

april 2020

HUMILITY // HEDGEHOG // GREY

In the United Kingdom, you might find gardeners making holes in fences or placing small shelters outside to lure neighborhood hedgehogs – Nature’s pest control! But while a hedgehog means trouble for slugs, it’s not an animal to go around picking fights.

Hedgehogs are small mammals recognizable by their spines (hollow, stiff hairs). They are not related to hogs but get their name because of the ways they forage for food. They are also not related to porcupines. While porcupine quills are barbed and detach to lodge in an attacker, a hedgehog’s quills are not removed easily.

Native to Great Britain, hedgehogs are also found in other parts of northern and

western Europe, with related species in Asia, Africa and New Zealand (where they were introduced). In most states in the US, hedgehogs may be kept as pets, often with special permits. They are not allowed as pets in some states.

If startled or in danger, a hedgehog will lower its spines over its eyes. It might make a huffing sound, followed by pops or clicks. Its main defense is to curl up into a ball, so that its face and belly are covered by spines.

Wild hedgehogs usually hibernate in winter. Their metabolic rate can become 100 times slower, and they may even stop breathing for up to two hours. They might emerge to change their nest site, and if the winter is warm, they might even snack right through it!

HUMILITY: Putting others first by giving up what you think you deserve.

