

## ANIMAL INFORMATION SHEET

Common Name – **African Hedgehog**

Scientific Name – *Atelerix albiventris*

Order – Insectivora Family – Erinaceidae



Care, feeding and handling guidelines are researched and outlined by the Association of Zoo and Aquariums, United States Fish and Wildlife and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

### **General Information:**

Size: 7-9 inches (females are generally larger than males)

Lifespan: up to 4 years (wild); up to 8 years (captivity)

Habitat: Grassy, woodland areas

Wild Diet: Insects, fruits, and vegetables

Diet: Insectivore diet can consists of cat/dog food, diced apples, grapes, hard-boiled eggs and mealworms.

**Indigenous Habitat:** African hedgehogs have a wide variety of habitats, including grassland, scrub, savannas, and suburban gardens. Hedgehogs are predominantly nocturnal and rest during the day curled up in a ball under leaf litter or in a hole in the ground. They assume this ball position also when fearful of attack.

**Home Habitat:** Use their indigenous environment to arrange enriching areas for digging and foraging. Hedgehogs require an ample sized container with smooth bottom and locking lid. Leaf litter can be frozen in zip bag for a minimum of 48 hours to create fun yet mite free substrate. Not recommend as a first pet, sleeps during the day so daylight interaction/handling should be limited. Spines can puncture children's hands.

**Recommended max time for handling:** 30 minutes

**Temperature Range:** 60° F – 85° F

**Transport:** Small smooth bottomed container with locking lid lined with paper and a crate cover to decrease stress for transporting to/from veterinarian or any other location. <60° F hot water bottle wrapped in towel MUST be placed in container. >85° F place a towel wrapped frozen water bottle in a container.

**Restraint:** Can become accustomed to being touched, patients and gardening gloves required while training. Pick the hedgehog up with two hands around the middle. The hedgehog will be curled in a ball until conditioned.

**Handling:** Can become conditioned to allow touching; but do NOT touch head as this will cause stress.

**Signs of Stress:** Biting, spitting, foaming, frothing, curling in to a tight ball and urinating.

**Vocalization:** Grunting and growling

**Interesting facts:** African hedgehogs have a drawstring muscle in their abdomen that allows them to draw themselves into a tight ball when they feel threatened. Hedgehogs have a high level of resistance to toxins allowing them to eat some snakes, wasps, bees and even scorpions.



### **Animal adoption saves millions, contact a local shelter to adopt today:**

1. Hedgehog Welfare Society at [www.hedgehogwelfare.org](http://www.hedgehogwelfare.org)
2. Check shelter's in your area via [www.Petfinder.com](http://www.Petfinder.com)
3. For questions or concerns you may have about your pets or where to adopt contact The Bunny Hutch at [Info@TheBunnyHutch.ORG](mailto:Info@TheBunnyHutch.ORG) or call (866) 488-4248.