

THUMP

NYC METRO RABBIT NEWS NOVEMBER 2023

Getting to the Bottom of Sore Hocks

By Mary Ann Maier

Good news, bad news: The good news is that many of our house rabbits are living long lives, even into the double digits. The bad news is that the older they get, the more likely they'll develop sore hocks. In this article I'll refer to two foot conditions as sore hocks: severe abraiding/calluses/inflammation of the heel area and true sore hocks (pododermatitis).

Our domestic rabbits' wild counterparts have short lifespans and their feet have evolved to serve them for only a few years at most. You can think of a rabbit's feet like a car's tires. If you maintain a car for seven or 10 or more years, you'd expect its tires to wear thin and need replacement. Rabbits don't have the leathery pads on their feet that cats and dogs do, so the fur wears down first, followed by the skin. In severe cases bone is involved. They're simply not designed for the long haul. Rexes have been bred to have a fine undercoat only, without longer guard hairs, and thus are extra prone to sore hocks even at a young age. However there are things to be done to help prevent or slow the progression of sore hocks:

Photo: Mary Ann Maier



Mr. Fritz in his new booties from Etsy.

Photo: Katie Scarr



Inflamed calluses.

Keep their flooring as soft as possible. This means not just covering any area they occupy with rugs, but rugs with low friction. Feel the rug with your

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You Can Brighten The Holidays By Helping RRR Rabbits

As the holidays draw near, please consider helping Rabbit Rescue & Rehab rabbits. We have spent this year dealing with abandonments, surrender requests, and pleas to pull rabbits from local shelters.

Giving Tuesday is this month, on Nov. 28, and a donor will match up to \$2,000 of donations to RRR. Donations can be made to Rabbit Rescue & Rehab through

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Photo: M.C. Basile



Happy Holidays to all from Dari.

Sore Hocks

(Continued from page 1)

hand. If it feels rough it'll be rough on your rabbits' feet. Pile (plush) rugs tend to be softer than loop (Berber) rugs. Natural fibers and some synthetics like viscose tend to be softer than polypropylenes and nylons. All rabbits should live 24/7 on rugs or carpet, with owners paying closer attention to flooring friction as rabbits age. It's important to monitor your rabbits' feet as they age, and determine when to make changes.

When rabbits reach their senior years, many are helped by using even softer substrates: topping existing rugs with cotton flannel sheets, held taut and secure by tucking edges under existing rugs or puppy pens, or switching to "synthetic sheepskin" or microfiber bath mats, both of which add surface softness and another component: "loft." Loft is the squishable thickness and cushioning that further eases a rabbit's gait as he or she walks. (Note that the term "fleece" is sometimes conflated with what we call "synthetic sheepskin." Fleece can refer to very thin fabric used to make leisurewear and is not too helpful for our purposes unless as a top layer.)

Keeping a rabbit at a healthy weight is extremely important. Just a few excess ounces can create pressure that makes the difference between your bunny developing debilitating sore hocks and not.

At some point you may need to take additional measures to keep your rabbit on his feet. I personally have not had much success with ointments. I've felt that once they were applied, they would quickly get rubbed off onto the substrate or worse, licked off. There was a cream a dozen years ago that showed promise (HealX) but it's off the market now. For me, booties work better. Back in the day, we wrapped our rabbits' sore hock feet with a technique involving applying a nonstick wound pad on the sore itself, then gauze around the foot and ankle, and then securing with stretchy vet wrap. When it worked, it worked great!

However there were problems: wrapping too tight constricted blood flow and impaired mobility. Wrapping too loosely caused rubbing and lacerations at the elbow. And if a bunny had urinating issues (not uncommon with seniors), then you had to change the entire wrapping immediately so there wouldn't be urine scald. The wraps would be applied and removed daily or every couple of days as necessary. Some rabbits didn't like wearing them at all and would simply chew them off.

Now some clever person online has created little booties that are deceptively simple but well-engineered and worth every penny. I can put them on and take them off with one hand while cradling my hock boy, Mr. Fritz. Designed with a helpful gap at the elbow for mobility, there's no rubbing. They're lined with synthetic sheepskin. But booties are not for every rabbit, and some rabbits might struggle to chew them off or refuse to exercise with them on. Know your rabbit, so you can assess what works best.

Photo: Sandra Blum



Sore hock and inflamed heel callus.

Photo: Mary Ann Maier



Gauze and vet-wrap booties.

Photo: Mary Ann Maier



Synthetic sheepskin, left, versus 'fleece' fabric, right.

Photo: Mary Ann Maier



A callus starting to form underneath a naturally occurring 'combover.' Eventually that fur might degrade too, exposing the callus.

To the Emergency Vet or Not?

By Megan Hilands

A little over a month ago, my husband and I spent a sleepless night with our bunny Charlie. Longtime bunny companions might be familiar with our tale. Around 7 p.m. on a Thursday evening, Charlie was merely nibbling on a small piece of kale for dinner, declining most of his usual portion. Soon, he was sitting in a hunched position in the corner of his pen and shoving away any hay or treats I passed near his mouth in hopes of enticing him to eat. Eventually, we ended up spending the night at an emergency vet clinic that our regular bunny-savvy vet (Catnip & Carrots) had approved for us in case of true after-hours emergencies. Thankfully, Charlie was eventually fine and back to his normal, energetic self.

