



NYC METRO RABBIT NEWS JANUARY 2023

Thanks for Your Match Donations; Sanctuary Rabbits Need Help

As 2023 begins, Rabbit Rescue & Rehab wants to thank everyone who donated to our efforts this past year. Match donations helped turn \$2,500 into \$5,000!

RRR takes in many injured, older, and chronically ill rabbits with life-long special care requirements; these bunnies become sanctuary rabbits and remain in our care forever. Please consider making a donation to help support their ongoing care.

This year, RRR's wish is to purchase a cold laser therapy machine to help alleviate pain from arthritis and other degenerative conditions in our senior rabbits. RRR currently has eight rabbits we are treating for varying degrees of arthritis pain, including Angelina, who lives with her partner Puffin.

Angie began to develop arthritis in her spine when she was only 6 years old. It
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New York State Prohibits Retail Sales of Rabbits

Rabbit advocates and rescuers celebrated a hard-fought victory in mid-December as Gov. Kathy Hochul signed legislation to prohibit the state's pet stores from selling dogs, cats and rabbits.

The new law, which will take effect in 2024, was supported by animal-welfare groups throughout the state. Rabbit Rescue & Rehab members actively pushed for the legislation by calling and emailing the governor over the past year.

The legislation, called the Puppy Mill Pipeline bill, had been passed by the state's Senate and Assembly but needed the governor's signature before the end of 2022. Only a handful of other states have taken action to restrict retail sales of pets.

The law is intended to end the puppy mill-to-pet store pipeline and stop abusive breeders.

RR&R said in a Facebook post on Dec. 15, "Today, New York Governor Hochul signed the Puppy Mill Pipeline bill into law!!! Please join us in thanking @govhochul for sending a message to the bunny, kitten & puppy mill operators. New York has closed its borders to their

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Ruby in Her Sleigh



Photo: M. C. Basile

Perhaps it was RRR foster bun Ruby with her sparkling ruby eyes, and not Rudolph, who led Santa's sleigh on Christmas Eve! Hopefully 2023 is the year Ruby finds her forever home.

The Story of Cindy Lou, the Tiniest Who

By Lauren Eddings

Visions of the big-box store Target during the holidays include packed parking lots and thousands of shoppers searching for a good deal. As of Dec. 11, when I think about Target at Christmas time, I'll also think of a tiny black bunny and the people who cared to save her.

Every year, Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group receives hundreds of emails about rabbits found abandoned in neighborhoods, parks, school fields and in much more precarious situations. Naturally, we wish we could save each of these rabbits. However, as a foster-based rescue, our ability to rescue one of these rabbits hinges on having the space to responsibly house them. Rabbits adopted out mean more rabbits can be rescued to fill their spots. Fortunately for the tiny black rabbit noticed by concerned citizens outside the Westbury Target in December, we had several adoptions that week, opening up room for newcomers.

Photos: Lauren Eddings



To avoid the rain, the rabbit was huddled under the trees.

On Dec. 11, we took on the assignment of catching the rabbit at Target. I reached out to the finder, a store customer, who had spotted the rabbit on Thursday and again on Saturday. She provided photos of the rabbit and gave directions to the



Lauren and Justin Eddings with Cindy Lou in a carrier.

general area where she was spotted. I let the finder know we would be out there later that afternoon to try to bring the rabbit to safety.

My husband, Justin, and I arrived at the Target parking lot that afternoon. It was just the two of us on this mission. When it comes to catching rabbits, I'm admittedly a bit of a "director." I visualize exactly the steps we are going to take

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Retail Sales of Rabbits

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abuse. Thanks to each one of you for your support. Your calls, messages & emails made this happen! Hopefully our neighboring states (and all states) follow New York's lead very soon. This is a big step toward banning the sale of all animals in retail establishments."

State officials said the new law aims to prevent the buying and selling of animals from large-scale, abusive breeders that lack proper veterinary care, food or socialization.

The legislation will continue to allow pet stores to host adoption services in conjunction with animal shelters or rescue organizations. Pet stores will be allowed to charge shelters rent to use their space for adoptions.

Gov. Hochul said, "Dogs, cats and rabbits across New York deserve loving homes and humane treatment." She added, "I'm

proud to sign this legislation, which will make meaningful steps to cut down on harsh treatment and protect the welfare of animals across the state."

Rabbit Rescue & Rehab previously pushed for a similar law in 2016 for New York City. Unfortunately, rabbits continued to be dumped at city shelters because the rest of the state continued to allow rabbit sales in pet stores.

Now that there will be a statewide ban on such sales, RR&R is encouraging all members to press for similar legislation in Connecticut, New Jersey, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania. If New Yorkers end up purchasing rabbits in those states and no longer want to care for them, they will be abandoning them in this state.

The need for this legislation is enormous. Rabbit Rescue & Rehab constantly receives individual relinquishment requests for rabbits, a number that excludes all

large-scale surrenders, hoarding cases, and over-reproduction situations that may involve 100+ rabbits in each scenario.

A significant number of these surrender requests come from people who purchased a rabbit from a pet store on impulse, received a rabbit purchased from a pet store as a gift, or were given incorrect information (or no information) about rabbits from a pet store and only later learned that they were not prepared for the commitment or the expense.

Also in mid-December, Gov. Hochul signed the New York Cruelty Free Cosmetics Act. This law bans the sale of cosmetics newly tested on animals in the State of New York, as of Jan. 1, 2023.

Meanwhile, the New York City Council recently held a hearing on legislation that would ban guinea-pig sales in stores. A number of volunteers from the Manhattan shelter testified in favor of the ban.

Cindy Lou

(Continued from page 2)

and I have a bad habit of barking orders to my poor assistants during the catch. For this reason, Justin is almost always my go-to guy. He already likes me, understands my process, takes direction and he sees the catch unfolding the way I do. As a team, we work fast and methodically, and we rarely come back empty-handed.

We scanned the area first from the car, trying to match landmarks from the provided photos with the area where we parked. We saw a large reusable shopping bag positioned on its side and opened toward the tree line. I thought it was likely left for the rabbit as a shelter. Fruits and vegetables were placed on the ground as food.

We left the car and walked about 30 feet in each direction along a treed fence line. Then we spotted her, huddling to avoid the rain, sitting under the trees and undergrowth. Fortunately, the fence line mostly blocked her from the busy road on the other side of the trees. I asked Justin to set up a line with an X-pen from the fence toward the parking lot. "Make a wall and then start to form a U to funnel her in!" I said.

I got on my stomach with my net in hand, crawling up the little hill under the brush, and talking quietly to the rabbit as she munched on some fallen tree limbs. She didn't seem very threatened, but she was certainly watching me. As I got closer, she became more alarmed, took a few hops and then stopped along the fence as she considered her next move.

It was then that I spotted a small hole leading to the busy road. It was certainly big enough for this rabbit to get through. I shouted to Justin, "There's a hole! Back off and move the pens so she can't get to the road!"

After repositioning the pens, we tried another approach toward the rabbit. This time, she was able to squeeze her tiny body under the pen where the ground wasn't as level. She made her way to thick evergreen ground cover and she hunkered down.

For our third attempt, we had her in the perfect spot. While I kept my eyes on her,

talking calmly to reassure her, Justin set the pens up again to my left with a large chute to funnel her in. I made the approach from the right side at the top of the "funnel" and as I approached she hopped toward the chute where Justin encircled her with the pens. She was surrounded.

