The Channel Islands are an archipelago in the English Channel, off the French coast of Normandy. The inhabited islands, all British Crown Dependencies, are: Jersey, Guernsey, Sark, Herm, Jethou, Brechqhou and Alderney.

Two things distinguish Alderney from the other islands: it is the northernmost island in the archipelago. And, more importantly, it is the home of an extremely rare group of blond hedgehogs!

According to local legend, the first five hedgehogs (known as the Alderney Spike Girls) came from England in the 1960s. They traveled to Alderney in a Harrod’s shopping bag, were accidentally released on the island, escaped into the wild and mingled with the local brown hedgehogs.

In England, blond hedgehogs are extremely rare—in thirty years of research only three blond hedgehogs have ever been found there. In Alderney, however, its quite a different story: Twenty-five percent of the hedgehogs on Alderney are blond!!

The Alderney hedgehogs are not albinos. A recessive gene found in common
brown hedgehogs causes their light coloring.

Biologists believe that at least one of the five British hedgehogs originally brought to Alderney was the carrier of a rare gene that has spread throughout the island population of hedgehogs. As the hedgehogs from England bred with the Alderney hedgehog population, the rare, recessive gene was passed on. Brown hedgehogs produce blond babies when both parents carry the blond gene.

The blond hedgehogs lack the pink eyes and pure white spines of albinos. Instead, the blonds have light, cream-colored spines. Their eyes are black, their noses and feet are pink. Like their brown relatives, they are nocturnal; unlike their brown relatives, they do not carry fleas!

According to Barbara Head, a hedgehog caretaker who lives on Alderney,

The two types interbreed but have differing characteristics. The brown ones tend to be more tenacious and aggressive, while blonds are more placid and amenable to handling.¹

The HWS owes a big “Thank you!” to Yukari, founder of Flat Bonnie (http://www.flatbonnie.com/).

What’s a “Flat Bonnie,” you ask? Flat Bonnies are stuffed animals, originally made in bunny form, created by Yukari to be sold and used to show the need for bunny adoption. The Bonnies’ owners are encouraged to bring their Bonnies out in public, pose them for photos, and give their owners a great way to bring up the topic of bunny adoption. In addition, Bonnie owners are encouraged to ‘adopt” and care for their Bonnies until they have the resources and ability to offer a home to a real bunny; a rescued bunny, of course! Flat Bonnie’s mission states:

Flat Bonnie hopes to raise awareness about the importance of "ADOPTING" when someone is ready for a "REAL" bunny. A portion of the sales will be donated to bunny/animal rescue organizations.

Over time, Yukari has created an entire line of Flat animals, to raise funds and/or awareness of adoption for skunks, guinea pigs, chinchillas, capybaras, and now, HEDGEHOGS! In addition, she has a line of stuffed bunny, guinea pig, and hedgie poos; you MUST visit her web site to see them, they’re adorable!

For her “Rescue of the Month” for July, Yukari partnered with Hedgehog Welfare Society Board member Laura Dunklee and offered to donate 20% of her July sales income to the HWS. To encourage sales of “Flat QT the Hedgehog” they created the Golden Hedgie Poo contest. Each week, one lucky person who placed an order was randomly selected as the recipient of that week’s “Golden Hedgie Poo” award. The winner received a plush "Golden Hedgie Poo" with their order, a secret code as verification, and a chance to choose a prize from a selection of prizes generously donated by HWS members.

The prizes included a bucket wheel made by Larry, a clock donated by Charity, a selection of all 3 HWS cookbooks and hedgehog chocolates donated by Sheila and Murfi, a Judie Peters tote bag filled with embroidered towels made by Tina, note cards donated by Margaret M., hedgehog dryer balls donated by Jennifer, and a hedgie bag/lap pad made by Cindy DeLaRosa.

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Full disclosure, as the person in charge of describing the prizes to the winners and letting the donators know where to ship them, I mistakenly asked Cyndy Bennett to make and mail a hedgie bag and lap pad to a winner. Although puzzled by the request, she gallantly stepped up and did so. Then I discovered my error. Thank you, Cyndy, and my apologies to Cindy. Never fear, Cindy’s lovely sewing efforts will be donated to another good cause soon.