Most of us are busy adults, balancing work, social lives, school, and possibly childcare. Making the decision to go to an emergency medical facility of any kind at night is never easy, but here's how we made our decision and why I think it was the right one for Charlie.

Mood and behavior

Rabbit-savvy veterinarians and educators will tell you that any time a bunny is not eating it is considered a medical emergency. While Charlie did technically eat a few bites of dinner, he soon declined all food and did not seem like himself. Our normally bubbly, Energizer-Bunny-resembling Charlie looked hunched and

Photos: Megan Hilands



Charlie.

uncomfortable. He showed no interest in his usual toys or treats and was not pooping. I noticed that he seemed like he was trying to use the litter box, but I was not seeing any output. It was clear to us that we were dealing with illness and probably the beginnings of gastrointestinal stasis. The question was whether or not this was something we could successfully treat at home.

This might come as a surprise, but Charlie was also flopping, even at his worst. I suspect he was trying to move his belly around and try to get more comfortable. I feel like that speaks to

how important it is to really know your bunny's tendencies and personality. Flops are usually a sign of happiness in bunnies, but with Charlie I know it's not always a good sign – though, he does flop a lot while sleeping, too.

Medicine

Charlie is a very difficult bunny to medicate when he is feeling ill. The emergency vet later confirmed this. It was pretty hard for her to get a syringe in his mouth, even with Charlie secured in a towel. After hours of trying at home, I had only been able to feed Charlie about a half a dose of simethicone. I had strong suspicions that gas was the root cause of his illness, given that his belly felt soft and I heard some gurgling sounds. Without medication, though, I feared that Charlie was not going to resume eating. Under the care of the vet, Charlie got down much more pain medication and Oxbow Critical Care than he would have accepted at home.

Timing

Around midnight, it was clear that Charlie was not getting better and I was probably not going to be able to sleep anyway while he was feeling so poorly. I was scared for my bunny's life, knowing that GI stasis can be fatal. I feared if I waited until morning and regular business hours, his condition could worsen. I ultimately made the call to get him seen as soon as possible.

Important things to consider with an emergency vet

Like any hospital, an animal emergency room operates on a triage system, and during off-hours often does not have a full staff in place. That means you might have a long wait. We were there for about five hours in total. Other animals needed more urgent care than Charlie, so it took more time for him to be seen.

It is critical that if you do choose to go to someone other than your regular

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Brighten the Holidays

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PayPal. You can also send donations to: Rabbit Rescue & Rehab/NYC Metro Rabbit, 333 Mamaroneck Ave., #363, White Plains, NY 10605.

Our team has worked to help as many rabbits as we can, and many of them require costly veterinary care as a result of neglect and difficult living situations.

RRR relies entirely on donations to cover all of our veterinary expenses and to be able to rescue abandoned rabbits, especially to help those who are injured and sick.

Enjoy the holidays and thank you for all the support and encouragement you have provided. Your contribution is tax-deductible.

Rabbit Rescue & Rehab (d/b/a NYC Metro Rabbit) is an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) charity registered in New York State.

The Smallest Coworker

By Samantha Rowan

A few weeks ago, when the Wi-Fi was out in my office, a couple of my colleagues came to my apartment to work for the day. One of them had done so before and was familiar with Lenny, our senior rabbit. The other, who had grown up with dogs, didn't know much about bunnies but was more than happy to spend the day with six pounds of fluff. Little did he know what the day would bring.

We sat down at the table with our laptops and, after sniffing his way around his guests and their bags, Lenny settled down in an adjacent space. It was one of his favorite places, close enough to the table to take advantage of any crumbs that might fall and close enough to me to be able to get a head pat here and there.

"He looks so cute! But does he have a blanket or a bed?" This was Randy, my friend who was not familiar with rabbits. "Do rabbits do that?"

Peter, my other colleague and a long-time friend of Lenny who knows his ways, snorted.

"No," he said. "Lenny would tear it up."

At that exact moment, Lenny pushed himself up from his peaceful loaf and started to push against the cabinet in a way that probably seemed incongruent with his cute bearing.

"What's he doing?" Randy asked.

"Well, he's trying to move the cabinet," I said. "But Lenny weighs six pounds

and the cabinet weighs about a hundred and is also screwed into the wall. I'm not sure he's going to get anywhere."

But Lenny tried. Valiantly. He pushed his little head and shoulders against the cabinet, grunting, and then tried to wedge his nose underneath the legs and the bottom so that he could tip it over. During this time, Lenny also made some little snuffles and grunts, which were both adorable and showed the extent of his frustration. Finally, he gave up and stared at me with angry eyes. I patted his head.

"I didn't know rabbits were so task-oriented," Randy said. "Or so noisy."

"Aye, that's Lenny," said Peter, who is Scottish. "He's a good lad."

We all got on with our work – some of us on the computer and one of us trying to dig through the floor, gnaw the leg of the table or snuffle around the floor looking for crumbs. Eventually, Lenny went back to his spot and sank down onto the floor.

"He must be very comfortable with you guys," I said in a conversational way.

"For rabbits to lie down like that, with their legs stretched out, it means they feel safe."

