



# The Hedgehog Welfare Society

TO PROTECT THE WELL-BEING OF PET HEDGEHOGS THROUGH RESCUE, RESEARCH AND EDUCATION OF THE PEOPLE WHO CARE FOR THEM. NEWSLETTER #33, JAN/FEB 2008

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## 'BROZIA SAYS... "HAPPY HOLIDAYS EVERYONE!"



This is 'Brozia (as in ambrosia). She is an Algerian Platinum. She is 3 months old with a very sweet personality. Her favorite pas-time is to splat on her mommy's chest and go to sleep. She is sure to get some extra kisses from her care taker, Brenda Sandoval, for looking this cute!

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## They've Gone Batty in The Colonies (Again!)

By Z. G. Standing Bear

As the keeping of hedgehogs as pets in North America has emerged over the last 13 years, long-time hedgehog advocates, primarily in Great Britain and Europe, have generally viewed the practice with disdain. The notion of having these often flea-ridden, smelly, beneficial garden insect-eaters as house pets seemed, to those where wild hedgehogs dwelled, as preposterous as domesticating squirrels or chipmunks. Accordingly, word from the "New World" about hedgehog house pets only served to reinforce the British notion that things were still somewhat batty in the Colonies. Our European and British cousins seemed to join in with the militant "animal rights" activists in soundly proclaiming that "these are wild animals that belong in the wild!"

But not all hedgehogs are alike, and not only were the African hedgehogs waddling around American family rooms different in several aspects from their English and European brethren, but the way in which they got to arrive on American shores was quite remarkable. Having no discernable odor if healthy, African hedgehogs raised in captivity are mainly free of parasitic insects, save for the occasional attack of mites, which is easily remedied. Moreover, it turns out that African hedgehogs are remarkably free of the dander and other substances found on other fur bearing mammals that cause allergies in humans. Since they are not rodents and do not have the need to gnaw constantly, their quiet nature and other attributes make them ideal pets for people with limited space and rental property restrictions.

The exodus of African hedgehogs from Nigeria, Niger, and Benin to North America by the tens of thousands from 1991 until 1994 was a story of overpopulation and starvation. The affectionate and well-developed hedgehog named Thelma that lived at *The Flash and Thelma Rescue* for over three years was a far cry from the emaciated waif that arrived by air from Lagos, Nigeria in the Fall of 1993. After some 80,000 Central African and Algerian hedgehogs were imported, the United States Department of Agriculture stopped all imports in 1994 just as pet African hedgehogs were becoming "fad" pets, thus giving rise to an American hedgehog breeding industry. The benefits and horrors of THAT endeavor are far beyond the scope of this article; here my intent is to point out the very different perspectives when viewing the hedgehog through American versus British/European eyes and minds.

As the American pet hedgehog enterprise rolled on, understandably the European and British hedgehog fanciers were at least disapproving and at most aghast. Early pet hedgehog advocates in North America did not help the situation by their orientation on profit breeding and by a retinue of hopelessly harmful hedgehog pet care books

that were introduced into the mass market. During those early and largely harmful years, a small number of serious enthusiasts emerged to publish sound treatises on hedgehog care. Among them were Pet Storer, Sharon Mas-sena, Bryan Smith, and Dawn Wrobel.

As North American pet hedgehog organizations formed and then either died on the vine or fell apart (or imploded), the British and Europeans remained adamant that the keeping of pet hedgehogs was inherently a bad idea. Then, around 1999 or so, Dawn Wrobel, hedgehog breeder, author, and show organizer, apparently got an idea that was to begin to change the North Atlantic perception of pet African hedgehogs. During even-numbered years, Dawn organized the Chicago-area *Go Hog Wild*, one of the largest hedgehog shows in the world. Included within the group of keynote speakers for *Go Hog Wild* in 2000 was Jane Durrant of Great Britain's Welsh Hedgehog Hospital and co-author of *The Natural Hedgehog* (Gaia Books, London, 1995). Her talk, which was within her area of expertise, concerned homeopathic remedies for hedgehogs; this topic also occupied a major portion of her book. But beyond Jane's talk was the opportunity to visit and socialize with North American hedgehog fanciers and caretakers. That seemed to break the ice. It appeared that Jane returned home having made new friends and with a better understanding of the conditions and situations for hedgehogs in the "west."

