



Hedgehog (*Atelerix albiventris* x *A. algirus*) Care Sheet

SUPPLIES:

- Enclosure, such as a rabbit/small animal cage, aquarium, etc.
- Substrate, such as carefresh, Boxo, white wood shavings, etc. **DO NOT USE PINE OR CEDAR AS THEY CONTAIN TOXINS WHICH WILL KILL YOUR HEDGEHOG.**
- 1 shallow water dish or low hanging water bottle, and 1 shallow food dish.
- 2 hide boxes.
- 1 hedgehog wheel.

SETUP:

- Place roughly 1 inch of substrate in the enclosure.
- Locate the enclosure where the ambient temperature is roughly 75°F - 80°F. It can be cooler, but it must not be colder than 70°F. Hedgehogs can rapidly develop a respiratory tract infection if they are kept in conditions that are too cold. **DO NOT LOCATE THE ENCLOSURE NEAR AIR CONDITIONING UNITS OR VENTS.**
- Locate the feeding dish & water dish/bottle where desired. Ensure that your hedgehog can easily access both.
- Place one hide at each end of the enclosure.
- Place the hedgehog wheel where desired.
- Under tank heat pads may be used to supplement heat if required/desired; be sure to locate it underneath the enclosure in an area where a hide is located. **DO NOT PLACE THE HEATING PAD INSIDE THE ENCLOSURE.**

FOOD & WATER:

- Feed daily, as much as the hedgehog will eat. A good quality commercial hedgehog food, or high quality cat food, as well as a wide variety of insects should form the foundation of the diet. Appropriate insect prey includes, but is not limited to, soft bodied insects such as butterworms, hornworms, phoenixworms, silkworms, and waxworms, as well as hard bodied insects such as cockroaches; captive raised only, crickets; captive raised or wild if collected from a pesticide/herbicide/fertilizer free area, mealworms; including their pupae and beetles, and superworms; including their pupae and beetles. You can also offer fresh fruit, eggs, Taronga Zoo diet, and animal protein such as frozen-thawed pinky mice and/or pinky rats.
- **DO NOT FEED A DIET COMPRISED MAINLY OF HARD BODIED INSECTS, SUCH AS MEALWORMS, SUPERWORMS, CRICKETS, ETC. THE CHITIN THAT FORMS THEIR EXOSKELETON, WHILE NECESSARY FOR FIBRE, CAN CAUSE AN INTESTINAL BLOCKAGE WHICH CAN BE FATAL. SOFT BODIED INSECTS SHOULD COMPRISE THE MAJORITY OF THE INSECT PORTION OF THE DIET. DO NOT FEED EARTHWORMS - EVER. THEY HARBOUR LUNGWORM AND THREADWORM PARASITES, BOTH OF WHICH ARE FATAL TO HEDGEHOGS.**
- Clean water for drinking should always be available.
- Bathing babies for 15 minutes weekly in a shallow bath of warm water is a good way to keep your hedgehog clean.
- Handfeeding is a great way to build trust and ensure a strong bond with your hedgehog, so make it a priority.

Caring for your hedgehog properly requires that you provide suitable temperatures, proper nutrition, clean water, a safe and secure enclosure/environment, and lots of daily attention to build and maintain trust. If you cannot or will not provide these things, a hedgehog is definitely not the right pet for you.