

Name _____



The Role of Hedgehogs in the Ecosystem

Hedgehogs play a vital role in the ecosystem by helping maintain a balanced environment.

These small, spiny mammals are natural pest controllers. They eat insects, worms, snails, and other small invertebrates, which helps keep the population of these creatures under control.

This makes hedgehogs especially helpful for farmers and gardeners, as they reduce pests that can harm crops and plants.

In addition to pest control, hedgehogs contribute to the food chain. Hedgehogs are prey for larger animals such as owls, foxes, and badgers. Their presence provides food for these predators, which helps keep the ecosystem in balance.

Hedgehogs also help with soil health. As they forage for food, they dig through leaves and soil, aerating the ground and promoting healthy plant growth. This natural behavior helps plants grow stronger and healthier.

However, hedgehogs face challenges in the wild. Habitat loss and human activities like the use of pesticides threaten their survival. Conservation efforts such as building hedgehog-friendly gardens and avoiding harmful chemicals help protect them.

By controlling pests, serving as prey, and aiding soil health, hedgehogs play an important part in maintaining a healthy environment.