The winners and their prizes are:

Week 1: Dianna Hahnlen who choose the clock
Week 2: Catherine Farrington who chose the bag and lap pad
Week 3: Rachel Rysdyk who chose the wheel
Week 4: Dianna Hahnlen who chose the tote bag filled with goodies
Week 5: Kayleigh Sherman who received the cookbooks and chocolates

Great fun was held by all, the HWS received a donation from Yukari of $104.58, and lots of people now have adorable QTs to snuggle.

Prizes shown include a raspberry sparkle Carolina Storm wheel, Judie Peter’s tote bag, two of the three HWS cookbooks, Kikkerland hedgie-shaped dryer balls, and hedgehog cards
Britain’s *Wildlife Aid Foundation* Launches Campaign  
By Margaret Myhre

The future of the hedgehog in Great Britain is in serious jeopardy. In the 1950s the estimated population of British hedgehogs was around 36 million. By 1990 their numbers had declined to two million and today there may be less than one million hedgehogs left in all of Britain.

This July, Britain’s *Wildlife Aid Foundation* launched the *Save Harry! Campaign* to protect the nation’s remaining hedgehogs. Spearheaded by The Right Honourable Ann Widdecombe, a former Member of Parliament and current patron of the Wildlife Aid Foundation, the organization is calling for a Hedgehog Protection Act to reverse the population decline among hedgehogs.

Previous efforts to save stop the population decline have urged individuals to make their gardens more hospitable for hedgehogs as well as providing them with food and shelter. *Save Harry!* advises shifting the burden from the individual to the government. Although the United Kingdom’s current *Biodiversity Action Plan* awards hedgehogs “priority” status, they must share that status with 1,149 other species—making them just another number in an enormous list. They are also protected under the *Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000* which requires government departments to conserve biodiversity.

The *Wildlife Aid Foundation*’s founder and director, Simon Cowell (not the TV personality) says that a protective law which makes the deliberate killing of hedgehogs a crime is needed as well as a mandatory code of practice to force government agencies to respond to the hedgehog’s plight. This would include measures such as adding escape ramps to cattle grids and garden ponds, making hedgehog-sized holes in fences which block natural hedgehog corridors and discontinuing the use of pesticides and slug pellets.

The mandatory Code of Practice would include the following requirements:

- Hedgehog tunnels under new roads and railways
- Fencing to funnel hedgehogs toward tunnels under new roads and railways
- Warning road signs where hedgehogs live next to roads similar to those for deer, cattle and speed bumps
- Escape ramps in livestock grids

Guidelines based on the Code of Practice would be issued by organizations such as the Home Builders Federation, National House Builders Federation, National Farmers Union and the Country Land & Business Association.

Organizations such as the Royal Horticultural Society, the Wildlife Trusts and the National Trusts would be required to adopt relevant sections of the Code of Practice in their advice to members on biodiversity.

A *Save Harry!* Quality Mark featuring the silhouette of a hedgehog in an oval frame would appear on the websites and documents of organizations adopting the Code of Practice.

**Sources:**

Register Your Hedgehog
By Elaine Becker

It’s been a long time since I wrote about registering your hedgehog (HWS Newsletter Volume 45, part 1, page 7) so I thought it was time to bring it up again for everyone who is new. Unlike the snobby cat & dog registries, you can register your hedgehog regardless of where it came from - even if it is a rescue. Best of all, registering your hedgehog is FREE! You can also get a nice certificate, if you want to buy one for a few dollars. To get your hedgehog registered, you can start at http://www.hedgehogregistry.org/ or if you don’t want a certificate (they will email your hedgehog’s registration number) jump directly to http://hedgehog-registry.org/individual.html and fill out as much information as possible. For rescues and rehomed hedgies with unknown birth dates, just guess as best you can. When I registered Speedy, he was “about two years old” – so I picked a birthday two years prior to his “Got’cha date” when I adopted him.

If you have questions about your hedgehog’s color, the registration site has a link to click that will take you to the color chart. But if you can’t decide between two very similar colors, don’t worry too much. Just pick one. It’s only important if you breed or show your hedgie – and at shows, the judge can help you decide if there’s a question.

