



Hedgehog Welfare Society

Newsletter #84 January/February 2017

To protect the well-being of pet hedgehogs through rescue, research and education of the people who care for them.



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Considering a Hedgehog? Things You Should Know, Part 1

By Laura C. Dunklee, HWS Co-Chair for Health, Research & Education

Part one of a two part article on what to expect when you adopt a hedgehog.

The Genesis of the Article

Frequently, prospective or new hedgehog guardians join the Hedgehog Welfare Society (HWS) and other Facebook groups and start asking questions about caretaking. This is excellent, as it means they want to learn about caring for a bundle of quills and an informed hedgehog guardian is best able to provide a wonderful life for a hedgie.

I thought that an article that covers the basics would be helpful. However, I've been a hedgehog guardian for more than 13 years, long enough that I've forgotten what it's like to be new to the marvelousness of these beings. I can't now recall my initial "Oh, wow, what is Miss Penelope Anne doing and is this normal?!" moments. So while I can share what I've experienced over the years, a lot of "normal" hedgehog things don't come to mind when trying to help a newcomer. So I decided to ask for help.

I posted in our Facebook group, asking two questions; I didn't expect the number of thoughtful, insightful responses.

The Two Questions

1. **What is the one major thing you wish you had known before bringing a hedgehog into your life?**

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2. What's the one piece of advice you would give someone who's thinking about bringing a hedgehog into their life?

From the HWS Facebook Community:

Jack C's Response:

1. So. Much. Poop. Keeping their cage clean is a constant ordeal.

2. They are not dogs. They are not even cats. The YouTube videos you see of sleepy, belly-rubbing hedgies who obviously enjoy *human* company are RARE. I have had many, many hedgies at this point and I'd say only two really seek out human company rather than tolerating it or avoiding it.

Tavia R's Response:

1. How hard it is to find a spot in my house with enough space for the cage that also meets a hedgehog's temperature requirements

2. Start putting a bit of money aside every month in case you need unexpected vet care beyond the usual care. If you don't spend the money on that, you'll have enough to get another hedgehog (because you will likely fall in love and want to always have one).

Brenda H's Response:

1. I wish I had known more about their dietary needs. I brought home my first little guy on hedgehog food and it took me entirely too long to find out that he wasn't getting what he needed. I wish I had found the Facebook hedgehog groups sooner so that we could have transitioned to better food.

2. Make sure you have an adequate vet fund. Exotic vets charge a premium and some charge even more for hedgehogs because they're more "difficult". The smallest issues can be expensive if your vet has to sedate your hedgehog for the exam and there's no telling whether your ball of love will become a ball of spite at the vet's. Also, bring hand warmers in your

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carrier when you go to the vet. It's like an icebox in there!

My rehomes and rescues definitely require a lot more socialization and love than my breeder baby: She came off the air-plane, sniffed me, and decided I was "home". Her "stray" brother took six months before he realized he was safe here!

Sun H's Response:

1. Take into account that once they do bond with you, changing "owners" can be very traumatic for them. If you are not sure beyond any doubt, then don't get one. It still breaks my heart to think of what my girl went through when she had to leave the person she was bonded with before me. It's hard to describe the way she acted, but she mourned. She is bonded with me now and will NEVER go through that again, but I am actually tearing up thinking about it.

Also, veterinary financing options like **CareCredit** (or **Petcard** in Canada) are literal lifesavers!

Aimee H's Response:

1. I wish I'd known how to help them with fireworks (the solution for me is to give the hedgehog my bed). You can ask for advice via Facebook groups for most things, but, to be honest fireworks are the one thing every animal owner struggles massively with. I am working on a UK-based campaign to limit the use of fireworks in gardens.

2. Always have multiple spares of supplies. One spare liner and pouch is NOT enough if you have a liner diver. I've had to change liners three times in one night due to cold weather. You can't just leave them wet! I share my room with my hogs so I am frequently awakened by the liner diver diva.

