

Hedgehogs

Hedgehogs are small brown creatures with sharp spines covering their bodies. They are nocturnal (come out at night) and cause problems for native NZ animals.

Why hedgehogs are pests

Hedgehogs eat native lizards, snails and invertebrates. Hedgehogs also eat the eggs and chicks of birds, especially those that nest on the ground e.g. dotterels and terns.



Why did people bring hedgehogs to New Zealand?

Hedgehogs were brought here by early settlers to help to make them feel more at home. It was thought that they would eat slugs and snails from vegetable gardens. Now hedgehogs can be found all around New Zealand.



Hedgehog droppings:
Photo: Astrid Van Meeuwen-Dijkgraaf

Hedgehog facts

- Hedgehogs were named after pigs (hogs) because of the grunting noises they make
- They can't see very well and rely on their senses of smell and hearing
- In Te Reo Māori hedgehogs are known as tuatete
- Hedgehogs are known to eat wētā and giant centipedes. One hedgehog was found with 283 wētā legs in its stomach!



Hedgehog footprints. Photo: Liz Maire