Reasons to join the Registry are:

1. To preserve and improve the quality of the species, and to keep track of the progress of our efforts.

2. To improve knowledge of inherited traits with the goal of eliminating those characteristics that have a negative impact on hedgehog longevity and health and increasing those traits that enhance the species.

3. To track the demographics and distribution of pet hedgehogs

4. To connect hedgehog owners and breeders with one another, to enhance the hedgehog community.

If you move or your hedgehog changes health status, you can also do updates through the site to keep the Registry current.

A couple bonuses for having your hedgehog registered are that you get to collect points from ribbons won at shows toward the coveted Permanent Grand Champion award and your hedgehog can join the Hedgehog Military (on Pog-Chit-Chat). That number becomes their serial number.

Make sure your hedgehog stands up and is counted!

http://animals.m-y-d-s.com
“Good morning, Prickly Prickles, are you OK?” I ask when I open my favorite Hedgehog’s cage door and put my hand under her pigloo to check on her. Hyperventilating badger noises ensue as I feel all of Pricklepot’s quills poking into my outstretched hand. Reaching under her soft, furry belly, I lift her out of her bed regardless of the noise and pain. I know my Prickles is all talk. What I pull out resembles an almost round spikey ball of anger (Pricklepot can’t ball up all the way due to her slight weight issue).

Brushing down her quills with one hand, I turn Pricklepot over onto her back and look at her wiggly little black nose. She continues to huff and spike up.

Prickles, Prickles, it’s just me,” I say and smack my lips in a human kissing noise.

Pricklepot makes the kissing sound back. I put my nose to hers and the quills go down. The huffing stops. I see her two sparkly black eyes peering out at me in sleepy recognition.

“See, Pricklepot, it’s your mama.” I whisper to her and she begins to snuffle around like a happy hedgehog looking for a worm.

Bystanders have remarked upon Pricklepot’s complete relaxation after she realizes that I’m the one who is holding her. What they don’t see are the changes that take place inside of me when our noses touch. The constant tightness and perpetual pain in my chest begins to disappear. My heart rate slows to something closer to normal. Thoughts and images of horrific experiences from my past are dimmed inside my head. All

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the muscles in my body relaxed as did Pricklepot’s quills. We have calmed one another.

The things we talk about are inconsequential: What is causing that crusty patch on her face, what has she been doing that day (usually seepin or hoggin the hedge), whether she wants to take a baff or eat some wormies, where have all the light brown crunchies from her bowl gone... the list goes on. But the effects of the conversation between my Pricklepot and me can carry me through the rest of the day.

When I met Pricklepot, she had some health issues and her former caregiver could not afford to provide veterinary care. I nursed her through foot disease of unknown origin and an infected uterus with follow up spay. Pricklepot provided moral support during my hysterectomy. If a 560 gram creature could make it through the surgery, I had no reason to be afraid of it. She can calm my nerves and make me feel like a normal person.

We have rescued each other!

Who is Hans Majestet Pinssvinet?

Studentersamfunnet i Bergen (the Bergen Student Society) is a Norwegian student organization which was founded in 1934 by a group of students from the Bergen Museum. It is the oldest public student organization in the city of Bergen as well as western Norway’s largest independent arena for cultural, academic and political debates. The official protector of the group is a European hedgehog known as Hans Majestet Pennsvinet (Erinaceus europeus minor, Rex et Inspirator).

Hans is also the head of Pinssvinordenen, an order of honor which is awarded to selected members of the student society for their commitment to human rights and their work for the organization.

Under the auspices of Studentersamfunnet i Bergen student volunteers from educational institutions in the city of Bergen organize meetings, lectures and debates on cultural, scientific and political topics. The group has hosted presentations from prominent speakers including South African activist and Anglican Bishop Desmond Tutu; American political scientist, activist and author Norman Finkelstein; and Iranian lawyer and human rights advocate Shirin Ebadi.

Source:

Dianne Kavalar’s family has always volunteered. Family documents show that as far back as the Civil War her family volunteered, driven by a strong sense of duty to family, church, community and nation. Dianne shared with me that her “first volunteer gig was as a cat sitter (and plant waterer) for our neighbors”. This occurred at age 11. Since that time she’s been involved in over 40 different volunteer organizations/efforts. Some of the organizations include: the American Field Service (AFS), her children’s schools, the Parks Department (Dianne is an avid geocacher), Boy and Girl Scouts, and hospice care. Also, as a veteran, she’s involved with many veteran and military volunteer efforts.

