

Name _____



The Life Cycle of a Hedgehog

A hedgehog's life cycle is fascinating and goes through several stages from birth to adulthood. Hedgehogs are small, spiny mammals that usually live in Europe, Asia, and Africa. They can live up to 3 to 7 years in the wild, depending on their habitat and threats from predators.

Hedgehogs begin their life as newborns, called hoglets. Hoglets are born blind and covered with soft, white spines. During the first two weeks of life, their eyes begin to open, and their spines harden. The mother cares for the hoglets by feeding them milk and keeping them warm in a cozy nest.

As hoglets grow, they start to explore their surroundings and learn how to find food. Around four to six weeks old, they begin to eat solid foods such as insects, worms, and fruits. At this stage, they become more independent but still stay close to their mother for protection and guidance.

By the time they reach two months old, hedgehogs become fully independent. They leave their mother's care and begin to live on their own. Young hedgehogs continue to grow and develop their spines fully during this stage.

Adult hedgehogs live a mostly solitary life. They are nocturnal, meaning they are active at night, searching for food like insects, snails, and plants. Hedgehogs help control pests in gardens and forests by eating insects that can damage plants.

The life cycle repeats when hedgehogs reach maturity around one year old. After finding a mate, female hedgehogs give birth to a new litter of hoglets, continuing the cycle of life.