Further liaisons between North American hedgehog fanciers and European rescuers and caretakers developed, especially with the hedgehog rescue in Denmark (*Pindsvinevennerie i Danmark*) and our own Donnasue Graesser's travels to Europe to participate in conferences on hedgehog health and welfare. It was in this context that Donnasue met Hugh Warwick, a prominent British journalist, environmentalist, and activist in the cause of hedgehogs. Recently, Hugh and his team of rescuers finally convinced the *Scottish National Heritage*, a conservation group with apparent life or death authority over the plight of hedgehogs on the Scottish Uist Islands, that hologicide was not the best idea in protecting the eggs of ground nesting birds. Known widely for his success in relocating the Uist Island hedgehogs to the Scottish mainland, Hugh became a British hedgehog celebrity. It was about time since he



*Continues on page 4...*

had championed and worked with hedgehogs for well over twenty years! Mr. Warwick's long devotion to hedgehogs finally paid a dividend in that when the large publishing company Penguin engaged him to write a major work about hedgehogs. Titled *The Hedgehog's Dilemma*, the work seeks, in exploring the lot of hedgehogs around the world, to address Arthur Schopenhauer's "hedgehog's dilemma." The Dilemma is a philosophical concept which implies that the closer two beings come to each other; the more likely they are to hurt one another (using the hedgehogs quills as the analogy). However, remaining apart brings on loneliness.

Exploring hedgehogs and the human interaction with them in Great Britain as well as evacuating the Uist Islands hedgehogs, Hugh's thirst for more global hedgehog knowledge grew. Next stop: China, in search of the little known hedgehog *Hemiechinus hughii* which was especially interesting in that here was a hedgehog that is the namesake of this man who has devoted so much of his life to them.

In investigating the world of the hedgehog, after China what could possibly be a stranger place to visit for an Englishman? Well, even in China, as in most of the world where there are hedgehogs, the little fellows exist solely in the wild. Enter now, North America, home of the pet African hedgehog. Thanks to an invitation and sponsorships from the Hedgehog Welfare Society and the Rocky Mountain Hedgehog Show, Hugh was on his way to the Colonies, where hedgehogs in the wild went extinct about ten million years ago but where a pet African hedgehog might be found in the family room of Harry Schwartz in Sandusky, Ohio.

In the *HWS Newsletter* for December, 2007, you have Hugh's take on his visit here. But there will be more ... much more. His individual book chapters are running around 18 single-spaced typed pages! And those of you who had such a great time being formally interviewed by Hugh or engaging in conversations with him at various points in the show, may well be prepared to appear in *The Hedgehog's Dilemma*, due to be released in the fall of 2008.

For my part, as Hugh's host while he was here for the show, his visit was delightful. He is a very engaging and humorous writer and his personality reflects those traits as well. We had a houseful of guests during Hugh's stay here, the others heading off with my wife, Virginia, to a forensic nursing conference in Salt Lake City. It was quite like the United



Nations here, with guests from England (Hugh), Texas (but originally England), India, and Ghana. As may be expected, Hugh hit it off wonderfully well with everyone. Seeing a little of the "American West," even on a tight schedule, is not too difficult around here. Among other places, we visited the gambling town of Cripple Creek and the old mining town of Victor, where the pavement ends in the middle of the place.