It turned out Lenny felt very comfortable because a second later, he flopped over onto his side and fell into a deep sleep. For anyone who has seen a rabbit flop, it was not alarming. But for Randy, the sight of an older bunny suddenly appearing to collapse on the floor,

twitch his paws and lie there with his eyes half-opened was pretty alarming. I got it – you never forget the first time you see a rabbit flop.

"Sam," Randy said carefully. "I think your rabbit is broken."

"He's just sleeping," I said. "That's how rabbits sleep."

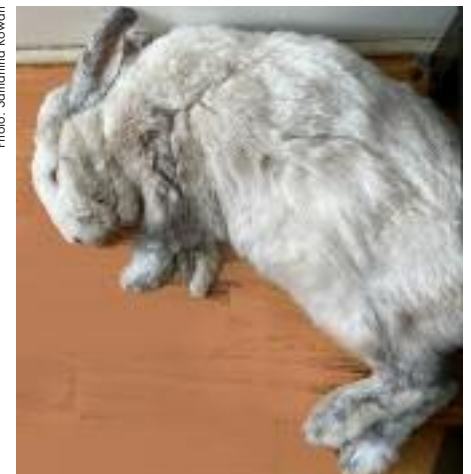
"That's terrifying. But very cute," Randy said.

We all watched Lenny for a minute. His little paws were twitching and his mouth was moving, like he was dreaming about digging and eating kibble.

"I think he's dreaming," I said. "So we need to be quiet so we don't disturb him."

We all resumed our work, one eye on the screens and one eye on our smallest co-worker. We all worked hard, but no one rested better than Lenny!

Photo: Samantha Rowan



Sleeping on the job.

Emergency Vet

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bunny-savvy veterinarian, the vet needs to have rabbit knowledge. I felt confident in this particular clinic as Catnip & Carrots had told me it was acceptable in an emergency. (I live about 30 miles away from C&C, and once when my bunny Simba was ill, we considered whether an ER was the right call for her.) If I had doubts about the rabbit-savviness, I would have waited until

Friday morning instead and driven to our usual vet. For this reason, if you travel with your bunny, it might be useful for you to look up rabbit-savvy emergency-care options at your destination.

Costs will also generally be higher for an emergency visit than for a standard vet appointment – in my experience, double or even a little more. If you have the means, pet insurance and/or an emergency fund for your bunny are good ways to help alleviate the brunt of the cost.

Charlie today

Since Charlie's time in the ER he has recovered well. For a few days, he did seem angry at me and did not accept pets as eagerly as he did before he was sick. The poor guy didn't quite seem to understand we were helping him. We also have reduced his portion of greens (on veterinary advice) in the evening and no longer feed him parsley, which he had the night before the stasis scare. Now, though, he is back to normal and is my cuddliest bunny.

How to Have a Hoppy Holiday

By Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group

If you are like most rabbit owners, the first name on your holiday gift list is your rabbit's name. It appears in the No. 1 spot – above children, parents and spouses. Every bunny should get a holiday gift – even two or three – but how can you, as a good bunny owner, give a great gift that's also a safe one?

Give chewable gifts of untreated wicker, willow or seagrass mats, and baskets and tunnels. We recommend tunnels, tubes, baskets and mats that can be found at many online retailers. Always select an untreated, unvarnished and unpainted product. Avoid sweets such as yogurt drops, crunchy dried nuts and fruit, nut and popcorn sticks, and anything else with a high sugar content.

Most people run short on cash around the holidays. That is no reason to relegate your favorite gift recipient to the bottom of the list. Every bunny loves a good cardboard box. Select a box that is made of brown cardboard, remove all tape and cut a nice hole for a door. Voilà! You have built your own bunny castle. Using a marker, write the name of your king or queen over the entrance to his or her castle. You can add a neat tunnel feature using a concrete form available at your local home-improvement store.

Photo: Matthew Gaylen



Wrapping paper with tape is hazardous.

For those really short on resources, a great gift would be a rotation of different types of hay. You need to buy hay anyway, so why not try meadow grass, orchard grass, brome, clover, oat hay, and even hay cakes. Many of these products will be gobbled up happily by your rabbit. These can be obtained at [Oxbow](#), [American Pet](#) and [Farmer Dave](#).

For particularly pampered bunnies, the internet offers safe, shreddable, chewable, tossable fun toys for your rabbits from retailers such as [BinkyBunny](#).

Decorations

Holiday decorations, while an integral part of your winter months, must be arranged carefully to protect your rabbit.

Photo: Jane O'Wyatt



Christmas cactus is toxic.

All strings of lights that dangle within the bunny's reach must be taped or tacked up higher to prevent fires and injuries to the rabbit. The water receptacle at the bottom of a fresh Christmas tree must also be off limits. Tree branches treated with sprays and fire retardants are toxic. Also, ribbons, wrapping paper with tape, tinsel and fallen glass ornaments are hazards. This is the time to have a few extra exercise pens in your house that can be used to block off the entire tree area while your bunny is out in the living room.

Houseplants should be kept out of your rabbit's reach, and Christmas plants are no different. Christmas cactus, holly, ivy and mistletoe are all toxic.

RHDV2 Confirmed in Florida

By House Rabbit Society

Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease continues to spread in the U.S. and Canada.

