

Bookshelf

PAT MORRIS AND JIM JONES RECOMMEND TWO RECENTLY PUBLISHED TITLES, BOTH OF WHICH PROMISE INSIGHTS INTO THE LIVES OF CHARISMATIC MAMMALS - HEDGEHOGS AND WOLVES.

Hugh Warwick is a trustee of the British Hedgehog Preservation Society and in his highly original book *A Prickly Affair: my life with hedgehogs* he tells tales of his many exploits with hedgehogs near and far. These include his visit to China in search of Hugh's Hedgehog (*Erinaceus hughi*), his attempts to count the hedgehogs supposedly annihilating the seabirds of

North Ronaldsay and his personal investigation of the catch-and-kill operation against hedgehogs in the Uists. This led to fieldwork proving that translocating living hedgehogs did not cause a welfare problem after all, resulting in a welcome change of official policy. Hugh provides a sensitive description of some very caring hedgehog lovers, as well as an account of a bizarre meeting of American

hedgehog keepers in Colorado. Mixed in with all the stories is a lot of sound information about hedgehog natural history and the relationships formed between hogs and humans.

The whole book is a delight to read, written in the same cheery and enthusiastic style that characterises Hugh as a person. I thoroughly enjoyed it, but don't take my word for it. My wife seized my review copy and read it almost continuously for two days, neglecting important things like myself! Occasionally she would chuckle or exclaim in delight and once broke off to tell me what fun it was to read. She ordered several copies as Christmas presents, and I'm sure they will all have been read and enjoyed by now.

PAT MORRIS



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A Prickly Affair: my life with hedgehogs

by Hugh Warwick is published by Allen Lane/Penguin Books, RRP £14.99



HUGH WARWICK

Humans have been fascinated by wolves for millennia. Our early hunter-gatherer ancestors across the northern hemisphere range of the grey wolf *Canis lupus* developed rich mythologies and rituals in which wolves played the role of creators, teachers and protectors. As humans adopted a farming culture and developed more settled lifestyles, brother wolf became an unwelcome competitor, an animal to be feared and thus persecuted and destroyed: the wolf grew into a beast of nightmare. In recent years, our awareness of wolves and the ecological role they play has been advanced through rigorous and long-term scientific studies such as those of Mech in Minnesota, USA and Jedrejewski in the Bialowieza Primieval Forest, Poland. Successful reintroductions have taken place in

Yellowstone National Park. Despite increasing scientific knowledge, the wolf remains a powerful symbol in the human psyche, representing a wilderness from which much of humanity has become disconnected.

Wolf: Legend, Enemy, Icon is a worthy attempt to capture the changing relationship between wolf and mankind over the 1.5 million years or so of their coexistence. A synergy between science and story-telling in the tradition of Lopez's *Of Wolves and Men*, the text here is brought to life by wonderful photographs of wolves playing out their life history and illustrated by fascinating artefacts such as the Haida wolf mask and Nisga'a wolf rattle. Facts on the evolution and ecology are necessarily brief but adequate, the book's main strength being its focus on the relationship between man and wolf through legends, folk tales and stories. The social similarities between our

species are highlighted, underlining the necessity for cooperative behaviour, pack formation and hierarchy, captured so perfectly by the famous Rudyard Kipling quote, which the book includes "the strength of the wolf is the pack, and the strength of the pack is the wolf". Wolves appear as a reflection of our primitive selves and we are left wondering at the rejection of this state by civilized man.

No new ground is broken by this volume, there are many other similar books such as those by Jim Brandenburg. However, I enjoyed the inclusion of tales from the wider world, unusual for American authors. This book would be a welcome addition to your table or bookshelf, a tome to stimulate fireside thoughts of wolves, wilderness and the winding path of our own folk memory.

JIM JONES



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Wolf: legend, enemy, icon

by Rebecca L Grambo is published by A&C Black, RRP £14.99