



Meet and Greet: Prickle the Hedgehog

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<https://youtube.com/watch?v=ZhueQcHUOdk>

<https://nerdfighteria.info/v/ZhueQcHUOdk>

Hi guys! Welcome back to Animal Wonders. If there's one thing I love to do, it's getting to know the animals, and then sharing them with you. And today we're gonna talk about a little gal that makes this world just a little bit brighter. Her name is Prickle and she's covered in... prickles!

[intro]

Prickle is this little ball of spikes. She's an African pygmy hedgehog and we've had her for about a year. When she wakes up a bit, you'll see that she has a spunky and outgoing personality and she's a lot different than the hedgehog we've had in the past. We have many different species of animals at Animal Wonders but what I really love about caring for more than one of the same species of animal is that I get to see the different personalities each one has.

Even though Sherman and Groucho were the same species as Prickle, Sherman was calm and easygoing. Groucho was shy and a bit of a grump and Prickle is totally different and I love it. Prickle's history is mostly unknown, but what we've gathered is that she was purchased as pet from a pet store and then about 1-2 years later, she was dropped off for boarding and the owners never returned. The pet store soon realized that she wasn't doing very well and they called us up and asked if we would check her out and see if we could help.

When I met her, I could see her backbones and hipbones through her spikes and skin. She was the skinniest hedgehog that I'd ever seen. They said that she wasn't eating very well and they were nervous about continuing to care for her, so I offered to take her in and see what we could do. Once I got her back to Animal Wonders, I noticed that her back leg looked like it had been previously broken and then healed so she has a bit of an awkward gait. She also loved running on her wheel, but she did have a problem eating. The pet store said that they were offering her dried hedgehog diet with dried mealworms and she wasn't eating much of it.

I knew that she needed to put on weight ASAP 'cause she was already showing signs of lethargy. I offered her our standard diet for hedgies, formulated insectivore pellets, fresh veggies, and live mealworms. She ate a few of the mealworms but she wouldn't touch the rest. So, I went to my backup, something that might not be the healthiest but at least it would entice her to eat: cat food and mealworms. Wax worms are packed full of fat and protein and most animals find them irresistible. Prickle couldn't get enough of them. Yes! Success! And she found the cat food appetizing as well, so that's what she ate for the first few weeks, but she didn't seem to be gaining any weight.

I realized that she was spending most of her waking hours running on her wheel like a little maniac. She was expending so much energy running that she was burning her calories immediately instead of putting on weight, so I was mean and I took her wheel away. Sorry, Prickle, but you needed to gain weight, and so she finally started to gain some grams. Over the next few weeks, I started weaning her off of the cat food and wax worms and introduced more and more insectivore diet, regular wax worms, and even fresh vegetables. She did get her wheel twice a week, because I couldn't take her away her favorite toy altogether, but I also introduced her to other furniture that she could play with and she was very curious and happy.

Prickle is now a healthy weight and she's fully eating our standard hedgehog diet, though she's still not the biggest fan of vegetables. While she is a reasonable weight, she's still on the small side, and I'm wondering if that's just her genetics or if her lack of nutrition somehow stunted her growth. She still loves running on her wheel and she also enjoys exploring new places. When she goes out to

presentations, she's super social. She'll readily uncurl, run around, eat mealworms, and she'll even accept pets from strangers.

At home, Prickle loves to burrow under blankets, curl up in small dark places like this hut and this woven hay ball. She plays with balls and bells and likes to push stuffed animals around her enclosure until they're in just the right spot. Hedgehogs are notorious for being difficult about nail trimming because they can just roll into a ball and you can't really get to their toes. I can either hold her on her back like this or I can hold her on the table like this and have one leg stick out at a time. See, she's so tolerant.

We don't have an accurate age on Prickle, but hedgehogs don't have that long of a lifespan, usually 4-5 years and topping out around 7 for the oldest. I hope we can give Prickle a long and happy life at Animal Wonders, she deserves the best.

Thanks for letting me share Prickle with you. Let's give her a mealworm. Isn't she a cutie? If you would like to show Prickle some love, you can find stuff just for her on our Amazon wishlist. There are some of her favorite toys, some furniture that she likes to play on, and even bedding that she likes to push around and burrow into. If you'd like to keep meeting and learning about animals, subscribe to our Youtube channel AnimalWondersMontana and go on an adventure with us every week. Thanks and we'll see you next time.

(Endscreen/Credits)

For over 100 years, behaviorists have been studying how controlling the effects an animal encounters after a behavior can change or modify that animal's behavior.