Florida recently confirmed a case of RHDV2 in Palm Beach County, in a domestic rabbit.

Is your rabbit due for the RHDV2 vaccination? Even indoor-only rabbits are at risk of RHDV2, since the virus can be transferred to them by people (on their shoes and clothes), other animals (including dogs and cats, especially if

they go outside), and even insects.

Vaccination against RHDV2 is the most important way to protect your rabbit from this highly contagious and often lethal disease affecting rabbits of all ages.

RHDV2 is the first of the rabbit hemorrhagic disease virus strains to affect both domestic and North American wild rabbit and hare species. As many as 70% to 100% of rabbits exposed to the virus will die within 48 hours to 10 days after exposure.

There have since been confirmed cases of rabbit hemorrhagic disease in 40 countries. The new strain, RHDV2, emerged in France in 2010.

Talk with your veterinarian to learn more about the RHDV2 [vaccine from Medgene Labs](#).

There is no known cure for RHDV2, and the virus is extremely hardy. [Visit the HRS resource center](#) to learn more.

Defensive Rabbit Behavior

By House Rabbit Society

Education is key to building a good relationship with your rabbit. Learning some important cues will help you nurture your rabbit into a social, loving companion.

Many people expect rabbits to be docile and sweet all the time. But just like any animal (or human), if a rabbit feels threatened, he or she will respond with defensive behaviors. This can be startling to you, so it's important to understand what is really going on with your pet.

What defensive behaviors in rabbits look like:

- Nipping at your hand or fingers
- Scratching or boxing with front paws
- Chasing you across the room with ears back flat on the rabbit's head
- Warning bites to "back off"
- Kicking or thrusting back feet while being held or restrained

A rabbit uses these behaviors to say: "I feel unsafe."

Rabbits will start with "quiet" messages at first: ears back and lunging toward you, or a light nip with the front teeth. If you persist in interacting with the rabbit or do not remove yourself from his space, the messages will get "louder": scratching and boxing, or a stronger bite.

Photo: Jane O'Wyatt



Let the rabbit come to you.

If your rabbit behaves like this, do not give up hope.

The rabbit needs time to feel safe with you in the spaces you share.

Here are some tips:

- Rabbits like being active. Allow your rabbit time to play, explore and forage in a safe space without your interference. Rabbits need to feel comfortable in their environment on their own terms.
- A rabbit is rarely born a "meanie." Rabbits showing defensive behaviors have often come from situations where they were under high stress or maltreated.

Chances are, your rabbit has a very pleasant personality. He or she has just been through some stressful experiences.

- Beyond 4-6 months of age, if a rabbit is not spayed/neutered, defensive behaviors will be more frequent and severe. This is due to hormones as the bunny matures. If your rabbit is unspayed/unneutered, take him or her to a rabbit-savvy veterinarian.
- Remember that you often must earn a rabbit's trust. Communicate to your rabbit that you do not want to hurt him by: not sneaking up on your rabbit, not grabbing at or "tapping" the rabbit's body, not allowing others to grab him. In a shared space, let the rabbit come to you.
- Offer a calm, one-second stroke on the rabbit's forehead and pause; then wait for a response. If the rabbit doesn't move away, offer another short stroke.
- Learn your rabbit's body language. A head-bonk to your leg might mean, "Please move now!"
- Most rabbits do not enjoy being held and they struggle when off the floor.
- If you lie on the floor, most rabbits will come near and lie near or even climb on you.
- When you do have to pick up your rabbit for health/medical or transport

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Don't Forget to Brush!

By House Rabbit Society

You should brush rabbits regularly to keep them nicely groomed and looking sharp. Rabbits shed every three months, which is why grooming your rabbit regularly is essential. Besides keeping the rabbit healthy and clean, it is also an opportunity to make sure your rabbit's body is in good condition and no problems have arisen. Rabbits' skin is delicate so it's important to groom them gently and carefully.

Photo: Jane O'Wyatt



Some bunnies shed all the time!

Rabbits should be brushed once a week. Prepare to brush them more often when they are going through a heavy shed.

Never bathe a rabbit. Rabbits groom themselves like cats do, and don't need to be bathed. A stressed, wet rabbit can quickly become hypothermic and go into shock and even die.

Not all flea treatments are safe for rabbits. Ones that are safe to use include Revolution or Advantage II, which you can get from a veterinarian. Never use Frontline on a rabbit. Flea powders, flea shampoos, and flea baths/dips are also not recommended for use on rabbits.

Spokesbunny Noah Reports From Long Island

By Noah the Bunny
with assistance from Shari Zagorski

Hello my human friends!

I have been on extended vacation from Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group education events lately, but my human agent just booked a visit to a Girl Scout meeting in November and my annual visit to the Middle Country Public Library “Scales and Tails” event in early December!

This will actually be my third year volunteering at “Scales and Tails” and in 2021, this was the first event I participated in as a spokesbunny. It made me think back to how I earned this position two years ago.

First, I’ll share a little history about my bunny family. I have been told that about five years ago, my bun-sibs Shadow and Mittens used to volunteer as spokesbunnies at some LIRRG education events. Since the human pandemic kept many people home with their bunnies in 2020, there were no live indoor gatherings with spokesbunnies for over a year. When normal events resumed in 2021, Shadow (at age 9+) retired from her job and Mittens refused to go alone and leave his bun-wife at home.

