



A Prickly Affair: My Life with Hedgehogs, Hugh Warwick, Penguin Books Limited, 2008, 0141900245, 9780141900247, 304 pages. An ode to the humble hedgehog from a lifelong obsessive. Exploring what hedgehogs actually do and what they tell us about our need for wildlife and the changes in the British countryside, The Hedgehog's Dilemma travels from the Outer Hebrides via the American Hedgehog Festival, Sonic the Hedgehog and Mrs Tiggywinkle, to a field in Shropshire, where Hugh Warwick's love of hedgehogs began..

Crow Country , Mark Cocker, Feb 29, 2012, Nature, 224 pages. One night Mark Cocker followed the roiling, deafening flock of rooks and jackdaws which regularly passed over his Norfolk home on their way to roost in the Yare valley. From

Hedgehog Howdedo , Lynley Dodd, Aug 1, 2001, , 31 pages. Hibernating hedgehogs introduce the numbers from one to eight in a winter garden with pizza plants and a cackleberry bed..

Encounters with Animals , Gerald Durrell, Sep 6, 2012, Nature, 176 pages. 'I once travelled back from Africa on a ship with an Irish captain who did not like animals. This was unfortunate, because most of my luggage consisted of about two hundred odd

Summer Snow & Other Yuan Dynasty Stories , , Jan 1, 1991, Chinese drama, 101 pages. .

The Lonely Little Horse A Chinese Adoption Story, Mick Verga, Aug 2, 2011, Family & Relationships, . The Lonely Little Horse is based on the real life adoption of the author's daughter Amanda and is written in an animal fable genre, some true names and facts and some good old

Smoke - The Silent Killer Indoor Air Pollution in Developing Countries, Hugh Warwick, Alison G. Doig, Mar 1, 2004, , 40 pages. Over two billion people in developing countries use only traditional biomass -- wood, dung and crop waste -- for their basic energy needs. The pollution from the burning of

Country Driving A Journey Through China from Farm to Factory, Peter Hessler, Feb 9, 2010, Travel, 448 pages. From the bestselling author of Oracle Bones and River Town comes the final book in his award-winning trilogy, on the human side of the economic revolution in China. In the

Saving Chimpanzees - A Man On A Rescue Mission , Eugene Cussons, Nov 21, 2012, Nature, . Genetically, the chimpanzee is humankind's closest relative in the animal kingdom. Yet in recent times humans have shown scant regard for the welfare of their intelligent

Chinese traditional festivals , Marie-Luise Latsch, 1984, History, 107 pages. .

Wildwood A Journey Through Trees, Roger Deakin, Jan 6, 2009, Nature, 416 pages. Here, published for the first time in the United States, is the last book by Roger Deakin, famed British nature writer and icon of the environmentalist movement. In Deakin's

The Hedgehog's Dilemma A Tale of Obsession, Nostalgia, and the World's Most Charming Mammal, Hugh Warwick, Aug 21, 2010, Nature, 304 pages. In this wonderfully entertaining, adorable book, Hugh Warwick, an environmental writer and photographer, examines the relationship between the hedgehog and man, and how the

Hedgehogs , Althea, Jun 1, 1985, Nature, 24 pages. .

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Ð¶Ñ~ÑžÐ,â€¹Â±ÐµÂ°ÐœÐ·â€¹Â§, , 1988, Fairy tales, 465 pages. .

Why Can't Kiwi's Fly? , Gerard Hutching, Apr 24, 2013, Nature, 240 pages. Why Can't Kiwis Fly? is a succinct, quirky and informed collection of questions and answers about New Zealand's natural history. Crammed full of fascinating, fun and sometimes

What Dogs Want , Arden Moore, Sep 3, 2012, Nature, 192 pages. A visual guide to understanding your dog's every move. A highly visual guide, What Dogs Want interprets all the postures, expressions, sounds, and actions exhibited by your dog

Carrying its secrets beneath patterned spines and roaming our fields, parks and gardens, why is it that the hedgehog fascinates so many of us? In A Prickly Affair, Hugh Warwick - life member of the British Hedgehog Preservation Society - explores the quirky humour, misunderstanding and affection that characterises our feelings for this marvellous beast, going all out to explain the charm of the hedgehog.

Hugh Warwick is a completely dotty ecologist who spends his time sitting in freezing fields in the middle of the night watching hedgehogs doing what they do, and he has a way of getting the charm of these wonderful creatures across that nobody else can. When not field sitting, he can be found associating with even dottier Americans at the Hedgehog Olympics, and native American Indians busily engaged in rescuing them.

I received this book as a Christmas present, and I have to say it was definitely up there in the top five presents of Christmas 2009. This is a book for all to enjoy, and not just for those hedgehog fanatics out there, of which the author is certainly one. It had me giggling to myself many times, and was a great reason to get into bed early on those cold winter nights. It provides a wonderful insight into the world of our nightly garden visitor, and has left me hooked. So go on, curl up with Hugh Warwick and prepare to be entertained.