Justin ran and grabbed the carrier. I hopped in the pen with her and got her inside. At that moment, she was forever safe.

As soon as the rabbit was contained, we met a small throng of shoppers who had been trying to feed and catch the rabbit, and others who had seen us crawling and traipsing through the bramble that rainy afternoon. All were appreciative and grateful that we were there to help. Catching rabbits in strange places like this certainly makes me question the callousness and the sanity of the person who thought the Target parking lot in December was a good place for their unwanted rabbit. However, in that particular moment, I was more focused on the good people surrounding us.

We brought the rabbit home to join our foster ranks. As is our holiday tradition

each year of rabbit catching, she was given a Christmas name. The character Cindy-Lou Who is a hopeful little girl in the Dr. Seuss storybook, "How the Grinch Stole Christmas!"

Cindy Lou is just a 6-month-old baby rabbit, weighing in just shy of two pounds. She's sweet and very petite. We're still getting to know each other but I know her future will be wonderful and that whoever adopts her will be lucky to have her.

In a holiday season that can often be all too consumed with shopping and loads of material things, we often forget about the less tangible things that make this season so magical. Cindy Lou is safe because of the people who genuinely cared for her and reached out for our help. Her story is a bright spot in a rescue world that often is dark. Her light and the joy of saving her will help carry us into a new year of continuing to be there for those that need us most.

Breaking News: Cindy Lou has been adopted by a family that had tried for several days to catch her in the Target parking lot.

Cindy Lou is sweet and very petite.

Photos: Lauren Eddings



It's the Year Of the Rabbit!

The lunar year of the rabbit began Jan. 22, ushering in a time of luck and patience, according to Chinese tradition. This is said to be a good year for starting new ventures and moving in new directions because the rabbit symbolizes longevity, prosperity and peace. The Year of the Rabbit will run until Feb. 9, 2024.

Photo: Nadine Heidinger



Pippi in front of her portrait by Ilona Kahl.

HRS Names Chris Kelley as New Managing Director

House Rabbit Society has named Christopher Kelley as its managing director.

Mr. Kelley most recently served as the executive director at Conservation Earth, where he led a \$15 million master plan campaign and managed a 120-acre property with over 50 animals.

His previous work included serving as executive director at the Greater Farallones

Association, and at the Bear Research and Management/Bear Conservation Fund. He also held top posts at San Francisco Maritime National Park Association and the National Audubon Society.

Mr. Kelley can be reached at Chris.Kelley@rabbit.org.

Researchers Explore Relationship Between Humans and Rabbits

By Amanda Puitiza

The Human Animal Interaction Lab at Oregon State University is studying the bond between humans and rabbits.

As we rabbit owners know, rabbits can form strong bonds with other rabbits, humans, and even other species. Their intelligence and personality are evident as soon as they are provided with love and care in their forever homes.

Although rabbits are the third most common pet today, there has not been a lot of research that has looked specifically at cognition and sociality in rabbits. Such research has the potential to inform new rabbit owners and improve rabbit welfare.

Unlike with similar research in dogs and cats, it can be difficult to bring rabbits

into a new and safe space for the purpose of research. They are a prey species and are often uncomfortable with all the traveling/handling.

As graduate student and researcher, I am looking to create opportunities for remote research in rabbits, using both tests which can be done in the home and survey-based work. To start, I have created a survey for rabbit owners, which aims to look at motivation in pet rabbits. This information will help us learn more about what rabbits are willing to work for, which will help us develop future study methods. There is also the opportunity for interested owners to sign up to be notified about future remote studies.

Here is a link to take part in the survey. <https://forms.gle/MDhdq3j45dMi8cNGA>

Donations

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was quite young to begin having symptoms of the severity that we were seeing. For several years now she has been on increasing dosages of Metacam and gabapentin, and she receives Adequan injections and Myristol (an oral supplement) to support joint function.

Her arthritis is now affecting not only her spine, but her back legs and feet as well. Angie and many of our other sanctuary rabbits would benefit greatly from the added therapy of cold laser treatments, done in the comfort of their own home (frequent travel is hard on our senior rabbits), to help combat their arthritis pain.

The machine we wish to purchase will cost \$2,200. RRR relies entirely on donations to support the ongoing care of all of our rabbits. Any donations toward our goal are deeply appreciated. Thank you so much for your continued support of the bunnies.

Donations can be made using our [PayPal link](#).

'Scents' and Sensibility: How My Bunnies Judge The Humans (and Animals) Around Them

By Megan Hilands

Well, 2023 is here, and I have now had the pleasure of sharing my life and home with house rabbits for over a decade. During this time, I have often found myself impressed with just how adept my bunnies' sense of smell can be. They seem to have an uncanny ability to smell an apple from rooms away. Forget about eating one in the house without my bunnies begging for a bite!

Unsurprisingly, my buns are especially good at picking up scents from people and other animals. This ability makes a lot of sense when I think about it a little. After all, rabbits are very territorial creatures and their ancestors would have needed a keen sense of smell to survive in the wild. Here are a few of my most memorable experiences with bunnies' extraordinary olfactory glands.

Post-vet visit disagreements

Long-time readers of Thump might recall that my bunnies Simba and Nala tend to have little tiffs after trips to the vet. They do not, however, have the same reaction when traveling elsewhere, such as when we visit family members who do not have animals. I am convinced that when Simba and Nala visit the vet they feel more on edge than usual, not necessarily because of the poking and prodding but more from the scents of other animals in the waiting room.

Seemingly confirming this hypothesis, my bonded pair have had the most difficulty during appointments where there were more animals than usual waiting for appointments or we were in the waiting room a little longer than expected.

Pool scent woes

My husband enjoys lap swimming, and I occasionally join him at the pool. After my first pool swim, though, I noticed my rabbits seemed to shirk away from me. They would approach me, but

then sensing just how much I reeked of chlorine, they would move to another part of the room. My attempts to pet them post-swim were met with what I can only describe as disgust. I have to laugh at this – of course bunnies would dislike the scent of chlorine if it's

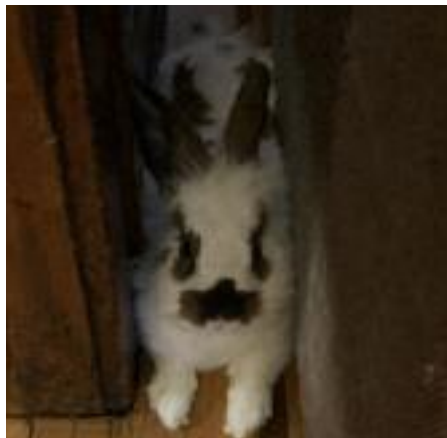
Photos: Megan Hilands



Nala has no boundaries when it comes to apples, and she will hop right into my lap.



Simba keeps her distance when I smell like chlorine.



Charlie has plenty of good hiding places. Fortunately there's no need for him to use them as long as we avoid offensive smells!

unpleasant to us humans! I now make a point to clean my hair and skin vigorously after swims. Although this probably does not remove all of the scent, it does enough to satisfy my bunnies.