Now for a little of my personal history. When I arrived as a rescue at my foster home in March of 2021, I felt safe and loved there, but there were certain noises and movements that set me off into

Photos: Shari Zagorski



Studying to be a LIRRG spokesbunny at my first event.



Inseparable: Shadow (lionhead) and her hus-bun Mittens.

panic attacks. My foster mom learned how to calm me down the very first time, and any time, I went into panic mode. She would keep me down on the floor and go on her knees and elbows to make a human hidey home that surrounded

me while she stroked me right behind my ears and spoke softly to me. Within a few minutes, I would melt into a fluffy pancake again.

After several weeks in my foster home, I knew I had to adopt these humans, but I had to convince them that they truly wished to have a fourth bunny family member. As much as I was cuddly and sweet, I was still young and a bit exuberant so I followed my human mom around everywhere to show my loyalty. I conveyed to the humans that I would do anything as long as I could stay. After my formal adoption in May of 2021 (although I think I melted mom’s heart well before then), there was no doubt that I would study to become

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Defensive Behavior

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reasons, always support the butt to give the rabbit a sense of stability. Be certain to hold the rabbit firmly but don’t squeeze.

- Never shove, hit or swat your rabbit. If you do, it will ruin any trust that has

developed and cause your rabbit to increase any defensive behavior. Rabbits are easily injured.

- To communicate that you do not like being nipped, try making a quick, high-pitched “eeeeeeep!” sound when a nip happens.

- Remember: Your rabbit has a blind spot directly in front of the face. Anything (food, a finger, a toy) thrust toward the face is startling to him.

Where Is Your Rabbit's Favorite Spot to Hang Out?

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 where their rabbits love to spend most of their time. Here's what they had to say.

“Peanut spends most of his day in his castle, which was gifted to him by his very special aunt and uncle.” – Denise B.

“Eugene's 'spot' is on his stump with his mini-me. This is right in front of the TV and he likes to face his parents when they watch TV every night. Cloud's 'spot' is pressed up against my air purifier. She loves to feel the breeze through her fur.” – Carly H.

“Daenerys loves her tunnel. Aegon loves the middle of the dining-room floor. Eleanor loves her pink pad. Theodora and Roosevelt love their Hop n Flops.” – Danielle Z.

“I am not allowed to decorate this bottom shelf (Beatrice has claimed it).” – Mary O.

“Olaf's favorite spot is on the couch... all stretched out, leaving no room for anyone else to sit.” – Aviva R.

“Velvet says, 'Call in sick, Ma.'” – Angela B.

“Depending which room they are in, Bam and Sweetie have different spots. In our bedroom, she loves the door and he likes to lie next to the hideaway box that's by the corner of our bed. Kitchen is under the table. Living room, right by our big fan that's in front of our TV.” – Victoria R.

“Bennington loves to perch on his Hop n Flop to get a good view of his domain.” – Jean M.

“Sophie and Dylan need to get a room. They are always nose-to-nose making out in the den.” – Danielle P.

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Peanut.



Eugene.



Daenerys.



Beatrice.



Olaf.



Velvet.



Bam and Sweetie.



Bennington.



Sophie and Dylan.

Favorite Spot to Hang Out (Continued from page 8)



Cara.



Enzo.



Cordelia.



Bün.



Franklin.



Yoshi and Elphie.



Christian and Mackenzie.



Bruce.



Eeyore.

“In her photo, you can see **Cara**, who is obviously exhausted from being so cute all morning.” – Barbara P.

“**Bün** loves his tunnel!” – Jessica P.

“**Yoshi and Elphie’s** favorite snuggle place is underneath the guinea pigs’ table.” – Jennifer B.

“**Bruce** enjoys life under his favorite chair.” – Christina B.

“**Enzo** flops against the living-room wall in the same spot for naps.” – Jessica L.

“**Franklin’s** spot is under the coffee table in the left straw basket. He loves to lie down, flop and sleep in there.” – Pamela P.

“**Christian and Mackenzie** love the playpen. It’s their ‘secret’ meeting spot.” – Ashley R.

“**Eeyore** loves his ball pit.” – Nancy C.

“**Cordelia** likes to hang out in her holiday train and her Hop n Flop.” – Nina T.

Rabbit Rescue & Rehab's Beautiful Foster Rabbits

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

Dove

Unfortunately, the summer of 2023 was a record year for outdoor rabbit abandonments. We were called to a neighborhood where several rabbits were seen trying to survive. During week two, little Dove appeared on the scene. She was very young and quite fearful; it took a few days to convince her that we were there to bring her to safety.

She is a beautifully elegant 7- to 8-month-old sable seal point, tipping the scales at 3.5 pounds.

Dove is a very sweet little girl. She is rather demure, with a cautious approach to the world. She is an active girl and loves to run and does fantastic binkies! Her binky game is no surprise because she has the legs of a supermodel! Dove is spayed and would thrive in a calm, adult home. If you are interested in adopting Dove, please email nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com.

