



Why Bread And Milk Is Bad For Hedgehogs

What do hedgehogs eat naturally?

The hedgehog is carnivorous and, in the wild, lives on a diet of beetles, earthworms and other invertebrates.

Which animals drink milk naturally?

None. All animals are weaned off their mother's milk before reaching adulthood.

Is milk beneficial to adult animals?

No, for the following reasons:

- 1) Milk is very bad for the teeth; bread and milk is especially bad, as it is too soft for proper dental care.
- 2) Many animals are intolerant of the lactose in milk which can lead to diarrhoea, dehydration and death.
- 3) Milk is iron deficient so in excess can cause dietary imbalance.
- 4) Milk will readily curdle if left for any length of time.
- 5) Milks that have been skimmed or semi-skimmed have had beneficial fat soluble vitamins removed.
- 6) In drought conditions animals may drink milk rather than water, to their detriment.
- 7) Milk is an ideal medium for the proliferation of harmful bacteria in the stomach and intestines.

Do hedgehogs like milk?

Undoubtedly, but we all like chocolate which is bad for our teeth.

Will milk help a hedgehog put on fat for its winter hibernation?

Only some whole milks contain fat. Tinned cat or dog food are far more efficient at building up body fat reserves.

How can we help our garden hedgehogs?

- 1) By providing a compost heap or overgrown area of garden for sleeping in.
- 2) By providing tinned dog or cat food as a dietary supplement.
- 3) By reading our Garden Hazards factsheet and making your garden a safe place for hedgehogs

Conclusions

Milk, especially with bread, is of no use as a dietary supplement for hedgehogs and is potentially harmful.



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