Dogs: not bunnies' friends

My bunny Charlie is extremely social and seems to like just about everyone. Last year during the holidays my sister was very much looking forward to meeting Charlie, and thought she might perhaps even earn a few of the nose bumps and petting requests I had mentioned. (With my husband and me, Charlie forces his head under our hands to let us know he wants head pets.) "Simba and Nala don't seem to like me very much," she mused, "but I think Charlie will." My sister's suspicion was not unfounded – Charlie seems interested in almost everyone, from my 8-year-old nephew to my mother, who is very hesitant around animals. Surprisingly, though, Charlie would not even approach my sister. When she visited his pen, Charlie moved about as far away from her as possible.

Why did Charlie seem to dislike my sister? Well, she has two German Shepherds at home and their scent is undoubtedly all over her clothes. When I have visited my sister or other friends with dogs, even I need to wash my clothes and shower before my bunnies are truly comfortable with me. I suppose it's not a bad thing for Charlie (and Simba and Nala) to have a healthy amount of caution around even the scent of a dog. Although I would never allow my buns to be anywhere near a canine, it's interesting to observe how rabbits seem genetically programmed to avoid even the whiff of a dog.

I also feel their reaction only confirms that rabbits and predatory animals should not live in the same home. In any case, my three crazy bunnies have plenty enough fluff and love (well, and sass) to satisfy our animal companion needs.

On the 1 Train

By Samantha Rowan

As a rabbit person, I've been on the subway with bunnies a lot over the years for checkups, nail cuttings and occasional health issues. People always want to know what is in the pet carrier and are usually generally delighted when they discover it is a rabbit.

I've become adept at fielding the usual questions – what is his name, how big is he, and what does he eat – and I can actually answer them in three languages: French, Spanish and Italian. While most people are content to tell me how cute my rabbit is, I had an unusual interaction with a fellow subway passenger back in December when I was taking my rabbit, Lenny, to the vet for his annual checkup.

Lenny and I were riding the train as usual when a man leaned across the aisle and squinted at the carrier. Like many carriers, there are slats around the sides and a plastic sunroof for the occupant to be able to see something of the world. It's hard to see that much of Lenny in the carrier and, at that point, his nose was pointed toward me, and his posterior was facing the man who was looking at him.

"Is that a rabbit?" The man asked.

"Yes!"

As the man looked more carefully at the carrier, I brightened up, ready to go into my usual patter about Lenny and his habits and advocate for why rabbits are awesome pets.

"Your rabbit has a beautiful soul. Did you know that?"

I was not, in fact, aware that Lenny had a beautiful soul. As his companion of nearly 10 years, I've gotten to know Lenny quite well and while our family believes he is an excellent rabbit, equal parts loving and prickly, I don't think any of us would have described his soul as "beautiful" – especially after only seeing a rear view of Lenny through the slats of a carrier. Still, I was going to take it.

Photo: Samantha Rowan



'Your rabbit has a beautiful soul.'

"Thank you," I said. "He's a good rabbit."

"You know," the man continued, "rabbits are delicate. They're very sensitive and the people who they live with have to be sensitive to that. A lot of people don't realize that about rabbits. They're different from cats or dogs and people don't appreciate them."

It was true. Rabbits are sensitive, and, in my experience, they are not appreciated in the way they should be.

"They're wonderful companions," I said. "And we're lucky to have Lenny."

For the first time, the man looked directly at me as he stood up to exit the train.

"The people who have rabbits must also have beautiful souls to be able to make them happy," he said.

The doors opened and closed and the man was gone and I was left with a

surprisingly complex interaction with someone who seemed to genuinely understand some of what I'd always felt about rabbits but hadn't quite expressed in the way that this stranger had. I stuck one finger through a slat in the carrier and gave Lenny a tiny nose pet, the best I could do in the situation.

"You have a beautiful soul," I told Lenny. "Did you know that?"

I remember the first time we met Lenny, at an adoption event at Union Square. He'd run wild in, of all places, a truck yard in the Bronx for a while before he'd been rescued and some of the spirit that had helped him to survive was evident as we sat on the floor and got to know him. Lenny has always been a resilient soul and it took a stranger's observation to open my eyes to the beauty of his spirit as well.

Taking the Leap to Adopt or Foster

By Lisa M. Nasoff

You may or may not be familiar with the “starfish story.” For anyone unfamiliar, the story (adapted from *The Star Thrower* by Loren Eiseley), goes like this:

One day a man was walking along the beach, when he noticed a boy hurriedly picking up and gently throwing things into the ocean. Approaching the boy, he asked, “Young man, what are you doing?” The boy replied, “Throwing starfish back into the ocean. The surf is up and the tide is going out. If I don’t throw them back, they’ll die.” The man laughed to himself and said, “Don’t you realize there are miles and miles of beach and hundreds of starfish? You can’t make any difference!” After listening politely, the boy bent down, picked up another starfish, and threw it into the surf. Then, smiling at the man, he said:

“I made a difference to that one.”

If you are reading *Thump*, you probably are already making a difference to at least one rabbit – whether you own or foster, volunteer at LIRRG, RRR or a shelter, or make monetary or material donations to support our furry little friends. Or perhaps you are thinking of making that leap, and are considering adopting or fostering a rabbit.

Adopting a rabbit, or any pet, is a long-term commitment. Animals are not commodities, to be bought, then sold, exchanged or at worst, disposed of, when no longer wanted. If only there were no need for the support and services that LIRRG and RRR provide! However, the unfortunate truth is that many people bring home a rabbit for all the wrong reasons, or maybe even for the right reasons, and then decide they no longer want the rabbit.

I am both a bunny mom, and a foster mom. I found my own rabbit, BunBun, while running through Hempstead Lake State Park on Long Island, where

someone had decided to “free” her. She lay across my feet, and there was no way I could leave her. I did not then know about Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group nor any type of fostering programs. I made some inquiries, but basically was told at every turn I was the new owner of a rabbit. I had owned a rabbit several years before that free-roamed my living room. The two rescue cats at the time were terrified of this little lop-eared bun, and stood clear. But my current cat? Also a Hempstead Lake rescue, he has a little bit more of a predator instinct.

It was clear from the start that BunBun would not be able to free-roam. I live in a one-bedroom apartment with no rooms to spare. I was stressed. But things worked themselves out. BunBun is what I call, modified free-roam. There is a pen that takes up most of my living room where she resides. She is approaching 9 years old and seems happy. I know I have made a difference to her.

More recently, I unexpectedly became a foster mom. If you aren’t already aware of the marvel that is Tara (aka Babybun), I refer you to the September issue of *Thump* (page one). This was another life-or-death situation for a newborn rabbit, resulting from people at some point setting their pet “free.”

When I found Tara, I knew that if I left her, she would be dead before the next morning. I remember speaking with Denise Bertolotti of LIRRG, and she asked me if I would be willing to foster the bunny. I responded that this was impossible (I refer you to the one-bedroom apartment with a rabbit already occupying the living room).

Nonetheless, my conscience and heart wouldn’t let me leave this innocent creature. I took her home, honestly not expecting her to make it through the night. Fast forward to four-plus months later (at the time of this writing), and I am a foster mom.

Photos: Lisa M. Nasoff



BunBun.



Tara (fka Babybun).

I admit that I was stressed when it became clear that I would have to foster Tara, and I didn’t know how I could make this work. When she was small and living in a small dog carrier, that was easy. But she would, and has, grown!

