

Parasites of the hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus*

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Hedgehogs are insectivorous mammals subject to strict species protection in Poland. The aim of this work was to determine the presence of internal parasites in hedgehogs. Faecal examination was carried out on female animals and offspring (four individuals). The faeces were collected in October 2014. To estimate the level of parasitic infection, the quantitative McMaster method was used. In addition, a post-mortem examination of two adult hedgehogs was performed.

The coproscopic studies showed the occurrence of lungworms (*Crenosoma striatum*) in four of the five analyzed hedgehogs, and the intensity of infection was from 1300 to 2100 eggs per 1g of faeces (EPG).

Post-mortem examination of one of the animals revealed the presence of *Crenosoma striatum* (heavy infection being the most likely cause of the death of the adult), whereas infection with *Capillaria aerophila* was diagnosed in the second.

Hedgehogs are infected with *Crenosoma striatum* at a very early stage of life. The parasite has been detected in nursing offspring (Majeed et al. 1989). Lung nematodes are common in hedgehogs, and an increased level of infection is observed in the late fall, when the animals are greatly weakened. According to some authors (Timme 1980, Gabrisch and Zwart 2008), these nematodes are the most common cause of death of the animals.

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