Early in his research into the dreaded hedgehog illness commonly known as "wobbly hedgehog syndrome," veterinary pathologist Terry Spraker remarked that he had never seen a group of people so attached to and fiercely protective of their pets as were hedgehog people. I am sure this disposition carried over to and was recognized by Hugh during his visit here. It will, therefore, be interesting to read what Hugh finally has to say about his interaction with the American hedgehog crowd. In his *HWS Newsletter* article, Hugh pondered the question "Why were people so keen to make a pet of a hedgehog?" Perhaps he will be able to provide some answers and insights after he has had a chance to distill the many interviews and interactions he had while here. I can speculate that whatever Hugh does come up with for the American chapter of his book, it will be insightful and a good read. However, perhaps the answer to that question is not as complicated as we may think? It may be as simple as the reality that African hedgehogs were overpopulating in northern Nigeria and were shipped to these shores as an experiment in the pet trade. They sold, and found a place in the hearts of people in a land where hedgehogs did not exist. Unsited to the outdoors in the North American climate, their fate as denizens of the indoors was sealed. Given the fondness of the British and Europeans for hedgehogs, perhaps the love affair of the Americans for these little characters, adjusted for species and environment, is not that difficult to understand.



## Common New Hedgehog - Caretaking Questions

By Laura C. Dunklee

We were all there once: New to the joys of sharing our lives with a hedgehog (or two) and no matter how well prepared we thought we were, once the animal was in our care all sorts of new questions and issues came to the forefront.

I was there, too – I'd done my research, read the books and websites, talked with caretakers, and inundated my breeder with questions. I was ready, and sure of it, to provide a good home for a hedgehog. But then my little one arrived and I realized that I had oodles and oodles of questions that I had not been aware of before Miss Penelope Anne arrived. Questions that I could not have asked before she was in my care because they arose only after she was with me and I was moving from theory to reality.

Knowing that I'm not the only one to have experienced this, I have gone through questions posted to the Hedgehog Welfare Society's Yahoo! discussion group (HedgehogWelfare), the Hedgehog\_Help discussion group, and the forums at Chins-n-Quills, putting together a list of the most common "New Caretaker" questions and some of the answers / solutions that have been offered in response.

Q. My hedgehog sleeps all the time – is this normal?

A. Maybe. If your hedgehog is young, then it is going to sleep a lot, like other young animals (and humans!). Also, you need to remember that hedgehogs are nocturnal so they are likely going to be sleeping while their humans are awake. Some hedgehogs will come out when the sun sets, others will only voluntarily venture out to explore when there are no lights on in the room. I would recommend letting your new hedgehog sleep during the day. Interact with it in the evening, a time when most hedgehogs are normally waking up and tend to be more active and social (though they may very well curl-up in your lap and snooze some more!).

Q. Every time I play with my hedgehog, she goes to the bathroom on me. How can I teach her not to do this?

A. Hedgehogs are a lot like we humans, in that they (and we) tend to need a trip to the bathroom shortly after waking. It is not surprising if your hedgie graces you with a "gift" soon after being wakened and brought out for snuggle time. Additionally, younger hedgehogs have trouble "holding it." This is a skill learned by some, though not all, older hedgies. You can not really punish your hedgehog for doing what comes naturally but you can learn to read its body language and place it in a litter box or appropriate bathroom spot when it looks like it is getting ready to relieve itself. Some key signs to watch for are: A "potty" dance (the hedgehog appears agitated in its

movements), the hedgehog squats on its haunches and the raising of the hedgehog's tail (it may "lift" its tail as if it is about to go to the bathroom). Other than that, accidents are normal. I recommend keeping tissues at hand when interacting with your hedgehog.

Q. My hedgehog's poop really stinks – can I stop this?

A. There are a couple of common reasons for smelly feces in hedgehogs and most are easily resolved. First, young hoglets tend to have much smellier poops than their adult counterparts. Also, the fecal smell is affected by what foods the hedgehog consumes. Some foods cause more of a stench than others. It has been my experience that cat kibbles with a seafood- or fish-base produce stinkier poops than kibbles with a poultry-base. Additionally, some people have reported an increase in smelly fecal matter when switching a hedgehog from one food to another, or when giving a special treat. The hedgehog digestive system seems to need to adjust to the new food.