Brittney A's Response:

1. A heating lamp (a ceramic heat emitter, or CHE) is recommended over a heating mat.

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2. Be ready for poop (and the crazy amount of poop that sticks to wheels) and cutting nails! Also, if you have a liner diver, try a boxed house with a plastic bottom. This solved my liner diver issues!

Christy N's Response:

1. All these things, plus the truth about "boy time."
2. Be prepared to love a perpetually grumpy hog (not all hedgehogs love the adorable belly rubs!)

Marissa P's Response:

1. Poop is much bigger than you expect, not like a hamster, rat, etc.
2. Make sure you can commit thirty minutes to an hour each day to spend with your hedgehog.

Jenny M's Response:

1. I wish I'd known how much of my heart the little guy would possess. He passed away at the end of August and I'm still crying.
2. Research. Find a reputable breeder or know what you are getting into with a rescue or rehome *Craigslist* baby. I definitely agree with Jack about the fact that a hedgehog is not a dog!

Sonya F's Response:

1. I would have liked to have known about the massive soft type poops that hedgehogs have, particularly when running on the wheel and in it! I also wish I had known that hedgehogs do bite and can draw blood as bad as, if not worse than, rodents!
2. While people claim hedgies don't like change, daylight, and numerous other things, every hedgie is different in personality—expose them to truly learn their personality. Our hedgehog loves camping, kayaking, hiking with us, and going on adventures! He's weird in how curious and calm he is, more so outside and in new places than at home. Also know how much the little buggers will steal your heart and make you realize one will always be in your life!

Christine R's Response:

1. [Both of my answers are vet related] — Even though I'd picked a vet pre-hedgehog as well as a back-up vet for when things were beyond routine exams, I found that I'd have to go to the University Teaching Hospital to be seen because my regular vet didn't have equipment small enough for things such as CT scans. The money really adds up so I'd say really know all of your vet options ahead of time, meet the vet and ask what they can do and what they can't (can they spay? How much experience have they had with hedgehogs?). Also know who they will refer you to for in-depth care, then call that vet and find out what their emergency visits will cost.
2. Once you have a hedgehog, understand that their lives are short and when you think "Gee, I've had a long day at school/work/whatever," just don't miss that time with them. Put them in a pouch for your

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Christine R's Response : (continued)

long day at school/work/whatever," just don't miss that time with them. Put them in a pouch on your lap, even if it's for only an hour while you are doing something else, just spend quality time with your pet.

3. Okay, one more thing—I think this is very important—no matter how hectic or busy you are, check in on your hedgehog. Physically look them over at least once in the morning and once at night and, if possible, sometime in between. This gives you a chance to assess that your hedgegie has eaten, has water available, has pooped normally, hasn't snagged a nail or become sick, and that the heat level in the cage is correct. If you check your hedgehog's situation two to three times each day, you can catch anything fairly quickly.

Ashley S's Response:

1. They are not all cute, cuddly, and friendly like the ones you see posted all over the Internet. Most of them are grumpy, grouchy and sharp. They can become cute, cuddly and snuggly but that takes tremendous time, effort, and patience.
2. Get all the information, food, and equipment you need BEFORE you get the animal. Don't go buy one, bring it home , and introduce it to stress and possible illness because you didn't take into account all the money and proper equipment it takes to keep a hedgehog healthy and safe.

Annie W's Response:

1. I wish I'd known it would hurt so much when I lost him.
2. They are NOT like a dog or a cat. They are not cuddly most of the time. And they do poke you with their quills.

Michael T's Response:

1. Hedgehogs are sensitive to environmental conditions — temperature, noise, and smell.
2. Expect health issues to be challenging and time-consuming. But totally worth it.

Look for Part 2 of this discussion in the March/April issue of the newsletter.



<http://www.wildlife-animals.com/clipart/hedgehog-2.png>

Thoughts from the President

Deb Weaver

Happy New Year Everyone!!