However, it’s a comment she made at a hedgehog show that caught my attention. I heard her say, “I volunteer at a pet store.” As a long time volunteer myself, I thought, “Gee, that sounds like a fun place to volunteer”. So I asked Dianne about it. She replied:

_Hoffer’s Tropical Life & Pet Store has been around for many years and I’ve enjoyed taking my children to the store for the past 3 decades. A trip to Hoffer’s was like a trip to the zoo. The trips were enjoyable and inexpensive expeditions to explore another realm. Hedgehogs are one of many exotic species that they handle. In January of 2010, I decided to bring a little life into my house. I had just attended a geocaching event and one of the other folks there brought her hedgehog along and I got some snuggle time. I learned about the Arlington, Texas rescue effort, and volunteered to make bags and blankies to send down to Texas._

I had to chuckle at this, yet another volunteer job!

_Hoffer’s has “store hedgehogs” that aren’t for sale, but used for educational events for the Milwaukee Public_
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schools. Dianne began her volunteer efforts at Hoffer’s by simply playing with these hedgehogs as a social activity — one on one. Over time her job grew to include bath time and “inspection” of each hedgehog for health issues. As babies arrive, Dianne includes them in her schedule. As she’s learned more about hedgehogs and their care, she shares her knowledge with the Hoffer’s staff. When Peanut was born and his Mom rejected him, one of the Hoffer’s staff nursed him along and he survived. One day the staffer approached Dianne, would she take him? Dianne said yes, and Peanut had a new Mom (Spike and Kelly Girl also left Hoffer’s and found a home with Dianne).

When a Hoffer’s hedgehog leaves the store, the adoptive parents have spent time with Dianne, learning about their new family members and their needs. She informs the new parents about the IHA and HWS organizations and the resources available to help hedgie parents. They also leave with a socialized baby thanks to Dianne’s efforts.

So, if you ever find yourself at Hoffer’s, look for the lady wearing the Hedgehog Help apron and introduce yourself to Dianne!
Thoughts From the CVO
By Deb Weaver

As you read this Labor Day will be approaching.

LABOR DAY??!++++

What the heck happened to the summer? Wasn’t it just Memorial Day and the long, lazy days of summer were stretched out before us?? It was a very, very hot and humid summer here in Wisconsin, unusual for us. And, as was the case for many of you, we didn’t come close to getting enough rain. I did manage to enjoy time at an Indy car race, a week out of the city with friends, a couple of art shows, friends visiting the city, and time spent down at our lakefront. Oh, and as I write this, I’m thoroughly enjoying the Olympics. I just marvel at what the athletes can do. Their drive and dedication are something to admire.

It got me to thinking, am I giving 100% to what I’m involved in? Have I signed on to a task with good intentions and am I now letting excuses be my legacy? I’ve been a community volunteer here in Milwaukee for decades and I’ve chaired my share of committees and events (one was an event for 3,000 people, that one almost killed me!). Nothing is more frustrating (and, in the case of chaperoning small children, dangerous) than folks who don’t follow through and constantly drop the ball. These folks need to ask themselves a couple of questions: Do I have too many commitments? Has something in my personal life changed since I signed on for the job? Has my desire/passion waned? Is it time to re-evaluate my commitments?

Life’s circumstances constantly ebb and flow, none of us truly knows what tomorrow will bring. However we owe it to ourselves to bring to tomorrow our best effort. If your heart’s not in it, you shouldn’t be either.
This small picture book is the first installment of a planned series featuring Lorelei, a bespectacled hedgehog. Of course Lorelei is nocturnal and, since most of her friends are asleep when she is awake, she spends a great deal of time reading and dreaming of exciting adventures. These are described in rhymed text. Lorelei sails the ocean in a galleon, has an encounter with pirates, and later imagines she is a princess who battles a dragon to free a captive penguin prince.

The author, Michael S.S. Thedford, owns a hedgehog named Lorelei Daaé who celebrated her seventh birthday last March. He contacted Marika “Meeks” Purisima to draw a portrait of Lorelei and was so pleased with the result he made his hedgehog the mascot of his online humor column. Lorelei donned spectacles for her column appearances. That worked so well, Thedford was inspired to create this book. He says the character Lorelei Hedgehog sprang fully formed from his head and onto a page in nineteen rhyming couplets and the book was born.