If you don't think that any of the above is likely causes for smelly poop from your hedgehog, then you need to get your little one in to see a vet. Take a fresh fecal sample with you for testing. Try to collect it just before going to the vet's office and place into a Ziploc bag) for testing. Hopefully your hedgehog will cooperate and produce a fresh sample for your veterinarian. The sample can then be examined for parasites and bacteria, both of which can cause a change in fecal scent.

Q. My new hedgehog's poop is kind of green and soft – is this normal?

A. Many hedgehogs develop soft green poops when stressed or going through a change, including car trips, vet visits, and moving from one home to another (from the breeder's home to yours, or from a pet store to your home). They may also produce green poops when their food or water is changed. If your hedgehog is eating well and active, you can wait a day or two to see if this matter resolves itself.

However, if your hedgehog isn't eating much and appears lethargic, or if its feces are really watery (diarrhea), then you need to get the hedgehog to the vet immediately! Diarrhea causes dehydration and hedgehog's die quickly once they become dehydrated. If you're at all in doubt, get to the vet, sooner rather than later (today, not tomorrow – and certainly not next week or next weekend).

Q. I don't think my new hedgehog is eating – is this bad?

A. Why do you think your hedgehog isn't eating? Because you haven't seen them eat? Because it doesn't look like the

*Continues on page 5...*

level in the bowl has gone down? Many hedgehogs prefer to eat under the cover of darkness, meaning that if you are in the room and there is a light on. Sometimes when there is no one in the room but there is some ambient light, they will stay hidden and not come out to eat. Or they may sneak out, grab some food, and sneak back into hiding. The easiest way to tell if your hedgehog is eating is to count the kibble or pieces of food in its bowl. Start with a fresh food dish and count in 70-100 pieces of kibble (try to go with whole kibbles, rather than broken pieces, for ease of tracking). Place this in your hedgehog's habitat and leave it there overnight. The next morning, remove the food dish and count the contents. If there is less kibble, then you know your little one is eating. If there is less food and some of the kibble has been broken, then your hedgehog is eating. If nothing has changed and NO kibble has been eaten, you may want to offer some other kibble options or some soft foods to tempt your hedgehog into consuming something. Hedgehogs need to eat regularly and a hedgehog that doesn't eat is at risk for developing Fatty Liver Disease and other health problems.

If you are fairly certain that your hedgehog hasn't eaten anything in 36- to 48-hours, then a vet visit is necessary to see if there is something seriously wrong that is keeping the hedgehog from eating normally. Your vet can also provide you with some foods that might tempt your hedgehog (*Carnivore Care*, *Feline ReBound*, *Nurti-Cal*, prescription canned foods, etc.).

Q. I've been feeding my hedgehog "hedgehog food" but people tell me that it isn't good for hedgehogs – then why is it sold and what's better?

A. Most of the commercially marketed / sold "hedgehog" food is not appropriate for the hedgehogs we keep as pets here in the U.S. and Canada. Sometimes the food is correct for the wild European hedgehogs but most of the time it's just crud and occasionally it's even dangerous. For example, some commercial hedgehog foods contain whole peanuts, which can become lodged in the roof of a hedgehog's mouth, or raisins, which can be difficult to chew and swallow. Why is it marketed? Because people buy it, simple as that.

A better option that is recommended by many breeders, rescuers, caretakers, and vets is a mix of high-protein, low-fat cat kibble, supplemented with safe fresh meats, vegetables, and insects. Many people prefer a mix of kibbles (two or three or more), because they're all formulated differently and the theory is that by feeding a variety we have a better chance of meeting all of the hedgehog's dietary needs. Another plus of feeding a mixture of kibble is that if your hedgehog suddenly decides that it doesn't like a specific kibble (or its formula is changed,

or it's recalled and pulled off the market), you have other options that your hedgehog will already be used to eating, lessening the chance of a complete hunger strike and the related complications.

Q. How can I tell if my hedgehog is overweight?

A. The general consensus is that a hedgehog is overweight if it cannot curl into a tight ball because of its excess fat. Like humans, hedgehogs come with different body shapes and sizes – one hedgehog might be at their perfect adult weight at 250 grams and another might be at their perfect adult weight at 700 grams.