Pink

Pink is a sweet Himalayan boy with an affectionate demeanor. He does have a big energetic streak and likes to get in his exercise by running big laps and fluffing up his blankets before settling in for a nap on his IKEA doll bed. He's particularly fond of toys that can be tossed around, and loves all of his pellets, greens and hay. Pink is neutered and ready for adoption. If you are interested in adopting Pink, please email nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com.

Skye

Skye is a 3.5-pound Himalayan rabbit. 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



Dove.



Pink.



Skye.

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 has a particular affinity for her Oxbow

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ADOPTIONS

RRR Rabbits in Foster Care

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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.

Lucy

Lucy was found outside in a dirt alleyway off a busy street where someone had cruelly abandoned her. Now adjusting to the safety of her foster home, Lucy's active and curious personality is shining through. She is a very young and playful rabbit who loves interacting with people and toys, and especially enjoys carrying her stacking cups to different spots around her pen and exercise space. If you are interested in adopting Lucy, please email nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com.



Indigo.



Lucy.

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 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.



Carmela.

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

Flora

As her name might suggest, Flora is sweet and beautiful. One of the eight botanical babies born to rescue bun Andrena, Miss Flora is affectionate, curious and exploratory. She wants to know what her humans are up to at all times, and she's been known to try climbing out of her enclosure to say hello. Flora has blossomed into an extroverted, social bun, and as such, she'd thrive in an environment where she can receive a lot of attention. If Flora were a human: Rapunzel from Disney's "Tangled."

Judy

Judy was found as a stray and brought to the Town of Babylon Animal Shelter in October 2022, where she was cared for until we were able to take her into our care. She has an old healed fracture on her back right paw, but it doesn't hinder her from running around her foster home. Judy is a sweet girl who may take time to feel comfortable in new places. She has glorious folds and the softest fur. While she can be cautious at first, with patient humans she enjoys gentle patting. Her future forever family should understand that because of her slight impairment, she may develop



Flora.



Judy.

arthritis in her joints earlier on in her life. To prevent any further injuries, Judy's environment should be free of ramps and any platforms used for jumping.



Ravi.

Ravi

Big girl with an even bigger personality! Ravi was found shortly after Easter 2022, abandoned in a residential area in Suffolk County. Although she was only a few months old, her GIANT ears were our first clue that Ravi would grow up to be a big puppy-like rabbit. Ravi is now a big and active girl, unaware of her size. She likes toys and will destroy them in a day's time. Food is her love language. Ravi is a spunky yet always sweet bunny and she gets along with other animals – supervised, of course. Her eyes glisten with a desire for playing and adventure. She also loves to jump up on the couch and other furniture to explore her foster home. If you're looking for a rabbit to provide endless entertainment, Ravi is your girl!

LONG ISLAND NEWS

Noah Reports

(Continued from page 7)

the next family spokesbunny once the LIRRG education events started up again.

In November of 2021 I had on-the-job training at my first gig at the "Scales and

Tails" event. There were dogs and birds and cats and big dogs and lots of humans all over the library. I knew my humans were right there with me to keep me safe. After raising an ear, I went back to loafing, enjoying all of the attention and petting from the humans who attended.

Since then, I have enjoyed volunteering as a spokesbunny any time I can, and my humans love sharing time with me while we educate others on the joys of bunnyhood!

Until next time, this is Spokesbunny Noah signing off!

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

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



Mr. Fantastic.



Phil.



Timmy.



Betsy Bunny.



Jasmine.



Michael.



Lil.



Grenas.



Nicky.

(Continued on page 14)

ADOPTIONS

Rabbits at Manhattan NYC ACC

(Continued from page 13)



Pinkey.



Mr. Wonderful.



Mr. Fabulous.



Ollie.

Forever Homes Found!

We are happy to report that Munchkin and Crackers, Mr. Gorgeous, Lamborghini, Buggs, BunBun, Snowball, Draco, Emmett, Conrad, Panda, Lavender, Ezra, Sock Hop, Saturn, Thumperina, Pip, Strawberry and Paris. were adopted since the last newsletter. Congratulations!

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



Frost.



Brownie.



Puff.



Bunni.



Uranus.



Lucky.



Peanut.



Diglett.



Pikachu.

(Continued on page 16)

ADOPTIONS

Rabbits at Brooklyn NYC ACC

(Continued from page 15)



Jolly.



Engine.



Neptune.



Peach.



Jelly Bean.



Dylan.



Bennu.



Merry.



Wabby Wabbit.

What Should I Feed My Bunny?

By Dana Krempels

The House Rabbit Society stresses that rabbits should live indoors, and have at least four hours of quality running/playing time per day. This, in conjunction with a proper diet, will help keep your rabbit happy, healthy and affectionate for a lifetime. Perhaps the most important items in the rabbit diet that ensure good intestinal health are (1) adequate oral hydration and (2) adequate crude long fiber, which helps push hair and food through the intestines, and keeps the intestinal muscles well-toned and moving quickly. This is essential to the rabbit's maintenance of a balanced flora (bacteria and yeast) in the cecum. Improper diet can quickly lead to intestinal problems, often originating with cecal dysbiosis, an imbalance of the natural "ecosystem" of the cecum.

Here are the most important items that you should be sure to include in your rabbit's diet.

Hay!

