby girl!

My hedge friends and I like to have lots of treats. Can you find these treats in the grid to the right? Once you find them, feed them to your hedgeie.

butter worms  
chickie sticks  
crickets  
earthworms  
meal worms  
phoenix worms  
silk worms  
spike worms  
super worms  
wax worms  
yogurt drops  

Prayers sent to God up high,  
years of waiting, now a baby’s cry.  
Tiny toes and fingers, dressed in pink.  
A smile, a giggle and then a wink.
NEWS RELEASE
(January 2007)

Hedgehog cull can now cease as the final obstacle to hedgehog rescue is removed - rescuing hedgehogs from the Uists is not detrimental to their welfare.

A scientific paper published in the journal Lutra reveals that translocating hedgehogs from the Uists in the Outer Hebrides is not harmful to their welfare. This has been the principal objection to their non-lethal control by Scottish Natural Heritage.

The research was necessary as Scottish Natural Heritage have been killing hedgehogs for the last four years in an attempt to eradicate them from the islands. The hedgehogs were imported to the Uists in the mid 1970s and have since spread over the islands, and are implicated in the poor breeding success of internationally important populations of birds, such as dunlin and ringed plover.

The decision to kill hedgehogs was taken because SNH, a conservation body, believed that translocating them would cause them to suffer a “slow and lingering death.” This study proves their assertion to be without foundation. It removes the principal obstacle to non-lethal control of the Uist hedgehogs.

The British Hedgehog Preservation Society funded the translocation project through donations from thousands of concerned animal supporters. Chief Executive Fay Vass said, “The publication of this study gives SNH the opportunity to rethink its policy of eradication and instead to work with hedgehog experts to solve the problem in a way that is humane and more cost-effective.”

BHPS believes this unnecessary slaughter of hedgehogs should be halted immediately.

Background information:

2: Since 2003 SNH have killed 658 hedgehogs while Uist Hedgehog Rescue, a coalition of volunteer groups made up of BHPS, Advocates for Animals, Hessilhead Wildlife Rescue Centre and International Animal Rescue, have rescued 756

3: A breakdown of the costs by Hugh Warwick shows that each hedgehog killed costs taxpayers around £950 whereas the costs of rescue and release are around £50 per animal. In the first year the Uist Wader Project had a budget of £90,000 of taxpayers’ money. It spent it all and killed just 66 hedgehogs. That equates to £1,363 per hedgehog. SNH has since agreed a budget of nearly £190,000 per year for the eradication of Uist hedgehogs. And they are getting better at catching and killing them - averaging 200 per year. But that still equates to £950 per hedgehog killed. UHR estimates that it costs just £50 to rescue, transport and release each hedgehog. In fact UHR is putting money back into this rural community through its reward scheme. As the hedgehog population exceeds 4,000, with fewer than 500 animals being removed each year in total, there is no realistic prospect of eradication in less than ten years unless major changes are made in the way the animals are found and killed. The present policy of complete eradication remains unlikely to succeed despite the high level of expenditure. Money for bird protection might be better spent by instigating more effective predation control measures such as fencing, combined with local translocation of individual problem hedgehogs.

4: Hugh Warwick is available for interview and comment. Call 01865 716498 or 07815 042 452. He also has available hi resolution photographs of hedgehogs from the study.
Press Release February 2007

UIST HEDGEHOG RESCUE DELIGHTED AS END OF CULL ANNOUNCED

SCOTTISH NATURAL HERITAGE CALLS OFF CULL IN FAVOUR OF TRANSLOCATION

Note to readers outside the UK: The Uists are two remote islands, North Uist and South Uist, located in the Outer Hebrides of Scotland.

The Uist Hedgehog Rescue coalition (UHR)\(^1\) is delighted at Scottish Natural Heritage’s (SNH) announcement today that the cull of hedgehogs on the Uists has ended. SNH’s Board has agreed to end the killing policy in favour of a translocation trial.\(^2\)

UHR has opposed the killing of hedgehogs on the Uists since Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) announced its lethal policy in 2002. In order to save as many healthy wild animals as possible, UHR has rescued and relocated 756 hedgehogs from the Uists over the last four years. The coalition of hedgehog experts, animal welfare and wildlife rescue and rehabilitation organisations has offered to help SNH with translocating hedgehogs in light of the expertise and experience it has gained from undertaking this process.

The end of the cull follows last week’s announcement from the Scottish SPCA that it had changed its policy in support of UHR’s call for the killing to end. The policy change was attributed to new scientific research confirming that the relocation of hedgehogs from the Uists to mainland Scotland is humane.

The Uist Wader Project (UWP), consisting of SNH, the Scottish Executive and RSPB Scotland, has been killing hedgehogs on the islands since 2003 in an attempt to improve the breeding success of ground-nesting birds. Translocation of hedgehogs was considered as an option by the UWP but rejected due to concerns that translocated animals would starve. The Scottish SPCA has previously supported this position. UWP has killed 658 hedgehogs on the islands.