There are three general "healthy" hedgehog body shapes:

| | - if you look down at the hedgehog's back, their body tends to move straight along the sides (this body shape tends to happen in smaller, very active or "runner" hedgehogs).

/ \ - if you look down at the hedgehog's back, their body widens in a triangle or teardrop shape moving back from the head.

( ) - if you look down at the hedgehog's back, their body appears to be rounded, like a ball.

The two un-healthy body shapes are:

) ( - When you look down at the hedgehog's back, if the body actually indents at the sides, sometimes called the "Squished Twinkie" look – this hedgehog is underweight and needs to gain some – please talk with your veterinarian about an appropriate weight-gain regimen.

( ) - When you look down at the hedgehog's back, if the body appears oval, being wider than it is long, this is likely an overweight hedgehog who cannot roll into a tight ball and needs to lose some weight. Talk with your veterinarian about a diet and exercise plan for this hedgehog.

Q. My hedgehog is losing quills, does he have mites?

A. Probably not, especially if your hedgehog is young. As they grow, hedgehogs go through several stages of "quilling" during which they lose their baby quills and their adult quills come in. The quilling process seems to vary between hedgehogs but most go through three or four quillings by the time they reach full adulthood. You should be able to part the quills on your hedgehog's back and see the new quills growing in. The new quills will be of various lengths as they come through the skin. Some hedgehogs appear to find the quilling process uncomfortable while others seem to go through it with no obvious trauma. You might want to try offering your hedgehog an oatmeal bath to soften the skin and (hopefully) allow the quills to come through more easily.

During a quilling, your hedgehog may not want to be han-

dled. Most caretakers recommend keeping the same interaction schedule during quilling but don't actively put pressure on your hedgehog's quills. Instead cuddle with the hedgehog in a hedgie bag or set it down to cuddle next to you. You also need to remove all of the shed quills from your hedgehog's living space, so your hedgie doesn't actually impale itself on the discarded quills.

If your hedgehog is losing a lot of quills and you are not seeing new quills coming in, or if you are finding bare patches on your hedgehog, then you need to take the little one to a vet and have it examined for mites and other skin issues, such as fungus.

Q. My hedgehog is missing quills on her forehead – why?

A. This is perfectly normal – what you are looking at is sometimes called a reverse Mohawk. There is a lack of quills forming a v-shape starting at the hedgehog's forehead and moving back over the skull. The reverse Mohawk is an evolutionary development for hedgehogs, it allows the hedgehog to pull together its visor quills to down to protect the face as it rolls into a ball when startled or threatened. If hedgehogs had quills in this area, they would actually get in the way of the hedgehogs protecting themselves.

Q. How often should I bathe my hedgehog?

A. It depends! How is that for an answer? Whether you

give the hedgehog a full bath or a foot bath really depends on how dirty the hedgehog is. Are you bathing the hedgehog because it is dirty or as a way of relieving itchy skin / quilling issues? The bath decision should be based on whether you have a neat and tidy hedgie or a hedgie that revels in making a mess and getting dirty on a regular basis.

Giving hedgehogs full baths can dry-out their skin by removing natural oils, so you don't want to give full baths too often. I would recommend full baths no more than once or twice a month at the most. However, hedgehogs are famous for their poopie boots (after a hard night of wheeling) and these need to be removed, possibly with a foot bath. Add about half an inch of warm water to the sink and then let the hedgehog walk around in it for a minute or two, softening the poop coating and making it easier to remove. Once the poopie boots are gone, make sure that the hedgehog is completely dry before returning it to its habitat.

I hope that these ideas have helped – please don't ever feel reluctant to ask about caring for your hedgehog. Even the most experienced breeders and caretakers are constantly asking for advice and insight.



Take a look at our past auctions.



Watch for up-coming auctions to benefit Wobbly Hedgehog Syndrome research!