As with the boy in the “starfish story,” though, I know that I have made a difference to this one rabbit.

Spokesbunny Noah Reports From Long Island

By Noah the Bunny with assistance from Roshni Patil

Hello, everyone, this is Spokesbunny Noah speaking.

I want to report on the successful Scales and Tails Pet Education Fair hosted by Middle Country Public Library on Saturday, Nov. 5.

When I was asked to be spokesbunny at this event in Centereach on Long Island, I obliged because, you see, I have experience doing this already and I understand these events may stress out other bunnies, but I handle them pretty

well. Plus, my human parents take such good care of me, it was the least I could do. Anyway...

This event was a huge success because, apart from getting pets and massages and treats from so many humans, we had a pretty good turnout. People and other rescue animals stopped by to learn about rabbit care, adoption and the goals of Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group – and to see me, of course.

I represented the rescue buns of the group and showed everyone how much difference it makes to give bunnies like me a safe and loving home. Everyone

was very friendly and I didn't mind socializing with them, for the most part.

The Nassau County SPCA, Long Island Parrot Society of New York, Jungle Bob's Reptile World, and New York Marine Rescue Center were a few among other rescues that brought their animals to the fair. These events promote pet adoption because there are many great animals looking for fur-ever homes. I enjoyed my time at the fair and I look forward to the next opportunity to represent LIRRG. And I hope to see you there!

That's it for now, until next time... this is Spokesbunny Noah signing off!

Photos: Michelle Zeman and Shari Zagorski



Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group volunteers accompanied Noah to the education fair.



Noah attracted many admirers at the Long Island event.

Dandelion Devotee

Photos: Deanna Calloun



Adoptable bunny Eden enjoys her favorite veggie, dandelion greens.

Tell Us About Your Rabbit's Grooming and Beauty Routine

By Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group

Friends of LIRRG is a Facebook community of over 1,000 rabbit owners and rescue volunteers who live on Long Island. We asked our Friends to tell us about their rabbit's grooming and beauty routine. Here's what they had to say.

"As floofy as Peanut is, I only brush him once every few weeks. The fur buster comb works best on him. He does get matted between his ears, so we use the hair-cutting scissors to trim that piece. Four times a year, his aunties come over and shave his bottom." – Denise B.

"Howie hates grooming but he is such a good boy that unless I pull his knots by accident he sits still. Few doodles never hurt!!!" – Karen R.

"Our Saturday nights are grooming nights and Lafayette loves it!" – Michelle M.

"Stella and Dickens love being brushed! We wait for them to get settled and relaxed on their pillow-beds, then we trick them into thinking they're getting full body massages when we're actually brushing them. No bun is the wiser. However, nail clipping is not fun at all... One at a time, we lure our unsuspecting bunnies into the laundry room for their

turn with the dreaded nail clippers. Once we close the door, the realization sets in. After 15 minutes of bun mom's bargaining and pleading, they allow themselves to be quickly scooped up and placed on the counter to get the job done. Always ends with a well-deserved treat and well-deserved foot flicks." – Lacey V.



Howie.



Lafayette.



Peanut.



Dickens and Stella.

Rabbit Health Videos



Screenshot from eye-cleaning video.

Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group has created two new online videos that Thump readers will enjoy. Both were made in collaboration with Jennifer Saver, DVM, of Catnip & Carrots Veterinary Hospital.

They are:

"Cleaning Your Rabbit's Eye When There Is Chronic Leakage," made by Katie Scarr and Mary Ann Maier in collaboration with Dr. Saver.

"Respiratory Distress/Failure in Rabbits" created by Katie Scarr with Dr. Saver.

A Fearful Shelter Bunny Now Purrs With Contentment

By Jean Mellano

My third rabbit, Bennington, aka Benito (when he is about to get into trouble), aka Benny (when it is time for fun) came into my life by chance.

I saw a very frightened rabbit at an animal shelter on Long Island. Bennington wasn't used to being touched and was in desperate need of socialization. I visited

him regularly at the shelter to give him some supervised exercise time.

It never ceases to amaze me how personalities can vary greatly among different rabbits. My first bunny, Snoopy, was grumpy and low key. Budgie was mischievous and playful. With Bennington, it is his way or the highway.

Bennington can be very vocal about what bothers him. He is a grunter and isn't

shy about voicing his displeasure with me if I move something in his pen area. Bennington can be a cantankerous soul. When he starts tossing around his stacking cups, I know he is not in a good mood.

Bennington nudges me (meaning he owns me) and purrs (sign of contentment) while I pet him. This is more than I

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Ebony the Mischievous Bun

Have you ever heard the silly tale
Of Ebony the mischievous bun?

She hops around so quietly looking for
Some troublesome fun

She chews up all your papers
And gnaws your charging cords

She'll poop in your best slippers
And bite the new baseboards

Ebony wasn't always so rambunctious
At one time she was quite scared

Humans didn't treat her well
And left her outside unprepared.

She had no food or shelter.
No protection from any storms.

But she made friends with the alley cats
Who huddled her to keep warm

Then some brave rescuers decided to step in
'Cause if Ebony stayed outside, her future was surely grim.

She was safe for the time being, at her fosterers who showed her care.
But her journey wasn't quite finished. Actually it was just getting started there.
One winter afternoon, a woman came to see
If a furry friend could be found for her little grey bunny.

Marshmallow was weary, to see this jet black bun.
She didn't want to cuddle, jump or have any sort of fun.

They decided to give it a try. At bonding to be specific.
Lots of time and patience seemed to be the winning ticket!

So Ebony lives with Marshmallow now. They are a bonded pair.
And Ebony can be her mischievous self all around The Campbell lair.

-Gabbi Campbell 2022

Photos: Gabbi Campbell



Ebony looks for some mischief.



Marshmallow and Ebony.



Ebony.

Rabbit Rescue & Rehab's Beautiful Foster Rabbits

For Information on Adopting Any of Our Rabbits, Contact nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com



Skye.

Skye

Skye is a 3.5-pound Himalayan rabbit and mom to the litter of “colorful” babies (Pink, Green, Blue, Purple and Orange) who all look just like her. Skye was found alone, tragically dumped in Central Park in terrifyingly poor condition, clearly having been horribly mistreated for quite some time even before she was abandoned outside. A passerby thankfully saw Skye outside and, wanting to help this poor bunny, brought her back to his home. Once there, she surprised him with a litter of babies. When we first saw Skye shortly after she had given birth, every bone in her small, frail body was visible and all movement was taxing for her in her emaciated state. Still, Skye was a wonderful mother to her babies and slowly but surely, she gained weight and became stronger. Today, Skye is completely healthy and enjoying some well-deserved free time now that her babies are grown up and off on their own adventures. Skye is looking for a quiet, calm human companion to match her sweet but reserved energy.

She is a gentle soul who will form a close bond with her family and enjoy receiving affection, provided she is given the opportunity to approach first. Skye



Indigo.

has a particular affinity for her Oxbow woven grass toys and is content to stretch out and fall into a deep sleep for afternoon naps. If you are interested in adopting Skye, please email nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com.