Spokesperson for UHR, Ross Minett, said: “At long last the totally unnecessary killing of these healthy hedgehogs has ended. Whilst the policy change is of course welcome it is disgraceful that it has come too late for the hundreds of hedgehogs already killed by SNH. As we have said all along, we believe that scientific research and decades of practical experience have shown that translocation is the humane and ethical solution to this problem. We have offered SNH the benefit of our expertise and experience of translocating hedgehogs from the Uists. We sincerely hope that lessons will be learned from this experience and that conservation organisations will incorporate a respect for animals and their welfare into future policies.”

UHR’s call for an end to the cull was supported by a number of high-profile people including Joanna Lumley, Brian May, Dame Jane Goodall, Virginia McKenna, Carla Lane and Jenny Seagrove.

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\(^1\) UHR is a coalition of hedgehog experts, animal welfare and wildlife rescue organisations consisting of Advocates for Animals, the British Hedgehog Preservation Society, Hessilhead Wildlife Rescue Trust and International Animal Rescue. 
For more information see [www.uhr.org.uk](http://www.uhr.org.uk)

\(^2\) The paper from SNH officers to SNH’s Board proposing an end to the hedgehog cull can be found at: [http://www.snh.org.uk/board/detail.asp?id=268](http://www.snh.org.uk/board/detail.asp?id=268)

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October 12-14, 2007  Doubletree Stapleton Hotel, Denver, Colorado

Highlights:
- International Hedgehog Gym-bar-ea
- 2 Conformation Shows
- Judges Training
- Hospitality Room
- Vet Panel
- International Speaker, Hugh Warwick
- Dr. Terry Spraker will lecture on WHS.
- Vicki McLean will share techniques for WHS relief.
- Tour of the Flash and Thelma Rescue or Denver Zoo
- Lots of vendor tables
- Silent Auction
- Live Auction

Little one
My dear one
Always keep
You near one.
One day you came
You stole my heart
I knew right then
We'd never part.
You talked
You mumbled
One day
You stumbled.
I did not know
The reason why
That stumble I saw
Would make you die.
Slow at first
The back legs went

Soon the front
Crooked and bent.
You looked at me
With soulful eyes
They said to me
Must I die?
To see you struggle
And try to be
It was so hard
For me to see.
I never stopped loving you
And even though you are gone
I hold you close in my heart
And honor you in poem.
Lord Punky, Lord Punky
We are not apart.
You see dear one
You stayed in my heart.

with great devotion and undying love, my Lord Punky,
Your Mom, Bonnie
Its the wee hours of Tuesday morning, (July 3, 2007), and MiniMee and Sir Maxx (chomp chomp) are in their carriers on the way to their first beach twip. We is xcited!! But we is a wittle bit skeered too, we never been to dah beach afore, by the way, we was wondrin, whats a beach? Well along the way, we is bout to finds out.

We start out wiff my mommy, Tammy, and her family from West Virginnny, we gots the fam- ily wiff us too, there is my human sister, Nicci, my human brover J.C., and wots and wots of cousins, Polwy, Mewissa, Tre’, Devon, Kathy, Jamie, Tamika, and Jayden. We gots three behi- cles. We starts out and keep going and going. We gets into Virginia, just cwossed dah West Virginy wine. We stopped there to take a bwake. Me and Maxx is starting to stwetch our wittle wgs.

We gets going again and stops a few more times cause one of dah human kids gets sicky. Ewww. Me and Maxx is starting to think, we dont wike this stoppin all dah times. Humans sure to goes to dah baffroom awot. Why dont they gets Care Fresh and witter pans wike we do’s? So we starts out again. We gets into North Carolina, and its daywight outside. Evwybody decides wants to stop to gets some breakfast, me and maxx could use sumptin too, but mommy says we can only have wittle sips of water till we gets to dah beach. Me is beginnin to fink me dont wike this twip to dah beach. We stops at McDonalds for some breakfast. Mommy goes in wiff some of dah others. Evwybody goes to go potty again. Mommy goes to dah potty and when her comes out, the whole reastaurant people starts to laff at her. Mommy didnt know why they was laffin at her till some wady says, “Psst maam, Psst maam!”, mommy wooks at her and dis wady points to mommys dwess tail. Mommy sayed her got soo mbarassed, her had gone to dah baffroom and her dwess gots stuck in her underwear. Mommy sayed dat the whole back of her dwess was stuck in her panties and to top it off, der was a wittle hole in her undies. Wots and Wots of people see’d my momm- mys unmentionables. Mommy sayed that people waffin at her maked her feel speshul cause her had made people waff that might not have waffed dah whole day. And mommy says, "one thing for sure, they wont forget seeing my mommy in all her Glory just one day before Independence Day". Mommy laffs and laffs about it now.

We finalwy gets to Moitle Beach about 11 hours after we weft West Virginy. Then me smells sumptin stwange, me twies to see outside but me is in my carrier. Me guessed it must be the smell of dah ocean water, dats what mommy sayed her was smellin anyway. We goes