The more you bid, the more we find out about the cause and treatment of this dreaded disease.

# Welcome to Pog-Chit-Chat...

## Where hedgies tell it like it is.

### Our Trip to the Arbor-eat-'em

Dec. 8, 2007

by Wizard Woodring

I just wanted to tell everyone about the exciting weekend that Baxter and I had. Friday night. When we got up for our lap time, we were both taken directly to the bathroom for a baff. Well, we wondered what was up. Maybe visitors??? No, Mom didn't clean our cages today which she would have done if someone was coming to visit. Maybe a hedgehog show??? No, I didn't see her packing our tents and all of our stuff. However, Baxter did see her take out a small tote late last night with some blankies in it. Hmmmmm....wonder what's up?

Well, finally Mom told us that on Saturday we were going to a place called the Arbor-eat-'em! She explained that the people there were having a Breakfast with Santa event and then a promotion of Jan Brett's Christmas books. They wanted some live hedgehogs there for people to see. We didn't know what arbors were but we figured we were going to "eat-'em" for lunch.

Well, we got to the Arbor-eat-'em about 10:30 in the morning all clean and smelling faintly of shampoo. Before we were even out of our carriers we could hear lots of people giggling and laughing and coming closer. I looked out and there were people everywhere. They were all rushing toward us! It seems there was a sign there that said "live hedgehogs at 11:00". So all those people had been wait-



ing for US!!! Can you imagine? We felt like movie stars!

They had a nice table set up for us with books and stuffed hedgies. Mom brought her poster boards of pictures which she put on a stand next to the table. So out we came. Everyone gathered round to see us and pet us. They were mostly little fingers, and they touched me so lightly that I had to giggle because it tickled. Heeheehee!! Dad was busy taking pictures and giving the little kids hedgehog stickers for their jackets.

Pretty soon Kathy Kocunik came with Merryweather and my niece, Tulahbelle. I had never met Tulah so that was exciting. Now that there were four of us there, we could take turns getting a little shut-eye.

The most exciting thing was the special guest who was there. It was Hedgie, the star of *The Hat*, *The Mitten*, and *Hedgie Blasts Off*. Baxter was so excited! You would think he had never seen a star before. Oh...well, maybe he hasn't. He got to pose with Hedgie for a picture. Whew...that guy really needs to get on some of that low-fat kibble.

At about 2:30 it was time to go home. We were only supposed to stay until 1:00 but people didn't want us to leave.

Now, about the arbors. Evidently they are some kind of tree but they didn't serve them for lunch. I hope they just didn't forget about us because we weren't in the cafeteria. I'll have to ask about that if we ever go back there.



# Celebrating the Holidays



Nigel Correra must have Santa on his mind!



Danielle Thomas all dressed up!



It must be time to dress up. Emmy's friend is wearing his tux.



Emmy Myhre thinks she is the star of the show.



Danielle's Aunt gave her this hedgie for Christmas.





# The Literary Hedgehog

Margaret Myhre



***The Birthday Presents* by Paul Stewart. Illustrated by Chris Riddell. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1999.**

This wonderful sequel to Paul Stewart and Chris Riddell's book *A Little Bit of Winter* expands on the relationship between Hedgehog and his dear friend Rabbit. The two would like to celebrate one another's birthdays but can't since neither one knows the date of his birth. They are sadly contemplating all the birthdays they will never celebrate, when Hedgehog suggests that they celebrate their birthdays on the following day (just in case it really is the day they were born). Hedgehog also recommends presents because "that's what birthdays are for."

The two friends rush away to prepare for the celebration. As Hedgehog snuffles for slugs in the moonlight, he imagines his friend Rabbit fast asleep in his silent, damp, gloomy burrow. Hedgehog chooses a gift which will brighten his friend's home so Rabbit will no longer be afraid of his "very, very dark burrow."

Meanwhile, Rabbit is safe in his burrow thinking of his friend Hedgehog sleeping out in the open. "How frightening and noisy it must be," he thinks, "and how bright!" He selects a gift which will protect Hedgehog from being disturbed by the bright, noisy day.