I heard Hugh Warwick, the author of this lovely book, on the radio the other day. A man with a true passion for hedgehogs I ordered the book immediately! It is a beautifully presented book (it would make a super gift for anyone keen on wildlife and hedgehogs in particular) and the content is a delight to read. Mr Warwick's love for our prickly friends shines through every page. The book offers anecdotes and advice plus a lot more - different chapters deal with various aspects relating to hedgehogs, all very readable written in an enthusiastic and uplifting way.

Hugh Warwick has a remarkable talent. 'A Prickly Affair: my life with hedgehogs' is a funny, informative, moving and entertaining book that I would never have imagined buying for myself. (After all, I'm a singing teacher - why would I want to learn about hedgehogs?) And now I find myself persuading all my friends to read it! Warwick has managed to combine a magpie mind, a gift for story and comic timing, an encyclopaedic knowledge of all things hedgehog, insights into evolution, and an ability to convey a coherent picture of humanity's place in the planet's ecology, and how the life and fortunes (fair or foul) of hedgehogs reflect our pattern of relating to the actual world and non-renewable resources.

While I still think that people who run animal rescue shelters, or fill their home with stray fauna, are still probably eccentric or obsessed, and have a slightly lop-sided view of humans (not all of us are wicked animal abusers ...), they do have a point. In our quest to have everything our own way and

one hundred percent convenient and comfortable, we do untold and inexcusable damage to our own habitat, the environment that we need to understand and respect if we are not to paint ourselves into an evolutionary corner. And the hedgehog kingdom is a perfect example from which to learn about how to re-establish a healthier relationship with the countryside and our planet.

Written in a sensitive and yet practical way, Hugh tells the reader of his study of hedgehogs throughout the UK, his fascination with the creatures whilst sharing amazing and inspiring facts about the species and visiting those who devote their lives to caring for and protecting them. He ventures overseas in search of the Asian equivalent and is perplexed but interested in the US obsession with pet hedgehogs of yet another species. The book is rounded off with guidelines on how we can all do our bit to support the species. He writes all of this with an obvious passion and gentle sense of humour.

For me this was a very special book to read. It reconnected me with my life as an animal welfare campaigner for a charity at the time when Hugh was working on the Uists. It has been wonderful to connect with my own memories of this time and I'm now inspired to make contact with fellow campaigners that I've lost touch with in the past decade as well as encouraging me to do even more for this beautiful and much threatened species.

I learnt that their ancestor is thought to have emerged in Asia during the Eocene, although there are ancestors dating back 70 million years, into the dinosaur age. In Britain we have *Erinaceus europaeus*, the western European hedgehog, although there's species distributed throughout Eurasia, and down through North Africa.

They're closely related to shrews and voles, being predominately insectivorous (Hugh watches one consume a large juice slug, having first wiped much of its slime off on a handy road surface; although it still chews a strong tasting leaf afterwards, presumably to cleanse its palate), unlike the American porcupine, which is a rodent. (And of course the Australian echidna, which is a marsupial.)

We watch Hugh's relationship with them and love of them develop as he takes on jobs tracking individuals around the countryside; primarily on projects to see how rescued ones fare when released back into the wild. Against all the rules, he develops, entirely understandably, a personal relationship with his subjects, giving them names and admiring their individual characters. (Although I suspect he's wrong when he says voles and shrews aren't similarly complex; look at them in the same detail I think you'd find the same complexity.)

So like any wildlife documentary, there are plenty of moments of tragedy in *A Prickly Affair*, for not only do a quarter of hedgehogs born never leave the nest and a half not survive their first hibernation, but they're always vulnerable to cars (and increasingly vulnerable as we carve up and concrete over the countryside, and also to badgers (some setts and individuals seem to develop the taste, but others don't, Hugh observes) and domestic dogs.

But the good news Hugh finds is that released animals (many of them young who failed to store sufficient fat before hibernation season and so had little time to acclimatise to life in the wild) seem no more vulnerable than their always free-ranging cousins. Which demonstrates that the many rescue organisations around the country; often little more than dedicated individuals who give their lives to hedgehogs, and develop great expertise in their care, aren't wasted.

Published in 2008, this book predates the recent study showing the massive decline in hedgehog numbers, but Hugh saw it coming, noting how rescuers were seeing a sharp fall in the number of animals being brought to them. He provides practical advice on how everyone can help care for them (even making sure that plastic rings that hold packed cans together are cut before going into the garbage, since one of those if caught around a young hedgehog will cut into its flesh as it grows, eventually, slowly and awfully, seeing if die of infection).

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Publishing. He is a former BC Music Editor and current contributor, whose work has also appeared in SPIN, The Rocket, The Source and other publications. You can read more of Glen's work at The Rockologist, and at the official Neil Young FAQ site. Follow Glen on Twitter and on Facebook.

Another busy weekend – this time off to the Manchester Festival of Nature where I was running a stall for the British Hedgehog Preservation Society and also doing four talks in the story-telling tent. The festival was one of a series organised as part of the BBC’s Summer of Wildlife, and was the second I have done – and it was interesting for what it did and did not achieve.