Indigo

Indigo's puppy-like playfulness is as endearing as his ears are enormous! Indigo arrived at ACC showing signs of terrible neglect. When we pulled him from the shelter, the veterinary treatment he was receiving had already filled an 8-plus-page-long medical record in that short time. He was facing an abscess, severe sore hocks, skin conditions, parasites and more. Today, Indigo has settled in beautifully and gained a whole 3 pounds since he first arrived at the shelter (currently tipping the scales at a magnificent 9.5 pounds!). Now living on cushy, appropriate floor material, Indigo's once infected and painful hocks are growing in nice new fur to protect his wonderfully giant feet. Indigo has been neutered and is living in foster care. He hopes to soon meet his forever family who will enjoy playtime and cuddle time as much as he does! If you are interested in adopting Indigo, please email nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com.



Ruby.

Ruby

After being brought in as a stray, this young NZW was cleverly named Rabbit Deniro during her stay at ACC, but this true gem of a bunny deserved a more fitting name. So we introduce you to Ruby, an incredibly beautiful, curious, friendly and affectionate large female rabbit. She is a magnificent companion, always interested in what her foster humans are doing and taking breaks between her binky sessions to sit beside them. Ruby deserves a forever home where she will receive lots of attention, time and space to exercise. Ruby is spayed and living in foster care. To inquire about adopting Ruby, please email nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com.

Blue and Purple

Blue and Purple are a young brother/sister pair of 3.5-pound Himalayan rabbits. Blue is the more outgoing of the two, and enjoys being wherever his people are at all times. He loves having his cheeks rubbed and will happily melt into the floor for long petting sessions. Purple is shyer than her brother, but is never far behind Blue and enjoys occasional head pets from quiet, gentle

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Photos: Kristen Chiraldi



The recently arrived "girl gang" at Manhattan Animal Care Center includes Eyeshadow, Hairspray, Fresh, Floss and Lipgloss.

RRR Rabbits in Foster Care

(Continued from page 11)

people whom she trusts to respect her boundaries. Blue and Purple are a wonderful pair who are very affectionate with each other and spend a lot of their down time closely snuggled up together or grooming one another. Blue and Purple are neutered/spayed and living in foster care. To inquire about adopting Blue and Purple, please email nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com.



Carmela.

Carmela

Carmela is a young medium-sized Rex rabbit. Her beautiful coat is mostly white with tan and black spots. She is a sweet rabbit who loves to have her soft



Purple and Blue.

nose petted. She also likes to explore her house, but her favorite thing is to relax with a nice soft blanket. Carmela is shy and would likely do best in an adult-only home. She would also likely make

a good partner for another rabbit. She has been spayed and is in foster care. For more information and/or to arrange a meeting with Carmela, please email nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com.

These Rabbits Are Available for Adoption From Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group

Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group has many rabbits available for adoption. Here are a few of the wonderful bunnies looking for homes. For more information about adoptions, please contact LIRRG at this email address: information@longislandrabbitrescue.org

Joslyn

Never fear – the bun-pup is here!

Meet Joslyn, one of our super playful bunnies. She was rescued in Nassau County by a police officer who brought her to a veterinary office. She's a glossy stunner with a friendly personality who loves hay and treats.

Ever since being in foster care she has displayed playful levels of energy. Joslyn

(Continued on page 14)



Joslyn.

LONG ISLAND NEWS

Fearful Shelter Bunny

(Continued from page 10)

could ever ask for. I suspect his life before he was brought to the shelter was difficult. He does continue to fear most humans and hides in his cardboard tunnel when someone new enters my home.

I don't know how old Bennington is, but I suspect he may be two or three years old because he does have a lot of energy. Unlike Snoopy and Budgie, though, it is obvious that Bennington had little contact with people.

After Budgie passed, I was originally adamant that I was not going to take in another rabbit since I am getting older and have a chronic illness. I thought that I wouldn't be able to give Bennington the time and attention that I gave to Snoopy and Budgie. However, I do believe Bennington is having a great life with me, and I am relieved that he is out of the shelter. The message here is ADOPT; DON'T SHOP!

Photo: Jean Mellano



Bennington.

ADOPTIONS

LIRRG Adoptable Rabbits

(Continued from page 13)

would require a home where she can be her energetic, attention-seeking self. She enjoys being petted and loves playing with her stacking cups, hay balls, and other rabbit-friendly toys. Joslyn is sure to surprise the humans in her forever home daily as she is always up to new antics. If you're looking for a rabbit who will warm your heart with her energy, Joslyn is your girl. She would wag her tail if she could to show you how happy she is.

Brodie

He may be shy at first, but Brodie is the ultimate goofball and a thorough escape artist. He was rescued on the lawn of the Great Neck Library in March of 2022 along with another rabbit. Brodie has a strong personality – he can be territorial and has a lot of confidence and energy. An example of his silliness is how he likes to sit in his water bowl without a care in the world. So, if you're looking for an active companion who will certainly keep you going, Brodie is the guy for you!



Brodie.



Morus.

Morus

Morus is one of our nine Botanical Babies born on March 23, 2022...but he is the ONLY one with a partial hairless gene! While he was born mostly bald, some fur has started to grow in as he has gotten older. Yes, he has adorable bald spots. He's the first hairless bun in LIRRG history. Morus, like all of his siblings, is vibrant and very playful. He likes to run and jump, and he is looking for a forever home to match his bold, fun-loving energy.

Forever Homes Found!

We are happy to report that Ganga, Chloe, Oidos, Ackerson, Toby, Zander, Julia, Vance, Blue, Dari, Natalie, Elle, Emery, Cedar, Jewel, Sabrina and Cindy Lou were adopted since the last newsletter. Congratulations!



Oidos.

(Check Petfinder for Updated Listings;
Some Rabbits Have Found Homes!)

**These Rabbits Are Available
At Manhattan Animal Care Center (NYC ACC)**



Maria.



Rosa.



Buggs.



Penny.



Coco.



Virginia.

(Continued on page 16)

ADOPTIONS

Rabbits at Manhattan ACC

(Continued from page 15)



Bun Bun.



Lola.



Timmy.



Onix.



Pinkey.



Gwen.

ADOPTIONS

**These Rabbits Are Available
At Brooklyn Animal Care Center (NYC ACC)**



Rye.



Boule.



Multigrain.



Sherlock Holmes.



Bugs Bunny.



Cassie Binbin.



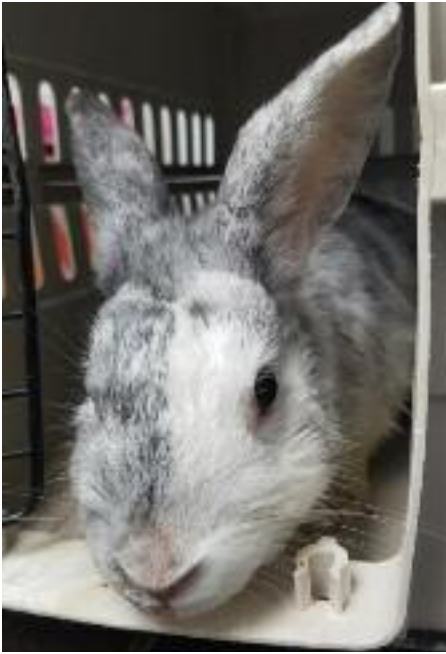
Sweeney Todd.

(Continued on page 18)

ADOPTIONS

Rabbits at Brooklyn NYC ACC

(Continued from page 17)



Cinnabun.



Amariah.



Chocolate.



Fluffy.



Toki.