I hope everyone had a happy holiday season, filled with all the people and things you love best.

I'd like to start out 2017 by thanking everyone who took in a rescue or adopted from us in 2016. HWS had 218 animal relinquishments, with 79 being placed directly with private adopters, and the rest going to one of our rescue sites. Once at a rescue site, many are nursed back to health and our rescue people then place them with an approved adopter. The rest, find a permanent home at the rescue site. To those of you who run one of our rescue sites - - YOU ROCK!!

I'd also like to thank the Board for their work in 2016. Especially Christina H. (and her husband Sean), who handled our very successful fall calendar sale and our very busy rescue chair Linda W.

HWS runs on donations. The calendar sale and our wheel-a-thon - - for those of you new, our wheel-a-thon is an annual fundraiser held on Hedgehog Day. Your hedgehog "collects" pledges from family, friends, co-workers, etc. for their running that night (doesn't matter if they actually do run...it's the thought that counts!). It's a flat pledge...not a per mile pledge - - are our two big fundraisers every year. See the article on page 7 in this newsletter on the 2017 wheel-a-thon. However, HWS can't exist on these fundraisers alone.

I'd like to encourage you to make a donation to HWS during 2017. Perhaps you could ask your friends/family to make a donation in your name for your birthday this year. Or a donation in memory of a beloved animal that has passed. No amount is too small, it all adds up to help us with our mission. I thank you in advance for your generosity.

Best wishes to everyone for a fantastic 2017!



It's Wheel-A-Thon Time

It's that time again! Winter is upon us and our Wheel-a-Thon is a few short weeks away! Every year, the Hedgehog Welfare Society holds its biggest fundraiser of the year, the Wheel-a-Thon, on Hedgehog Day (February 2nd). In 2017, we hope to have the biggest and best Wheel-a-Thon yet! You can help us accomplish that goal by signing up to have your hedgies run, as well as making a donation to one or more of the teams participating in the event.

It's easy to participate: you can sign up your hedgehog(s), giving them a cool fun team name, and ask your friends, relatives, co-workers and neighbors for pledges. You'll collect a flat amount, so you don't have to keep track of hedgegie mileage.

Sponsors can either write a check to the HWS or pay through [Paypal](#).

If you would like to participate, please send an email to HWS.wheelathon@gmail.com and you'll get a pledge sheet and the rules.

Let's make this our best year yet!

Sincerely,

Kristen & Christina

Hedgehog Birthdays

January 25 Kenny Hoggins MacGhille Morrison
February 1 Bud Becker
February 2 Joey MacGhille Morrison



An Australian Echidna from the book *Compléments De Buffon*. By R. P. Lesson. Paris, France: P. Pourrat, 1838.

The Literary Hedgehog : *The Hedgehoggiary*, A Review

By Laura Dunklee,

HWS Co-Chair for Health, Research, and Education

Have you ever read a book that delighted you from the cover through the credits?

Such was my experience with Samuel Eddington's *The Hedgehoggiary*. Even the title is enchanting! Eddington writes, in the Introduction, "It's called *The Hedgehoggiary* as a play on the medieval genre of the bestiary, a book that paired illustrations of animals with text about them." The title is apt and perfectly encapsulates the book's contents.

The Hedgehoggiary is divided into two sections: The first, "My Hedgehogs," is about the author's own hedgehogs, the very endearing Senator Harriet J. Hedgington, Esq. and Ambassador

Charlotte R. Hedgington, and his introduction to companion hedgehogs; the second, titled "*Hedgehogs I've Known & Loved*," is a collection of photos and stories of hedgehogs Eddington met through various social media platforms and sometimes in person.

Both sections contain bright, full-color photographs of hedgehogs (and sometimes their humans) and touching stories. Each page is a joyous exploration of the essence of hedgehogs: their personalities, their quirks, their wonderful uniqueness.

