



Cape Porcupines

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Species overview

Husbandry

Behaviour

Enclosure

Training

Other considerations



Species overview

Cape Porcupines



- Nocturnal Rodent
- From Southern Africa, in most types of vegetation although are generally absent from forest areas
- Often seen using old aardvark burrows they will adapt to their own requirements
- Monogamous and live in small family groups
- Although they will generally forage alone
- Least concern according to the IUCN red list
 - Threats come from farmers protecting their crops
 - Big cats and birds of prey will attempt to attack but with little success
- Generally in the wild they give birth once a year





Behaviour

Behaviour

Social structure

- Breeding pair and their offspring
- Highly social and should be kept in pairs or small family groups
- Single sex female groups can be kept together
- Breeding males will mate with subadult daughters but this will not result in pregnancy
- The breeding females hormones will suppress the reproduction ability of any other females in the family group

Feeding

- Underground bulbs and tubers
- In captivity a diet of mixed veg
- Pellet – RM1, browser, Gunina pig pellet
- Browse and logs
- Bones?



Cape Porcupines

Breeding

- All year round
- Interbirth period is 4 months
- Gestation 93-94 days
- Littler size 1-3
- Sterile cycle for 1 month
- Females mammary glands her size to enable the porcupettes to suckle without her rolling over

Porcupettes

- Birth weight approx. 300-400g
- Born with eyes open, soft quills and incisors
- Remaining teeth will begin to appear at 14 days
- Normally weaned at around 100 days





HUSBANDRY

Enclosure needs

General

- Can live outside all year round but will need protection from the elements
- We should try to replicate the temps they would experience in the wild
- Don't use wood – they can and will chew it.

Heating

- Guidelines state they should be kept between 13°C - 29°C
- If the outside drops below 13° then heating should be supplied



Enclosure needs



Inside den area

- Needs to replicate a burrow so should be a little darker than outside
- Can use normal florescent light but should avoid bright spotlights
- For a pair of porcupines the den should be 2.25x3.25m



Enclosure needs

Outside Space

- Substrate should provide digging opportunities, so sh
- Remember to under mesh
- Protect any trees

I would also advise a way of locking them away from you





Husbandry Training

Training

Reasons why training is necessary

Quills!! - Its safer to move them out of the way when your cleaning

Nocturnal – Be able to see then moving around

Veterinary treatment – Vaccinations, GA's

Moving – exports or enclosure moves

Recall

- For moving for safe access to enclosure or to get to the enclosure for visual checks
- Using sound – Porcupines have better hearing than eyesight

Boxing

- For exports, moving enclosures, visits to vets, GA's or vaccinations
- Using sound



Training

Recall

- For moving for safe access to enclosure or to get them in a specific area for training or visual checks
- Using sound – Porcupines have better hearing than eyesight

Station

- Call and reward on a post or mat



Training

Boxing

- For exports, moving enclosures, visits to vets, GA's or vaccinations
- Using sound



Training

Crush / squeeze

- To give vaccination or to go GA's





Other Housing considerations

What else?

Housing with other species

- Meerkats
- Yellow mongoose

Potential issues

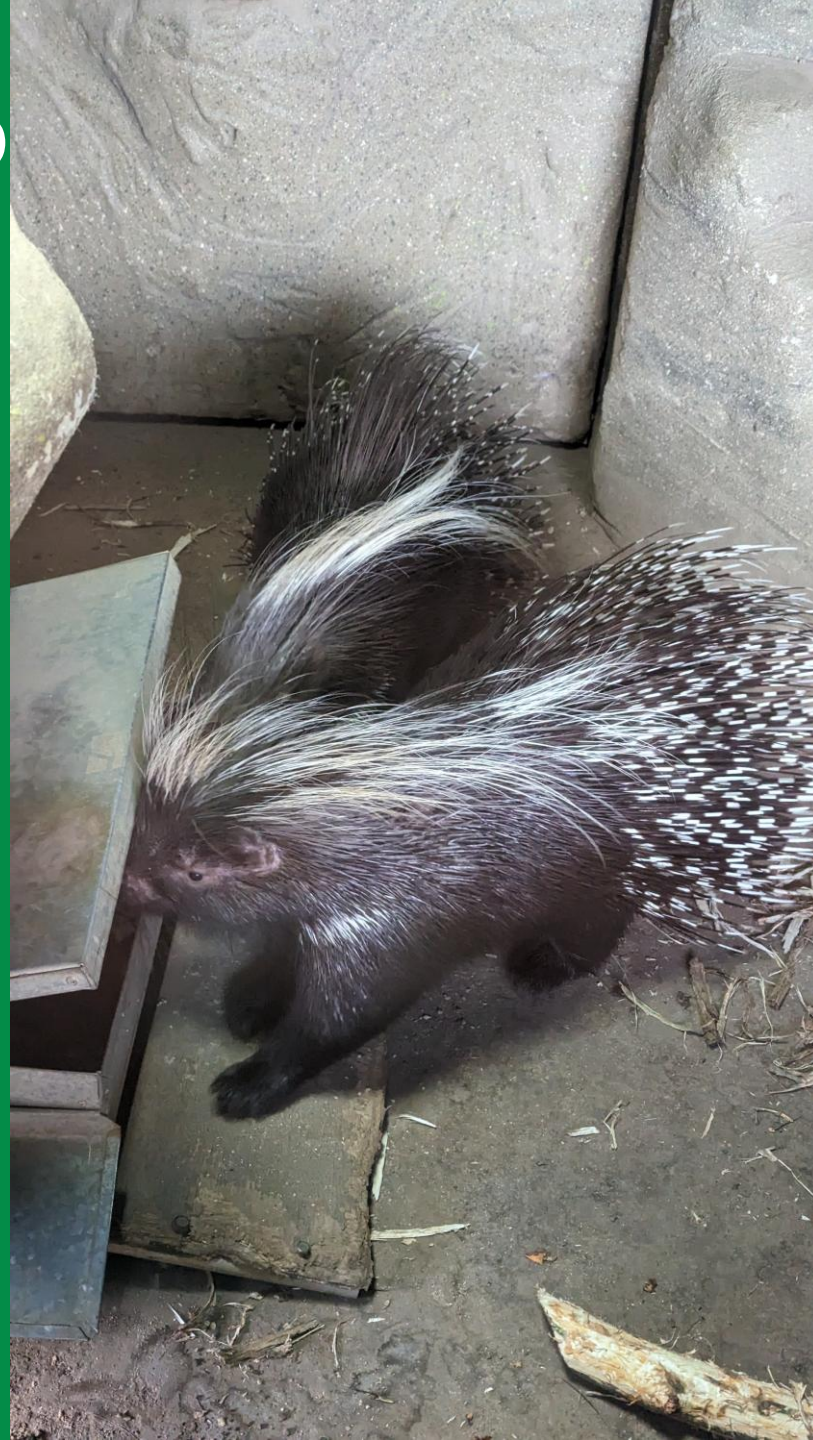
- Competition over food
- Quills
- Sleeping areas
- Competition over resources

Positive reasons

- Better use of the enclosure as they are active at different times
- More enriching for the species

Population management

- Can have 3 litters a year
- Only keep one sex
- Contracept or castrate



What else?

Why have them in a college facility

- Think about a different way of working
- You can't get hands on or net them
- Working with a large nocturnal rodent species
- Introduction to working with a potentially dangerous animals

Why have them in a college facility if they are dangerous ?

- They can be nice and fun to work with
- Practical experience
- Learn to read animal behaviour
- Learn to adapt the way you work



Thank you