It took place in Heaton Park – the largest park in Greater Manchester, and up in the north of the city in an area that has yet to be attacked by gentrification. Part of the reasoning for having it up there was to engage with a different demographic – if it had been in south Manchester (where I used to live, in Chorlton, there is a gorgeous park that would have been perfect) – it would have been flooded (appropriate as it is a water park) by the well-to-do middle-classes who have made the area their home. So would the Heaton Park event do what it set out to do?

To some extent – the weather was not perfect – or at least the weather forecast had been off-putting. The day itself had only a brief flurry of rain. And there was plenty of indoor activities. But there were far fewer people than I expected – despite the presence of CBBC superstar Naomi Wilkinson. And of the people who came to my stall and who came to my talks, there was, on asking, quite a high proportion who had travelled from the far side of the city … so what does it take to reach out into an audience who might not be used to coming to such a potentially fulfilling event?

That is not to say that I did not have a great time (though someone did nick the clay hedgehog I had made … and only Â£3 was put into the BHPS collecting box). The story-telling sessions I did were well-attended … and we did eventually (halfway through) reach an agreement with the next door tent of drummers so that the shut the &*\$ up for a while. Loads of clay hedgehogs were made, and I talked to many people about how best to run your garden for a hedgehog’s delight … pushing Hedgehog Street as well.

It was fascinating to see how children reacted to her – she has a magnetic impact on them – are they attracted to her simply because she is on TV? Or does she possess a particular magic? I know that my daughter has been hooked, and that Mati has requested that I get divorced, in order that I can re-marry Zoe and be on the show ‘Marrying mum and dad‘ that Naomi has been presenting! For me, though, her wonderfulness is entirely linked to the fact that she interviewed me on Blue Peter … earning me a Blue Peter badge!

I obviously hoped the hedgehog would win. I have been studying hedgehogs on and off for the last 30 years, have written two books about them and work with the British Hedgehog Preservation Society and the People’s Trust for Endangered Species in trying to bring a halt to the terrifying population decline.

An article by nature writer extraordinaire Patrick Barkham accompanied the launch of the poll. He made the very good point that the UK is bereft! If you use your computer to search for "country" and "identity" for many other lands you get clear answers " kangaroos in Australia and kiwis in New Zealand for example. But for animal-loving Britain? There has been no distinct answer. Until now.

And it was a very clear victory … the next nearest species was the badger. Interesting to have these two creatures, already wrapped up in a complicated ecological conundrum whereby the presence of badgers tends to augur poorly for the presence of hedgehogs, side by side in the nation’s affections. Here are the figures:

A question I am asked many times is brought up again by this poll – why do we care so much about the hedgehog? We cannot put it all at the feet of Beatrix Potter – even if she did mark

a point of change for how hedgehogs were referred to in stories. Prior to Mrs Tiggy-Winkle they tended to be creatures of mystery, or portent. I think it is tied in to how our lives have changed.

(more on this soon) marks me out as strange. But we used to live much closer to the wild – and before that, we were of the wild. For most people there is limited opportunity for direct contact with nature. Maybe watching David Attenborough and putting out some nuts for birds is as far as it goes. And this is a shame.

The hedgehog, by dint of its behaviour, allows us to get close to a genuinely wild animal, and this is important. It is something I advocate – in fact I am trying to win Â£1000 from Lush (the cosmetics company) at the Green Gathering this weekend in order to help fund my project of exciting primary school children into a great love of nature by reminding them that there are still hedgehogs out there to be seen.

It is a win-win situation. We get a thrill of nature – which is good for us – and this in turn shifts us from being passive consumers of wildlife images to activists who want to help save what we have left. The hedgehog is the most perfect icon – let us embrace the spiny beast (carefully) and let us make sure that there are hedgehogs to thrill generations to come.

Today I had a horrible reminder of a story that I tried to covered back in 1995. I had been in Namibia looking into the trade in pangolin scales. Pangolins are a scaly anteater – in south east Asia they are largely arboreal but in southern Africa there is a different species, theÂ Ground pangolin (*Manis temminckii*). The scales of the Ground pangolin are in great demand for the Traditional Chinese Medicine andÂ muti trades. And as there are so few left in Asia, attention has been turned on the African species.

The scales of the pangolin are made from a rather amazing and quite magical substance, so it is no wonder that people are keen to get hold of it, because I just cannot imagine where else they could find this stuff … keratin … really – the worry at the global shortage of keratin has people biting their finger nails in fear of what might happen if they could never get a hit of that complex fibrous protein again.

The film of seal cubs being clubbed to death was shot in 2011 but withheld until now as the campaigners atÂ Earthrace Conservation wanted to see whether the proof of what was happening would be enough to persuade the authorities in Namibia to call a halt to the controversial killing. They also wanted to leave time to allow those brave people who managed to film the cull to move far from harms way.

<http://eduln.org/2096.pdf>

<http://eduln.org/1132.pdf>

<http://eduln.org/214.pdf>