This book is affecting; it's not emotionally manipulative yet it pulls at one's heart. Eddington celebrates our companion hedgehogs, capturing much of what draws us to them. He also celebrates the hedgehog guardians and the compassion and support we offer one another.

Throughout *The Hedgehoggiary*

I smiled

I wept

And I cuddled the hedgehog who owns me.

I cannot imagine a more marvelous read!

The Hedgehoggiary can be purchased through CreateSpace:

<https://www.createspace.com/5684266>

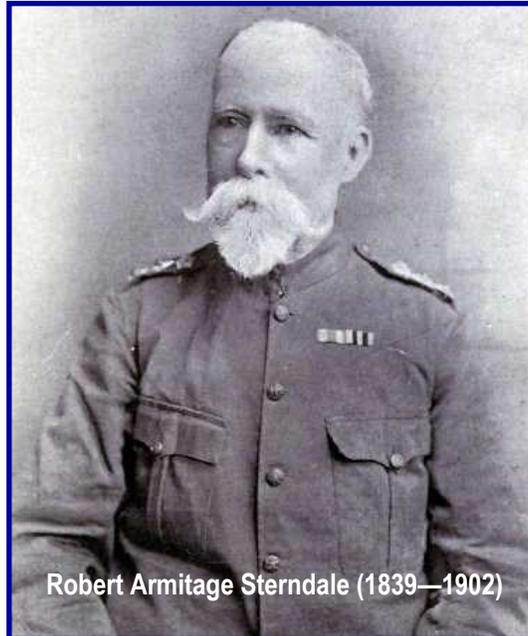
and through Amazon and the Amazon Smile Program:

<https://smile.amazon.com/Hedgehoggiary-Samuel-Eddington/dp/1516948653>



"FAMILY ERINACEIDAE—THE HEDGEHOGS"

An Excerpt from **The Natural History of the Mammalia of India and Ceylon**
by Robert Armitage Sterndale. Calcutta:



Robert Armitage Sterndale (1839—1902)

The European hedgehog is well known to most of us. Few boys who have lived a country life have been without one at some time or other as a pet. I used to keep mine in a hole at the root of an old apple-tree, which was my special property, and they were occasionally brought into the house at the Cook's request to demolish the black-beetles in the kitchen. These they devour with avidity and pursue them with the greatest ardour. They also eat slugs, worms, and snails; worms they seize and eat from end to end, like a Neapolitan boy with a string of macaroni, slowly masticating, the unconsumed portion being constantly transferred from one side of the mouth to the other, so that both sides of the jaws may come into play. Dr. Dallas quaintly remarks on the process; "This must be an unpleasant operation for the worm, much as its captor may enjoy it" Toads, frogs, mice, and even snakes are eaten by the European hedgehog. It would be interesting to find out whether the Indian hedgehog also attacks snakes; even the viper in Europe is devoured by this animal, who apparently takes little heed of its bite. The European species also eats eggs when it can get them, and I have no doubt does much damage to those birds who make their nests on the ground.

Few dogs will tackle a hedgehog, for the little creature at once rolls itself into a spiny ball, all sharp prickles, by means of the contraction of a set of cutaneous muscles, the most important of which, the *orbicularis panniculi*, forms a broad band encircling the body which draws together the edges of the spiny part of the skin. There is a most interesting account of the mechanism of the spines in Mr. F. Buckland's notes to White's *Natural History of Selborne*, Volume ii, page 76. A jet of water poured on to the part within which the head is concealed will make the creature unroll, and it is said that foxes and some dogs have discovered a way of applying this plan, and also that foxes will roll a hedgehog into a ditch or pond, and

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make him either expose himself to attack or drown. Gypsies eat hedgehogs, and consider them a delicacy—the meat being white and as tender as chicken (not quite equal to porcupine, I should say). They cook them by rolling them in clay, and baking them till the clay is dry. When the ball is broken open the prickles come off with the crust.

