



LET'S TALK ABOUT

COMPLETE CARE GUIDE

A LEH CARE GUIDE

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THE EGYPTIAN LONG EARED HEDGEHOG (LEH)

The Egyptian Long Eared hedgehog is smaller in size and shape, averaging between 12- 27cm. They usually weigh 250-800grams. Their life span is approx. 7 years in captivity. It is worth noting that they have shorter quills than most hedgehogs, do not have a reverse mohawk, have five toes on their back feet and have a crooked bend in their almost naked tail. The Long Eared Hedgehog (LEH) does not tend to curl into a ball when threatened, instead these feisty creatures tend to run straight at their predators, using their quills to ward off danger. In the wild their diet mainly consists of insects, but they are known to eat eggs, chicks, small birds, small mammals and even snakes.

Long Eared Hedgehogs require a lot of time and patience to tame. They are much more aggressive than African Pygmy Hedgehogs and are notorious for their biting ability. A LEH is not an advisable pet for children, a first time or nervous hedgehog owner. The eyesight of LEH is much better than APH's and they love to hunt for their insects/ play with cat toys/teasers. They require much more interaction than APH and prefer to play rather than cuddle. Consistent handling is necessary to keep them tame and less "bitey". However, they may still bite even if consistently handled, as it is just their natural defense mechanism rather than balling up. They are excellent climbers, cages are therefore not advised to prevent injuries. Their nails are not as big of an issue as APH. Do not worry about cutting them frequently as they will use them to climb. They will not grow into their paw pads, unlike APHs. If they're super super super long they will need some trimming. Males will get what is affectionately called "pee belly". This will increase more if they are "in the mood" or trying to mate with things. He will also do boy time like APH do.

Males may pee or dribble pee in various locations, likely scenting stuff. They grow out of it at some point but it takes awhile. The girls do not do it which again supports the theory that males are scenting things. It is worth noting that males do not reach sexual maturity until at least 6-9 months, the majority having no interest until a year old. They will try to mate with a female APH, but cannot, however that will not stop them trying to begin with. So it is recommended not to let them have free roam time together.

CHAPTER 2

DIET

It is best to replicate a Long Eared Hedgehog's diet, so the bulk of their food should consist of high quality insects. They are known as insatiable eaters. Edible feeder insects such as Dubia Roaches, crickets, morio and meal worms are a firm favourite. They love to hunt live roaches and crickets, so let them search for their food some of the time, put things in their enclosure to dig under and in, let the roaches and worms crawl round so they can hunt them. Fresh food such as raw pet grade meat should be fed daily alongside insects. Cooked ground beef, turkey, chicken, scrambled egg (no milk or butter) can be fed every few days.

A mix of a high quality cat kibble with protein of 32-35% and roughly 10-15% fat should also be offered daily to help with dental plaque, but they will want non kibble food more than kibble. Some of them enjoy kibble but most of them prefer EVERYTHING else. Variety is key. Edible fruits and vegetables can be offered for variety, but have little nutritional value to them, LEH tend to like apples and carrots the best. Pinkie mice, day old chicks and fresh quail's eggs should be reserved for treat occasions as, like APH's, they can be prone to obesity.

CHAPTER 3

HOUSING / ENCLOSURE

Like an APH, Long Eared hedgehogs are solitary and should always be kept separately, otherwise you run the risk of fighting and hurting each other. Fights have been known to be vicious, and often to the death. A 4ft vivarium x 2ft x 18 is a minimum requirement, as they like to run, so basically the bigger the enclosure the better for these guys. They do not need a lot of vertical space, but they do need lateral space, low sitting platforms can be used for variety. They are extremely intelligent and get bored easily so they love mazes and puzzles to keep their brain active. Free roaming/ play pen time is needed daily. In the wild they can run 7-12 miles a night. For a substrate finacard, aspen shavings, recycled paper bedding and hemp bedding are recommended, never use cedar or pine shavings as these are toxic to them and cause respiratory infections. Some LEH's are chewers so puppy pads are not recommended. LEH dig tunnels in the wild, so a loose substrate would stimulate them more so that they can dig. However, fleece liners can still be used if preferred. Hides, tunnels, guinea pig ramps, tubes and many toys should be provided and swapped out regularly to prevent boredom. A 12 -16 inch bucket wheel should also be provided at all times, again the bigger wheel the better, a smaller wheel than 12 inch is no good for a LEH as their feet are bigger than an APH and they are extremely fast runners. Water should be provided at all times, a heavy ceramic bowl is best, water bottles should not be used.

The ideal temperature for a LEH is 24-27 degrees. A Ceramic Heat Emitter with heat lamp and cage is best to keep a constant temperature and prevent hibernation. A thermostat should be used to maintain the correct temperature. They do not require a light as they are nocturnal.