Hedgehog and Rabbit meet for their birthdays on the following day and eagerly exchange gifts. Each is puzzled by the gift he receives but both tactfully cover their disappointment, each profusely thanking the other. Later when they have returned to their respective homes, both come up with alternative uses for their gifts. When they meet again, each one declares that his gift is the best gift he has ever received.

This gentle story is greatly enhanced by Chris Riddell's charming drawings of the characters. Rabbit is thin and nervous with huge expressive eyes while Hedgie is pudgy and awkward with an incredibly endearing hedgegie-esque quality.

This book is a "must have" for anyone who loves hedgies and appreciates a good story.



Jan. 1 Roxie Hart Storm  
 Jan. 3 Tru Jackson-Dempsey  
 Jan. 3 Daisy Muckenfuss  
 Jan. 4 Keeghan Storm  
 Jan. 5 Cuddles Lezana Bennett  
 Jan. 9 GW Pooles Muckenfuss  
 Jan. 14 Nevaeh Rake  
 Jan. 26 Periwinkle Primrose Inverso  
 Jan. 26 Sonic Bruin Muckenfuss

Feb 9 Havanna Muckenfuss  
 Feb 12 Keelin Dick  
 Feb 13 Baylee Storm  
 Feb 19 Winston Storm

# Hedgehog Trivia

Margaret Myhre

## Ornamental Cucumbers

Looking for unusual plants for the garden? How about an ornamental cucumber? This climbing vine produces pale green fruits covered with soft bristles about half an inch in length. They bear a striking resemblance to hedgehogs!

Although the fruits are very cute they have thick skins, large seeds and large seed cavities. They are so bitter that Andy Powning, of the *Green Leaf Produce Company* in San Francisco, has declared them to be "Not culinarily defensible!"

Despite this crushing review, they do have great potential as natural decorative craft items. The UK division of the *Thompson & Morgan Seed Company* markets the seed to child gardeners as "Horace the Hedgehog." The seed packet features a genial smiling green hedgehog and this statement:

Hello, my name is Horace. I'm so easy to grow and I'm covered in tiny prickles just like a real hedgehog. You can grow a whole family of little Horaces.

( <http://seeds.thompson-morgan.com/uk/en/product/4584/1> )

The seeds require full sun and should be planted in April or May. *Thompson-Morgan* advises sowing the seed on its edge as it has a tendency to rot if sown flat. The plants should be fertilized with potash and watered and mulched regularly. In temperate climates, the cucumbers may be harvested in August and September.



Photo by John Mullens Reprinted with permission.  
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/all-flowers/1756433379/>

The *Territorial Seed Company* of Cottage Grove, Oregon markets the seeds as

"Deco Mix Ornamental Cucumber." Here is their description:

*Cucumis spp*70 days. Almost otherworldly, these little curiosities stopped us in our tracks at our trial gardens. With foliage that looks like miniature watermelon leaves, the creeping plants are mobbed with spiky, alien-like fruit. Officially an African cucumber, the fruit are not edible, but do have an unearthly long shelf life and unlimited applications for floral arrangements, decorations, and crafts. At a local garden festival, we used these in an arrangement that generated a tremendous amount of enthusiasm. Not for human consumption. (<http://www.territorialseed.com/product/7255/s>).





Do you have an idea for Lucy Laughs? You can e-mail the editor with your ideas.  
~Editor

# Lucy Laughs

Can you speak Hedgese? See if you can decode the language below and see what Lucy has to say.

Yhpl jvfurf rirelbar n Unccl Arj Lrne svyyrq jvgu puvpxvr  
fgvpxf, zrnyjbezf, fjrrg crnf naq ybgf bs pevpxvrf sbe nyy.  
Gur rqvgbe jbhyq nyfb yvvr gb jvfu lbh n unccl, urnygul arj  
lrne svyyrq jvgu znal cevpxyl zrzbevrf.

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](mailto:hedgiemom@comcast.net)



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