Perhaps the single most important item in the rabbit diet is grass HAY, and it should be fed in unlimited quantities to both adults and baby rabbits. A rabbit fed only commercial rabbit pellets does not get enough long fiber to keep the intestines in good working order. The long fibers in the hay push things through the gut and keep the intestinal muscles in good tone. In addition to keeping the intestinal contents moving at the rate at which nature intended, hay may also help prevent intestinal impactions caused by ingested hair or other indigestible items. (For more information on problems associated with slowed intestinal function, please see <http://www.bio.miami.edu/hare/ileus.html>)

Alfalfa or clover hays, although tasty for the rabbit, are too rich in protein and



Greyson eating first-cut Timothy hay.

calcium to be fed ad libitum. Instead, offer fresh grass hays such as Timothy, oat, coastal, brome, Bahia or wheat. If you can't find good quality hay locally, you may wish to mail-order hay from Oxbow Animal Health, American Pet Diner or other suppliers. The coarser "first cut" Timothy hay is higher in fiber than the softer, more fragrant "second cut." Some rabbits who refuse to eat the (putatively healthier) high-fiber first cut will often eagerly accept second cut hay. Less fiber is better than none at all!

Pellets

A high-quality commercial rabbit pellet provides trace nutrients, vitamins and minerals that a rabbit might not get if fed only hay and fresh foods. However, very little pelleted food is required for good health. Many experienced rabbit veterinarians are now recommending no more than 1/4 cup of quality pellets per five pounds of rabbit per day, and some even consider commercial pellets a

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What Should I Feed?

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“treat food” that can promote obesity in spayed/neutered adult rabbits. A rabbit fed too many pellets will sometimes ignore hay, to the detriment of the intestinal system!

A good quality rabbit pellet DOES NOT contain dried fruit, seeds, nuts, colored crunchy things or other things



Olivia.

that are attractive to our human eyes, but very unhealthy to a rabbit. Rabbits are strict herbivores, and in nature they rarely get fruit, nuts or other such fatty, starchy foods. The complex flora of the cecum can quickly become dangerously imbalanced if too much simple, digestible carbohydrate is consumed – especially if the diet is generally low in fiber. The result is often “poopy butt syndrome,” in which mushy fecal matter cakes onto the rabbit’s behind. This a sign of cecal dysbiosis, which can foment much more serious health problems.

A good quality rabbit pellet should have at least 22% crude fiber, no more than approximately 14% protein, about 1% fat and about 1.0% calcium. Check the label on the rabbit pellets before you buy. Most commercial pellets are alfalfa-based, which means they’re higher in

calories and lower in fiber than Timothy-based pellets.

Baby rabbits may be fed unlimited pellets, as their bones and muscles need plenty of protein and calcium for proper growth. However, the calories and nutrients of commercial pellets fed ad libitum exceed the needs of a healthy adult rabbit, and will not only promote obesity, but discourage the rabbit from consuming enough hay to ensure good intestinal health.

The wise “bunny parent” will begin to gradually taper the quantity of pellets once the rabbit is about eight to twelve months old, and feed no more than 1/4 cup per day for every five pounds of rabbit (you can give a little bit more if the pellets are Timothy-based). Some rabbit caregivers complain that their rabbits won’t eat their hay. If the problem is not medical in nature (e.g., molar spurs and other dental problems are a common problem responsible for “picky eating”), then it may be that the rabbit is eating too many pellets, isn’t hungry, and so doesn’t eat the hay so vital to his/her health. Take the tough love approach! Cut back the pellets until you are sure your rabbit is eating enough hay.

Fresh Vegetables

You may have heard it from a breeder, pet store owner, or even a veterinarian who is not as familiar with recent rabbit health information as one might hope: Fresh vegetables will give your rabbit “diarrhea.” Nothing could be further from the truth than this old myth. In fact, fresh greens help keep intestinal contents hydrated, which makes them easier for the bunny to pass. Trace nutrients, fiber, and just plain old tastiness are other benefits of fresh greens. After all, what do you suppose wild rabbits eat?

Fresh, moist greens are about as important as hay in maintaining a healthy intestine. Try broccoli, dark leaf lettuces, kale, parsley, carrot tops, endive, escarole, dill, basil, mint, cilantro, spinach. Almost any green, leafy vegetable that’s good for



Sugarplum and Pineapple.



Baldwin Harbor Five baby bunnies eating fresh greens.

you (including fresh-grown garden herbs such as tarragon and various mints, with the exception of Pennyroyal) are good for a rabbit. Experiment and see which types your rabbit likes best! Rabbits love fresh, fragrant herbs from the garden.

Give starchy vegetables (e.g., carrots) in moderation, and use bits of fruit only in very, very small quantities, as special treats. Too much sugar and starch can cause cecal dysbiosis, and all its associated problems.

Baby rabbits may start receiving greens very gradually at the age of about two months. Add one item at a time, in small amounts, and if you see no intestinal

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What Should I Feed?

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upset, add another. Carrots, romaine lettuce and kale are good starters. A five-pound adult rabbit should receive at least four heaping cups of fresh, varied (at least three different kinds each day) vegetables per day. Be sure to wash everything thoroughly to remove pesticide and fertilizer residues as much as possible. Even organic produce should be washed well to remove potentially harmful bacteria, such as *E. coli*.