Hedgehogs have had several popular fallacies concerning them. They were supposed to suck cows dry during the night and to be proof against poisons. Mr. Frank Buckland tried prussic acid on one with fatal results, but he says the bite of a viper seemed to have no effect. Pallas, I know, has remarked that hedgehogs will eat hundreds of cantharides beetles with impunity whereas one or two will cause harm to a cat or dog. The female goes with young about seven weeks, and she has from three to eight in number. The little ones when born have soft spines—which however, soon harden—are blind, and, with the exception of the rudimentary prickles, quite naked. They are white at birth, but in about a month acquire the color of the mother.

No. 150. ERINACEUS COLLARIS. *The Collared Hedgehog (Jerdon's No. 85)*

HABITAT — Northern India and Afghanistan. Dallas says from Madras to Candahar; but Jerdon calls it the North Indian hedgehog, and assigns it the Northwest, Punjab, and Sind, giving Southern India to the next species.

DESCRIPTION — Spines irregularly interwoven, ringed with white and black, with yellowish tips, or simply white and black, or black with a white ring in the middle; ears large; chin white; belly and legs pale brown.

SIZE—Head and body, 8 to 9 inches; tail 7/12 inch.

I have found this species in the Punjab near Lahore. One evening, whilst walking in the dusk, a small animal,

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would not willingly hurt any animal, I could confess to an antipathy to rats, and, though I would not willingly hurt any animal, I could not resist an impulsive kick, which sent my supposed rat high in the air. I felt a qualm of conscience immediately afterwards, and ran to pick up my victim, and was sorry to find I had perpetrated such an assault on an unoffending little hedgehog, which was however only stunned, and was carried off by me to the Zoological Gardens. Captain Hutton writes of them that they feed on beetles, lizards, and snails; "when touched they have the habit of suddenly jerking up the back with some force so as to prick the fingers or mouth of the assailant, and at the same time emitting a blowing sound, not unlike the noise produced when blowing upon a flame with a pair of bellows." He also says they are very tenacious of life, bearing long abstinence with apparent ease; when alarmed they roll themselves up into a ball like the European species.

Hutton also remarks that *E. collaris*, on hearing a noise, jerks the skin and quills of its neck completely over its head, leaving only the tip of the nose free.

No. 151. ERINACEUS MICROPUS.

The Small-Footed Hedgehog (Jerdon's No. 86)

HABITAT—South India.

DESCRIPTION—"Ears moderately large; form somewhat elongated; tail very short, concealed; feet and limbs very small; head and ears nude, sooty-colored; belly very thinly clad with yellowish hairs; spines ringed dark brown and whitish, or whitish with a broad brown sub-terminal ring, tipped white."—*Jerdan*.

SIZE—Head and body about 6 inches. Dr. Anderson considers this as identical with *E. Collaris*.

No. 152. ERINACEUS PICTUS.

The Painted Hedgehog.

HABITAT—Central India, Goona, Ulwar, Agra, Kurrachee.

DESCRIPTION—Similar to the above, but the tips of the spines are more broadly white, and the brown bands below not so dark; the ears are somewhat larger than *micropus*, and the feet narrower and not so long.

No. 153. ERINACEUS GRAYI.

HABITAT—North-west India.

DESCRIPTION—The general color is blackish-brown; the spines are narrowly tipped with black, succeeded by a narrowish yellow band; then a blackish-brown band, the rest of the spine being yellowish; the broad dark-brown band is so strongly developed as to give the animal a dark appearance when viewed from the side; some animals are, however, lighter than others. The feet are large; the fore-feet broad, somewhat truncated, with moderately long toes and powerful claws.

SIZE—Head and body about 6 3/4 inches.

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No. 154. *Erinaceus Blanfordi* (Anderson).

HABITAT—Sind, where one specimen was obtained by Mr. W. T. Blanford, at Rhuri.