Publication of the book was funded through a web site called Kickstarter which functions as a funding platform for creative projects. According to the Kickstarter site:

> Thedford recruited the immensely talented Meeks Purisima, who had immortalized his beloved pet hedgehog the previous year, and got to work crafting poesy and art direction.

> Meeks, meanwhile, took his scribblings and some chalk and made miracles. A few months of back-and-forth later, and the book was born. And people loved it, unanimously telling the pair to publish.

> So contacts were contacted and prices priced, distribution planned and International Standard Book Numbers obtained. And now two dreamers who only wanted to tell a story about a prickly young lady with a big imagination are here, in your hands. 1

With 131 backers, the project reached its funding goal on February 11, 2012! The book can now be ordered from Elder Days Story Time at [http://www.edstbooks.com/](http://www.edstbooks.com/).

This book is appropriate for kindergarten and primary level students. It would make a wonderful addition to a school or library presentation about hedgehogs.

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Marika “Meeks” Purisima

Marika Purisima, AKA Meeks, is a self-described artist, craftsperson and aspie (she has Asperger’s syndrome) who currently lives in Vancouver, British Columbia. She is also the illustrator of the children’s book, Lorelei Has A Dream, reviewed in the Literary Hedgehog column on page 8.

Meeks began drawing and painting while she was still a toddler. As a child she realized that her career ambition of becoming a cartoon character was not likely to happen. Her second choice for a profession was to become an animator. She began taking art lessons at the age of seven, eventually graduating from the Hartford Art School with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in drawing.

Here she explains how her autism influences her work:

I’m on the autistic spectrum, which, in my case, more or less means I have the personality of a cat. It’s an intrinsic part of who I am, and like any way of being, it has both benefits and drawbacks. The way that my brain handles sensory input and processes information can make it very difficult to communicate, particularly through speech. It also allows me to perceive details and find beauty in places that others often miss; I can easily see the patterns of light and shade that are so crucial in observational drawing; I can lose myself in the pure enjoyment of a pleasant scent or texture...it’s not easy being different, but I wouldn’t trade it for ‘normalcy’.¹

Meeks describes herself as a geek from a family of geeks. When she is not doing art work she enjoys yoga, baking and sewing as well as talking walks in scenic places.


Autumn Birthdays

SEPTEMBER

Sept. 3 Speedy Fischer

OCTOBER
I Joined HWS This Summer !!!  By Alice

This summer I did something different. I joined the HWS!! You probably think that HWS stands for Hedgehog Welfare Society and it does...but it also stands for something else that is really, really cool! Hedgehog Welfare Scouts!! I really love being a hedgehog scout cuz I get to do all kinds of really fun things and I have a neat uniform to wear too !!! I get to wear a cool red hat called a burray and a kerchief too. See? There’s my picture in my uniform...don’t I look terrific? Mom says I look really good in red!

Hedgehog Welfare Scouts get to do all kinds of cool things like camping and earning merit badges and even selling cookies. Only when I sold cookies I didn’t get to go door-to-door cuz I can’t reach the door bells and knockers in my neighborhood. Instead, my mom invited people to our house and we passed out cookies on trays. Going door-to-door would be lots more fun! Next year, I’m putting all my cookies in my wagon and taking a rope ladder with me!

Anyway, I still sold enough cookies to pay for half a week at Camp HWS and my mom kicked in the rest! It was so cool at camp!! I had a real cammo tent to sleep in all by myself! Only it was kinda scary at night on account of the wind and shadows and some really scary noises and I didn’t really sleep much! Next time I’m packing my teddy bear even if everyone else teases me and laughs at me! I don’t care cuz I know Teddy will help me feel a whole lot more braver!

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Anyway my most favorite part of camp was going on a hike to this special place to honor Mr. Burford T. Bristle. Mr. Bristle *invented* Hedgehog Welfare Scouts! I think he deserves a medal for doing that. I didn’t have a medal so I gave him my hat and scarf instead. When I grow up I want to do something just as cool as inventing hedgie scouts!!

Love, Alice