Serve the vegetables wet, as this will help increase your rabbit's intake of liquid. This helps keep the intestinal contents moving well, and the bunny healthy.

Please don't make the mistake of serving less-than-fresh vegetables to your rabbit. A rabbit is even more sensitive to spoiled food than a human is. If the vegetables smell stale or are "on the fringe," they could make your bunny sick. Follow the Emerald Rule of Freshness when feeding your rabbit friend: "Don't Feed It to Your Bunny if You Wouldn't Eat It Yourself."



Vanessa at Petco Union Square.

Water

The importance of adequate water intake cannot be overstated. A rabbit who does not drink sufficient water will gradually begin to suffer desiccation of the intestinal contents. Skin tenting, a common method used by veterinarians to gauge the state of hydration in many animals, is not a good gauge of hydration in rabbits. It seems that even when the tissues of the rabbit appear to be well

hydrated, the intestinal contents may not be, perhaps because the rabbit is so efficient at sequestering necessary fluids from its own intestine. When this happens, the ingested food in the stomach and intestine becomes dry and difficult for the normal muscular motions to push through. This can start a downhill cascade into a condition known as ileus, which can be life-threatening if not recognized and treated.

A rabbit will usually drink more water from a clean, heavy crock than from a sipper bottle. The rabbit caregiver may wish to provide both, but it's important to be sure that the crock, if porcelain, is lead-free, and that the water is changed daily and the crock washed thoroughly with hot water and detergent to prevent bacterial growth in the water source.

Fresh Fruits?

These are considered treats, and, if offered at all, should be limited to very small quantities. Safe choices are apple, apricot, banana, cherries, mango, peach, plum, papaya, pineapple, apricot, berries....just about any fruit you would like is okay for your bunny. Be very careful not to overdo these treat foods, as they may promote cecal dysbiosis, other intestinal problems and create a desire in the bunny to eat treats instead of his/her normal, healthy foods.

Don't Feed Potentially Harmful 'Treats'

Remember: a rabbit is a lagomorph, not a rodent or a primate. The rabbit digestive tract is physiologically more similar to that of a horse than to that of a rodent or primate, and the intestine and related organs can suffer from an overindulgence in starchy, fatty foods.

NEVER feed your rabbit commercial "gourmet" or "treat" mixes filled with dried fruit, nuts and seeds. These may be safe for a bird or hamster – BUT THEY ARE NOT PROPER FOOD FOR A RABBIT. The sole function of

"rabbit gourmet treats" is to lighten your wallet. If the manufacturers of "gourmet rabbit treats" truly cared about your rabbit's health and longevity, they would not market such products.

Don't feed your rabbit cookies, crackers, nuts, seeds, breakfast cereals (including oatmeal) or "high fiber" cereals. They may be high-fiber for you, but not for your herbivorous rabbit, who's far better able to completely digest cellulose ("dietary fiber") than you are. Fed to a rabbit, the high fat and simple carbohydrate content of "naughty foods" may contribute to fatty liver disease, cecal dysbiosis and obesity.

A Special Note About Corn and Other Seeds

Some types of seeds (especially things like "Canadian peas" and corn kernels) have hulls that are indigestible to a rabbit, and can cause life-threatening intestinal impactions/blockages.

Corn, fresh or dried, is NOT safe for rabbits. The hull of corn kernels is composed of a complex polysaccharide (not cellulose and pectin, of which plant cell walls are more commonly composed, and which a rabbit can digest) that rabbits cannot digest. We know of more than one rabbit who suffered intestinal impactions because of the indigestible corn hulls. After emergency medical treatment, when the poor rabbits finally passed the corn, their fecal pellets were nearly solid corn hulls! Those rabbits were lucky.

*Copyright – Dana Krempels, Ph.D.
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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: Kar Parker



Peter and his reflection.

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 NOVEMBER 2023

Newsletter of RRR/NYC HRS
rabbitrescueandrehab.org

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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,
New York, NY 10024
(212) 501-8750

Westchester County:

Gil Stanzione, DVM
Dakota Veterinary Center
381 Dobbs Ferry Road,
White Plains, NY 10607
(914) 421-0020

Laurie Hess, DVM
Veterinary Center for Birds and Exotics
709 Bedford Road,
Bedford Hills, NY 10507
(914) 864-1414

Long Island:

Jennifer Saver, DVM
Erica Campbell, DVM
Catnip & Carrots Veterinary Hospital
2056 Jericho Turnpike
New Hyde Park, NY 11040
(516) 877-7080

Heidi Hoefler, DVM
Island Exotic Vet Care
591 East Jericho Turnpike
Huntington Station, NY 11746
(631) 424-0300

Ellen Leonhardt, DVM
Animal General of East Norwich
6320 Northern Blvd
East Norwich, NY 11732
(516) 624-7500

Maggie Camilleri, DVM
Paumanok Veterinary Hospital
639 Route 112
Patchogue, NY 11772
(631) 475-1312

Jeff Rose, DVM
Jefferson Animal Hospital
606 Patchogue Rd. (Route 112)
Port Jefferson Station, NY 11776
(631) 473-0415

Shachar Malka, DVM
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333 Great Neck Road
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