Many Caring Volunteers Shaped Rosie's Life

By Susan Lillo

Our family's girl rabbit, Rosie, died on Dec. 12 at the age of 11 and a half.

Rosie had spent more than eight wonderful years with my family, and she outlived two partners, Melvin and Desmond. She is survived by her partner of seven years, Sherlock.

Rabbit Rescue & Rehab volunteers knew Rosie as Petal. She started out with volunteer Cathy Zelonis at her home in Staten Island. Cathy watched over a rabbit family that included Petal, keeping track of their personalities and eating habits.

In an email from 2014, Cathy provided a bit of family history: Petal had been born on May 21, 2011. Her parents were Xena and Pegasus. "There were 7 babies, but 2 died. They were born in the shelter. I don't know if someone fostered them for a little bit, but then I got them." Petal's other siblings included Bertie, Wemberly, Smudge, Tulip and Pegasus. "Wemberly, Tulip, and Petal got their names from a kiddie book named 'Wemberly Worried' by Kevin Henkes. So that's the story of the family, who all have happy endings," Cathy said at the time.

Cathy brought Petal to the East 86th Street Petco, where Rabbit Rescue & Rehab volunteers hoped to introduce her to potential adopters. Cathy described the small bunny as "sweet and somewhat shy," adding that "I've had her all her life." Cathy also cautioned other Petco volunteers that Petal was easily frightened.

Petal didn't eat much at first, causing some concern among the volunteers at the store. But it wasn't long before L. Barbour reported, "All buns had hearty appetites, including precious Petal who even enjoyed some cilantro on her own accord! I was pleasantly surprised to see that she seems to be ever so slowly acclimating to the ever so varied scene at Petco."

And Robert Kulka observed Petal's social side: "Petal still grunts and boxes but is much more receptive to petting and more curious about surroundings."

Robert snapped a photo of Petal to display at the entrance of the store, and added these words: "Petal...pretty as a picture."

Photo: Robert Kulka



Petal at Petco in 2014.

Photo: Heather Lorence



Melvin was Rosie's first partner.

Photo: Susan Lillo



Rosie with Desmond in 2015.

She was indeed a beautiful young bunny, with soft white fur, delicate gray ears and a light gray smudge above her nose. Her tiny feet were always bright white.

Petal came to my home as a partner for our mellow lop boy, Melvin, who had just lost his companion to kidney failure. Cindy Stutts supervised a successful speed date at Petco.

However, Melvin died within seven months after dealing with a number of medical problems, including neurological issues and an abdominal cyst. Rosie

Photo: Susan Lillo



Rosie (right) and Sherlock in November 2021.

Photo: Jane O'Wyatt



Rosie with dandelion leaves in October 2022.

gained a new partner, Desmond, who had been fostered by Amy Odum. He was with Rosie less than a year before dying suddenly of liver lobe torsion.

Rosie was alone yet again, but M.C. Basile of Rabbit Rescue & Rehab had a boy bunny in mind. His name was Sherlock and he needed a new home.

And that was the beginning of a seven-year relationship that brightened the lives of both rabbits.

Rosie was quiet and gentle, but tough when necessary. Sherlock was bigger and brash, but infatuated.

Over the past two years, Rosie suffered from head tilt and lost most of her eyesight. Sherlock was as active as ever, but he spent much of his time checking on his partner. By the end of her life, Rosie would sit and wait patiently, and Sherlock always came to her side.

And over the years, Rabbit Rescue & Rehab volunteers made all the difference. You loved and nurtured young Petal and made sure she was comfortable at an unfamiliar Petco store. Later, you sought out loving boy partners for her.

Rosie's life was enriched through your efforts. Thanks so much.

Fur Loss and Skin Problems in Rabbits: Common Causes and Treatments

By Dana M. Krempels, Ph.D.
*University of Miami Biology Department
 House Rabbit Society of Miami*

There are many reasons a rabbit can lose fur – some of them completely normal, and others a sign of health or behavior problems.

Normal Shedding: Proper Care

A healthy rabbit will usually change her coat twice a year. If all things are normal, the shed areas will regrow fur as the old coat falls out.

Some unfortunate rabbits seem to shed all the time. This may be due to inbreeding causing a problem with the normal genetic response to day length and other seasonal cues, or to too much artificial lighting disrupting the rabbit's normal Circadian rhythms. In any case, when your rabbit sheds, even during a normal shed cycle, there are certain things that you, the caregiver, can do to make sure the shed is uneventful and comfortable for your bunny.

When a fastidious self-grooming animal such as a rabbit undergoes a shedding cycle, it's almost inevitable that some fur is going to be swallowed. Although rabbits do not typically get "hairballs" (with the exception of some of the long-haired breeds), ingested hair can be difficult to pass, and can make the bunny uncomfortable. The goal of the rabbit caregiver should be to reduce the amount of ingested hair as much as possible.

Correct Diet Will Help Push Ingested Hair Through the Intestine.

Intestinal motility problems arise when a rabbit does not eat sufficient rough fiber and does not drink enough liquid to keep the intestinal contents well hydrated. Dehydrated intestinal contents are prone to form desiccated, difficult-to-pass masses of food and hair, and the

situation can be made worse if the bunny is shedding/molting.

During a molt, it's important that your bunny have unlimited fresh grass hay, plenty of fresh, *wet* greens, and plenty of fresh, clean water to drink. A heavy, ceramic crock is better than a sipper water bottle, as a rabbit will usually drink more from a bowl, and in a more natural position. Hay, wet greens and water will all keep the intestinal contents well hydrated and easy to pass, and the bunny far less likely to suffer from any intestinal irritation related to ingestion of hair.

Don't worry if you see your bunny leaving "strings of pearls": fecal pellets strung together with twists of fur. If the fur is coming *out*, then things are working fine, though you might want to do more grooming to reduce the amount of hair the bunny swallows. Here's how.

Removing Loose Fur Will Help Prevent Fur Ingestion.

Daily grooming will help prevent discomfort during a shed cycle. A soft-tipped, wire brush or small, very fine-toothed flea comb will help you gently comb out loose fur. Careful plucking of loose fur tufts is also fair play, though many bunnies will object, and need to be groomed on a secure surface where s/he can't run off in protest.

A good way to remove loose fur that's not tufting is the **Wet Hand Rubdown**. Moisten your hands, and gently rub the bunny backward and forward over the entire length of the body. Loose fur will stick to your moist hands and form a thick sheet. To remove it from your hands, simply rub them together to make a roll, throw it away, and repeat the procedure until your bunny's loose fur is mostly removed.

In some cases, a bunny will undergo what we call a "coat blow," shedding great clumps of fur all at once, and

sometimes even leaving small bald patches. If the bunny is healthy, within a few days the bald patches will become pigmented, and then start to grow hair. If this doesn't happen, however, the fur loss may be due to one of several disease processes, and you should consult your trusted rabbit veterinarian for help in determining what the problem is, and how to appropriately treat it.

Abnormal Fur Loss

Fur loss associated with

- crusty appearance of the skin
- flaky skin/dandruff
- open sores or inflammation

can be caused by several things, including (but not limited to)

Parasite Infestations (fleas, lice, mites, fungus):

- *Sarcoptes scabiei* or *Chorioptes* spp. (mange mites)
- *Cheyletiella parasitivorax* (fur mites) or *Leporacarus gibbus*
- *Psoroptes cuniculi* (ear canker mites)
- *Ornithonyssus* spp. (tropical rat mite or feather mite)
- *Trixacarus caviae* (burrowing mange mite)
- Ringworm fungus (*Microsporium* spp.)