DESCRIPTION—Muzzle rather short, not much pointed; ears moderately large, but broader than long, and rounded at the tips; feet larger and broader than in the next species, with the first toe more largely developed than in the last. The spines meet in a point on the forehead, and there is no patch on the vertex. Each spine is broadly tipped with deep black, succeeded by a very broad yellow band, followed by a dusky brown base fur deep brown; a few white hairs on chin and anterior angle of ear.

SIZE—Head and body, 5 1/2 inches.

No. 155. *Erinaceus Jerdoni* (Anderson).

HABITAT—Sind, Punjab frontier

DESCRIPTION—Muzzle moderately long and pointed; ears large, round at tip and broad at base; feet large, especially the fore-feet; claws strong. The spines begin on a line with the anterior margins of the ears; large nude area on the vertex; spines with two white and three black bands, beginning with a black band. When they are laid flat the animal looks black; but an erection of the spines shows and gives a variegated appearance.

SIZE—Head and body about 7 1/2 inches

No. 156 *Erinaceus Megalotis*.

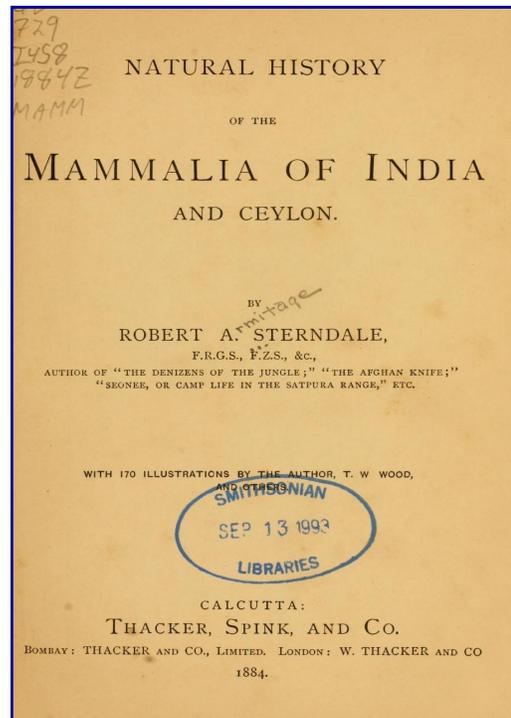
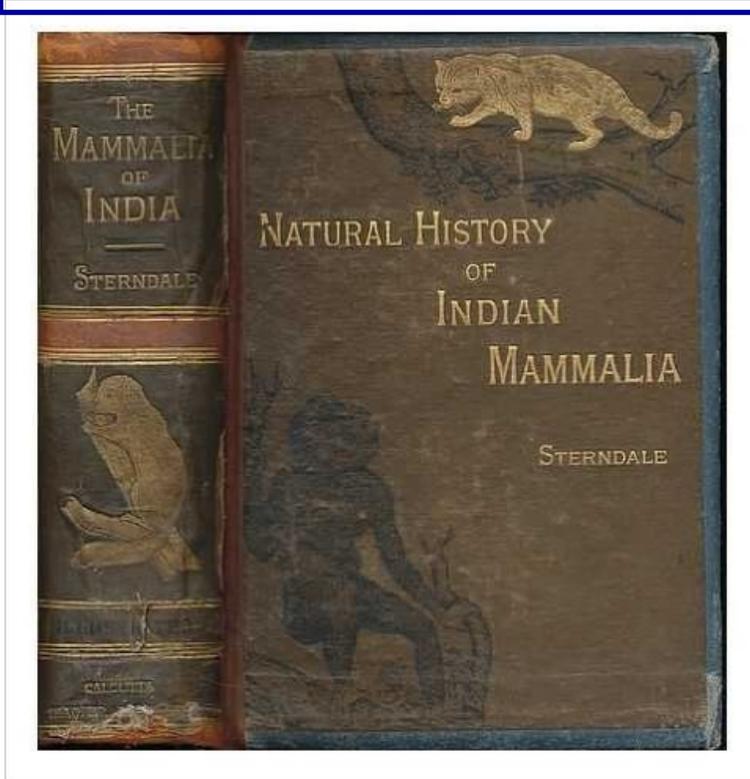
The Large-eared Hedgehog

