

The Western Hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus*



Identification:

Size: Head-body 160-300mm

Tail: 15-30mm

Colour: Creamy brown spines with darker tips on the top of the body, pale fur on the underside and around the face

Tracks and signs:

Droppings: 50mm long, 10mm wide

Black in colour, contain insect remains

Footprints: Hind 40-45mm long, 25mm wide,

Front 40mm long, 25mm wide

Nests: Summer nests made of grass, lined with moss and leaves, situated in woodland and hedges. Winter nests (hibernaculum) made of neatly packed grass, dry bracken and leaves, situated at the base of trees, in tree hollows, compost heaps and old Rabbit burrows.

Other:

Hedgehogs climb and swim well.

They are nocturnal, travelling up to 2km per night.

They are found in hedgerows, deciduous woodland, scrub, grassland, sand dunes with shrubs, rough pasture and urban gardens.

They are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981.



Right front

Right hind

Hedgehog footprints (to scale)



Hedgehog dropping (to scale)

Illustrations by Jenny King



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