Dental Problems:

- Saliva Burn (fur loss under the chin, on the dewlap, and on the chest)

Urinary Tract Disorders:

- Urine Burn (fur loss on the hindquarters only)

Other Health Problems:

- Bacterial infection
- False pregnancy
- Overgrooming by self or bunny partner
- Fighting among rabbits
- Hormone imbalance

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Fur Loss, Skin Problems

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Parasite Problems

Fur loss can be caused by several different kinds of mites that can infest rabbits, including mange mites (*Sarcoptes* spp.), fur mites (*Cheyletiella* spp. and *Leporacarus* spp.), and mites causing ear canker (*Psoroptes* spp. or *Chorioptes* spp.) and other problems. A severe flea infestation also can cause such severe itching that the rabbit scratches off his own fur. Fortunately, there are excellent, modern medications available that are safe for rabbits and will kill these parasites quickly.

Sarcoptic Mange

Mange is caused by the mite *Sarcoptes scabiei* and other *Sarcoptes* species. In rabbits, the disease appears as beige to whitish crusts, often starting around the borders of the ears, edges of the eyelids, the nose, mouth and toes. The crusts often have an unpleasant, musky smell, especially in the ears. If left untreated, the condition will progress until crusty, sometimes raw lesions cover more extensive areas of the body, causing itching, and predisposing affected areas to bacterial and/or fungal infection. Even mild cases of mange should be treated without delay, to avoid worsening of symptoms. The parasites are not difficult to treat, and results can be swift and dramatic, as Luke and Leia's "before" and "after" (one week after treatment with injectable ivermectin) pictures show:



Mange: Luke and Leia before and one week after treatment with injectable ivermectin.

Fur Mites

Symptoms of fur mites (*Cheyletiella parasitivorax*) are more subtle than those of mange or ear canker, and these mites usually do not cause as much itching as some other types of mites. Fur mite infestations usually manifest as flakes in the skin that look like dandruff. In more advanced cases, the fur may actually start to fall out, leaving tufty or bald patches. Unfortunately, some types of fur mites are not easily found on skin by scraping or visual inspection. But treatment with the proper medication (We have had excellent results with selamectin, sold as Revolution or Stronghold, depending on where you are.) will often clear up this problem, even if mites cannot be visualized.

Ear Canker

Psoroptes cuniculi is one of the most painful and nasty types of mite infestations your rabbit can suffer. When Gypsy first came to us as an abandoned stray, she had the worst case we'd ever seen:



Ear Canker: Gypsy before treatment.

Fortunately, a single injection of ivermectin (this was in the days before selamectin) killed the parasites, and Gypsy was cured completely within a week, though her ears suffered permanent thickening and scarring from her ordeal.

Tropical Rat (and Pigeon) Mites

Found in both subtropical and temperate regions is the tropical rat mite (*Ornithonyssus bacoti*), which feasts on many mammals, including humans. These can be extremely itchy, but also can be killed with ivermectin or selamectin. Permanent eradication of these mites is more challenging than of those that live on rabbits. Because *Ornithonyssus* mites live permanently on a primary host (rats, and sometimes pigeons), the problem of mite transmission to your rabbit or other companion animals will persist until the population of primary hosts is removed from your local environment.

Burrowing Mange Mite

Also worthy of mention is a nasty, though fairly uncommon (in rabbits) mite, the burrowing mange mite (*Trixacarus caviae*) that can cause extremely painful itching. These may be quite difficult to visualize, even with skin biopsy. Although they are more common in guinea pigs (in which they can cause fatal seizures) than rabbits, these mites have been rarely reported on rabbits. Rabbits affected with *Trixacarus caviae* may itch so badly that they become aggressive and sullen, while showing no apparent symptoms of illness other than scratching. Fortunately, treatment with selamectin will kill these nasty parasites, affording the rabbit relief within 24 hours of medication. We have heard of several cases in which a formerly sweet-natured rabbit (already neutered) became inexplicably vicious. Attending veterinarians could find nothing obviously wrong, but it was only treatment with selamectin that solved the problem and allowed the rabbit to

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Fur Loss, Skin Problems

(Continued from page 21)

become his old, sweet self again. A mite infestation was never confirmed, but the circumstantial evidence leads us to wonder.

Rabbit-Safe Remedies for Mites, Fleas, and Ticks

Almost any species of mite can be killed with topical application of **selamectin** (Revolution or Stronghold) from your veterinarian. An older, related drug, **ivermectin**, is also effective, but is injected, and does not last as long in the system as selamectin.

Even though they may be labeled for use in rabbits by the manufacturer, over-the-counter products such as permethrin or pyrethrin-containing flea powders or shampoos are NOT recommended. They are neither as safe nor as effective as the aforementioned medications.

Similarly, although mineral oil or topical ointments instilled in the ears are sometimes suggested as treatments for ear mites, they are not effective in the long term, and may make things worse if there is underlying infection. For this reason alone, it is wise to always seek the help of a rabbit-savvy veterinarian.

DO NOT, under any circumstances, use Frontline (fipronil) on your rabbit! Although this flea control product is apparently safe for other species, it has been implicated in many rabbit deaths due to severe neurological side effects. Check the package labeling, and you will see that the manufacturer now states that their product should not be used on rabbits.

We have found selamectin to be the most effective medication for persistent flea and mite infestations, and particularly for fur mites. Mange-afflicted little Tyler – shown at the right as “before,” “during” and “after” selamectin treatment – would agree!

Ringworm fungus

Fur loss due to this microorganism is usually patchy, characterized by relatively round bald patches with distinct edges. The skin may be only slightly irritated, sometimes with tiny, raised red spots. Ringworm can be treated with topical application of miconazole- or ketoconazole-containing creams from your veterinarian (Do not use over-the-counter preparations for humans! These have not been formulated for use on an animal that grooms itself.). Fungal infections also can be treated with Program (lufenuron), which inhibits the formation of chitin (an important structural component of the fungus’ cell walls). Always consult your veterinarian for the most appropriate medication for your rabbit’s condition.

Other Possible Causes of Fur Loss

Parasites are not the only reason your rabbit may be losing fur. Here are some other possibilities.

Fur Loss Around the Mouth and Under the Chin: Dental Problems

In some rabbits, fur loss is restricted to the area just under the chin, in the folds of the dewlap (the fleshy flap of skin and tissue under the skin), or down the chest. Often, but not always, the fur and/or skin there will be wet. In many, but not all cases, the rabbit will also develop suddenly picky eating habits.

These can vary greatly among individuals, with some rabbits being willing to eat pellets, but not hay, others eating hay but not pellets, some refusing to drink, and still others refusing everything but their most favorite treats. In short, any change in eating preferences is usually a good enough reason for a dental exam by an experienced rabbit vet.

Signs like this are almost surely due to molar spurs or other dental problems such as a molar abscess. These will make the bunny drool. Since saliva is caustic, it burns the skin, making the wet area itchy and sore, and causing the fur to fall out. Some rabbits will actually chew at the irritated area so much that they develop open sores.

