



African Crested Porcupine

Hystrix africaeaustralis



My relationship with Man

Woman have beautified themselves and their clothes with my quills and men have hunted us for food for many years. We are considered agricultural pest in many areas because we damage crops and trees by chewing the bark.

Habitat/ Climate

deserts
grassland
forest edges

Where am I from?

I am native to North and northwest Africa but also found in Southern Italy and Sicily. My habitat is deserts, grasslands and adjoining forests. I live under rocks, in crevices or in burrows I build myself. I like to have plenty of ground cover to hide in.



Other family members

Capybara
Chinchilla
Guinea pig

Who are my relatives?

I am from the order Rodentia an the suborder Caviomorpha (cavylike rodents). The guinea pig is one of my relatives.



Capybara

Breeding

Litter size is normally 3
Number of litters per year?
2-3

How am I born?

After a gestation period of about 112 days my mother gives birth to usually two or three of us. We nurse from teats on the sides of her body away from her quills. We will nurse for about 3 1/2 months. My mother is able to mate every 35 days but only produces two or three litters every year.

How long does it take me to grow up and how long do I live?

I reach sexual maturity at about 9-18 months. I will get 2 - 3 feet from my head to my feet and weigh about 30-60 lbs. In the wild my life span is about 12 -15 years.

Breeding Season

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
A	E	A	P	A	U	U	U	E	E	O	E
N	B	R	R	Y	N	L	P	P	T	V	C

What kind of family life do I What do I eat and when do I eat?

I am cared for by my mother in a grass lined burrow until my quills harden fully and even then mother stays with me until I am fully grown. She is very dedicated and can be quite ferocious when protecting us. As an adult I will live a solitary life for the most part. Some of us live in pairs and may be found in small family groups in our dens.

What do I eat and when do I eat?

I am a herbivore most of the time, although on rare occasion I will eat meat. I am nocturnal and have very poor eye sight. I use my nose to find the roots, bulbs, and berries I like to eat. My sense of hearing is so good I can hear fruit dropping from the trees several yards away. Like all rodents, my teeth grow continuously throughout my life and I have to gnaw on bones and branches to keep them from growing to long.

Names for:

Adult male- Boar
Adult female- Sow
Young- Porcupette
Group:- Prickle

Who are my predators?

Man, lions and tigers. Any animal that hunts me for food has to be very hungry to attack because of my sharp quills.



Comments:

I do not shoot my quills as some people think but they do detach easily and because of the barbs on the end are almost impossible to remove. I can rattle my quills to scare away predators and they make quite an alarming noise.