HABITAT—Afghanistan

More information is required about this species. Jerdon seems to think it may be the same as described by Pallas (*E. auritus*), which description I have before me now ("Zoographica Rosso Asiatica," vol. i. page 138), but I am unable to say from comparison that the two are identical—the ears and the muzzle are longer than in the common hedgehog. This is the species which he noticed devouring blistering beetles with impunity. It has a very delicate fur of long silky white hairs, covering the head, breast and abdomen, "forming also along the sides a beautiful ornamental border" (*Horsfield*, from a specimen brought from Mesopotamia by Commander Jones, I.N.)

The space to which I am obliged to limit myself will not allow of my describing at greater length; but to those of my readers who are interested in the Indian hedgehogs, I recommend the paper by Dr. J. Anderson in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* for 1878, page 195, with excellently drawn plates of the heads, skulls and feet of the various species. There is one peculiarity which he notices regarding the skull of *E. collaris* (or, as he calls it, *micropus*): the zygomatic arch is not continuous as in the other species, but is broken in the middle, the gap being caused by the absence of *malar* or cheek-bone. In this respect it resembles, though Dr. Anderson does not notice it, the *Centetidae* or *Tanreco*s of Madagascar.

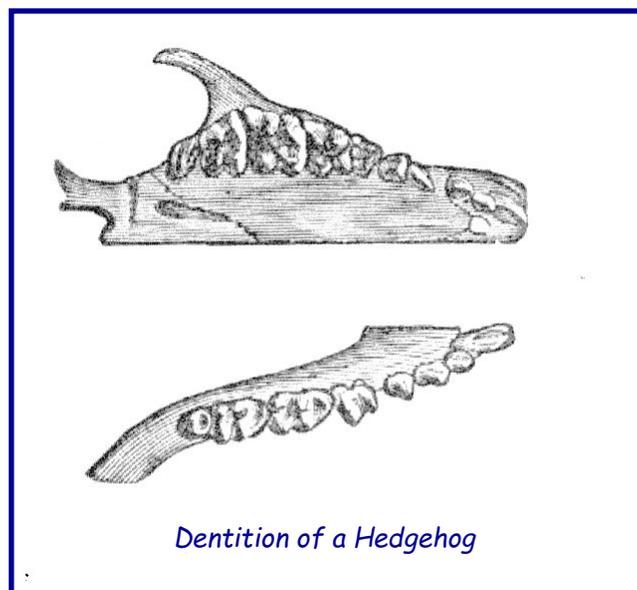
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Cover and title page of *Natural History of Indian Mammalia and Ceylon* by Robert Sterndale.

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Dr. Anderson's classification is very simple and good. He has two groups: the first, containing *E. micropus* and *E. pictus*, is distinguished by the *second upper premolar simple, one-fanged, the feet club-shaped; soles tubercular*. The second group, containing *E. Grayi*, *E. Blanfordi* and *E. Jerdoni*, has the *second upper premolar compound, three-fanged, and the feet well developed and broad*. The first group has also a division or bare area on the vertex; the second has not.





Alice visits the Castle

WRITERS WANTED



Would you like to write for the Newsletter? We are always Looking for stories, poems, craft Projects, recipes, puzzles, and Articles to include here.

Send your submissions or article Proposals to:
newsletter@hedgehogwelfare.org

ARTISTS WANTED



Would you like to help illustrate the Newsletter? We are always looking For drawings, photographs and art Work to include here.

Send your submissions in JPEG Format to:
newsletter@hedgehogwelfare.org