Although just about any rabbit can get molar spurs and other dental problems, they are more prevalent in short-faced breeds such as lops and dwarf rabbits, as well as in rabbits five years or older.

The solution to this problem is to find a very experienced rabbit vet who can do a deep oral exam to detect any molar spurs (some sensitive rabbits will show these signs even from very small spurs), and file them smooth, as necessary. If no spurs are visible, then head radiographs may be necessary to see if there are any signs of tooth root infection or some other mouth problem that’s causing the bunny to drool.

(Continued on page 23)



Mange: Tyler, before, during and after selamectin treatment.

Fur Loss, Skin Problems

(Continued from page 22)

Fur Loss Around the Rear End and Belly: Urine Burn

In some rabbits, fur loss is restricted to the area between the hind legs, around the tail, and sometimes up the belly and onto the feet. If there is no fur loss anywhere else on the body, then the possibility that a urinary tract problem (e.g., urinary tract infection, bladder sludge, bladder stone) causing urine leakage should be considered. It is important to learn a little about specific urinary tract disorders in rabbits, so that you will know what questions to ask your veterinarian.

Like saliva, urine is caustic. If it collects in the fur, it will burn the underlying skin, causing fur to fall out and the skin to become red and raw. While the veterinarian is sorting out the cause of the urine leakage, and while medications are starting to do their work, you can keep your bunny comfortable and start the skin healing and fur growing back with a safely administered rinse and/or dry bunny butt bath. A rabbit should never be bathed completely, as this can cause so much stress as to be life-threatening. But a badly urine-burned behind must be gently cleansed, dried and protected so that the pain doesn't elicit worse problems, such as GI slowdown, or ileus.

Bacterial Infection

Rabbits living in warm, humid climates are particularly susceptible to bacterial skin infections, since they often cannot stay sufficiently dry. Moisture (from rain or just from atmospheric humidity) collects in the fur, especially around the hindquarters, just above the tail and the backs of the thighs where the rabbit cannot easily reach, and the skin becomes friable, stinky, and dangerously prone to deadly myiasis (fly strike).

The best way to prevent this is to keep your rabbit in a dry habitat, and to

Photos: Mary Ann Walter



Nest Building: Philomena moves hay from litter box to nest.

constantly check for signs of skin irritation due to too much moisture. Fly strike can occur and develop so quickly that missing fly eggs laid on bacteria-laden skin and fur can become a life-threatening situation in as little as twelve hours.

If your vet diagnoses bacterial skin infection, the bunny may need to be shaved down over the affected areas, and appropriate medications administered, preferably guided by the results of a culture and sensitivity test to see which rabbit-safe antibiotic will be most effective against the particular pathogen your bunny has.

Nest Building Due to False (or Real) Pregnancy

If your bunny is female and unspayed, you may witness her pulling tufts of fur from her chest, belly and sides, then rushing off to line a nest she's made. If there's no way your bunny could be pregnant, then she's having a false pregnancy. This means it's time to have her spayed to avoid the risk of uterine cancer, mammary cancer, and other health problems associated with an intact female reproductive system that's not being used.

Overgrooming by a Bonded Companion

You'll have to catch them in the act to determine whether this is the cause. Overgrooming is not a normal behavior,

and can be a sign of boredom. Try letting your bonded bunnies have more free running time, or provide them with a variety of new toys to distract them from the grooming behavior, and break the cycle. It's important that your rabbits have a large enough running space so that the groomee can get away from the attentions of the groomer if s/he wishes to do so.

Tufting/Fighting Among Rabbits

If you have a group of rabbits living together, there's always the possibility that they're having turf wars while you're not there. Check the bunny for any scabs or cuts. These would be an indication that there's fighting going on when you're not watching.

If the bunnies are fighting, it's important to have them all spayed and neutered, for their health and longevity, and your peace of mind. Fighting should be absolutely prevented, as serious injuries can result, not to mention permanent hatred between the warring bunnies.

Hormone Imbalance

This is not often seen in rabbits, but is one possible cause of fur loss in any mammal. If your vet suspects this is the cause of your rabbit's fur loss, he or she may want to take a blood sample and send it to a laboratory for analysis of thyroid function, and other endocrine systems.

Adoptable Rabbits

There are lots of adoptable rabbits available in Manhattan, Brooklyn, Westchester and Long Island.

To adopt a rabbit in **New York City** or **Westchester**, contact nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com.

On **Long Island**, contact information@longislandrabbitrescue.org.

You can also visit Manhattan Animal Care Center at 326 East 110th St., between First and Second avenues, and the Brooklyn Animal Care Center at 2336 Linden Boulevard.

Rabbits for adoption in Manhattan and Brooklyn can be found by going to: <http://www.nycacc.org/> and doing an adoption search (for ACC inquiries about adoption/bunny dates, email adopt@nycacc.org). Volunteers are there every weekday evening and on Saturday and Sunday afternoons, but it is best to arrange an appointment first.

Bunny speed dates can be arranged by appointment only. Please contact nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com to make arrangements.

Many of our rabbits are living in foster homes and you can meet them as well. You also can arrange to foster a rabbit until he or she finds a permanent home. Contact nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com

For basic information about rabbits as pets, go to rabbitrescueandrehab.org, www.longislandrabbitrescue.org and the House Rabbit Society main site, www.rabbit.org.

If interested in volunteering for Rabbit Rescue & Rehab, please email nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com.

Photo: Kristen Ghroldi



Floss.

Donations

All donations go directly to caring for our foster rabbits and are tax-deductible. Please help us help them by sending contributions to: Rabbit Rescue & Rehab/NYC Metro Rabbit, 333 Mamaroneck Ave., #363, White Plains, NY 10605 or <https://www.rabbitrescueandrehab.org/donate>

To contribute to Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group, please go to www.longislandrabbitrescue.org.

THUMP JANUARY 2023

Newsletter of RRR/NYC HRS
rabbitrescueandrehab.org

Editor: Susan Lillo

Creative Director: Jane O'Wyatt

Masthead Logo Designer:
Mary Ann Maier

Rabbit Rescue & Rehab is a not-for-profit, tax-exempt corporation in New York State. Our purpose is to rescue, rehabilitate and find permanent homes for abandoned, abused and neglected rabbits, and to educate the public on rabbit care through publications, phone consultations, home visits and presentations. This newsletter is published by RRR/NYC HRS, which is solely responsible for its content. We retain the right to edit all submissions, which become the property of the NYC Chapter and cannot be returned.

Rabbit-Savvy Veterinarians

Here's our recommended vet list for the New York metropolitan area. **Please note that many clinics have multiple veterinarians, and our recommendations are for specific veterinarians in those clinics.** If you can't get an appointment with a recommended vet at one clinic, don't assume (no matter what you are told by the clinic) that other vets in the same clinic can help your rabbit. If you have any questions or would like to discuss any of the vets on this list, please contact Mary Cotter at (914) 643-0515. When you make an appointment with any of these vets, please tell them you were referred by us.

Manhattan:

Deborah Levison, DVM
Symphony Veterinary Center
170 West 96th Street,
New York, NY 10025
(212) 866-8000

Katherine Quesenberry, DVM
The Animal Medical Center
510 East 62nd Street,
New York, NY 10065
(212) 838-7053, (212) 329-8622

Alexandra Wilson, DVM
The Center for Avian and
Exotic Medicine
568 Columbus Avenue,
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Westchester County:

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