MEET THEM AT PLUMPTON PARK ZOO

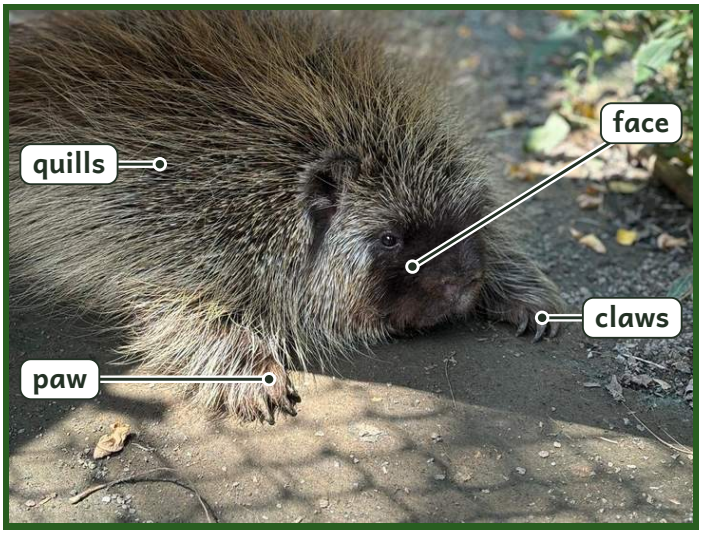
PORCUPINE

North American porcupine · Erethizon dorsatum

GRADES K–2

Teacher & Student Fact Sheet · © 2026 Plumpton Park Zoological Gardens Inc.
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Teachers: read this page aloud, one part at a time (about 5 minutes). Children follow along and say the bold words.



This is Quillbert at our zoo.

Its body

It has about 30,000 **quills**!
It cannot throw them.
Its feet grip tree bark.
It is a kind of **rodent**.

Its home (habitat)

It lives in North America.
It lives in forests and grass.
Quillbert lives at our zoo.



■ Lives in parts of this area ★ Plumpton Park Zoo, Rising Sun, MD

Its food

It eats bark and twigs.
It eats leaves too.

Its babies (life cycle)

A baby is a **porcupette**.
Its mother gives it milk.
It follows her to feeding trees.

Fun facts

It is a good climber.
It is a good swimmer too!
It is awake mostly at night.

Words to know

porcupette: a baby porcupine
quills: stiff, sharp hairs on its body
rodent: an animal like a mouse or beaver

Talk about it

1. Can a porcupine throw its quills?
2. How does a mother care for her baby?
3. What does a porcupine eat?

Learn more: plumptonparkzoo.org/mammals/north-american-porcupine/ · **Sources:** Smithsonian National Zoo; Animal Diversity Web
Supports Maryland and Delaware (NGSS) and Pennsylvania (STEELS) standards: K-LS1-1 (3.1.K.A) · 1-LS1-2 (3.1.1.B)
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PORCUPINE

Before and after your visit

GRADES K–2

Page 2 of the porcupine fact sheet for grades K–2 · © 2026 Plumpton Park Zoological Gardens Inc.
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Name _____ **Date** _____

Before you visit · 5 minutes

What do you think? Circle **YES** or **NO**.

1. A porcupine has quills. **YES** **NO**
2. A porcupine can throw its quills. **YES** **NO**
3. A baby is *a* porcupette. **YES** **NO**
4. A porcupine eats meat. **YES** **NO**

At the zoo · with *a* partner

Check each one you see.

- ☐ quills
- ☐ claws
- ☐ face
- ☐ tail
- ☐ feet

What is it doing? Circle one.

climbing · resting · eating

After your visit · 10 minutes

Draw *a* porcupine climbing *a* tree. Add lots of quills.

Draw here

A porcupine has _____

I learned that _____

ADJUST IT Kindergarten: read everything aloud; children talk and draw, and an adult writes their words. **Grade 2:** children read page 1 on their own. **Grades 3–5:** use the regular porcupine sheet on Teacher Resources. **Second source:** read about this animal in your class database or a library book too, then ask what both said and what was new. **No zoo trip?** Check off what you can find in the photo on page 1. **Answers:** 1 yes, 2 no, 3 yes, 4 no.

Learn more: plumptonparkzoo.org/mammals/north-american-porcupine/ · Page 1 of this sheet has the words and picture this page refers to.
Science, grades K–1: Maryland and Delaware (NGSS): K-LS1-1 · 1-LS1-2 · Pennsylvania (STEELS): 3.1.K.A · 3.1.1.B
Reading and writing, grade 1: Maryland and Delaware: RI.1.1 · RI.1.7 · RI.1.9 · W.1.8 · Pennsylvania: CC.1.2.1.B · CC.1.2.1.G · CC.1.2.1.I · CC.1.4.1.W
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