



NYC METRO RABBIT NEWS NOVEMBER 2021

You Can Help Bring Holiday Cheer To Our Wonderful RRR Rabbits

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

Giving Tuesday is Nov. 30 this year, and a donor has pledged to match donations up to \$2,500, so we could turn that into \$5,000! Last year, donations received for Giving Tuesday and the holidays allowed us to double our donations from \$2,000 to \$4,000.

Donations can be made to Rabbit Rescue & Rehab through PayPal.

<https://www.rabbitrescueandrehab.org/donate>
You 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 possibly can, and many of the rabbits are in need of costly veterinary care.

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

(Continued on page 7)

Vaccine Receives Emergency-Use Authorization for Deadly Rabbit Virus

By House Rabbit Society

Medgene Labs' innovative, U.S.-produced, recombinant vaccine has been granted emergency-use authorization by the Department of Agriculture to protect U.S. rabbits from Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Virus Type-2.

Many rabbit guardians have worried about keeping their bunnies safe since RHDV2 cases started in early 2020 and as the virus continues to spread rapidly across Southwestern and Western states. Recent RHDV2 confirmations in domestic rabbits in Georgia, Mississippi and Minnesota show that this disease continues to be an ongoing threat to both wild and pet rabbits.

Previously, to import the European vaccines, state veterinarians were requiring a confirmed case of RHDV within their state. With the new Medgene vaccine, that is no longer the process. Forty-two state veterinarians have already authorized use of the new vaccine, and Medgene anticipates approval in more states in the near future. (See page two for additional information.)

Visit <https://medgenelabs.com/rhdv2/> for the most up-to-date information about their vaccine, including a list of the states where the vaccine has been authorized.

Photo: Jane O'Wyatt



Tina.

Those who love rabbits can breathe easier knowing Medgene's new vaccine is ready and will be available to protect our rabbits over the coming months. It is being offered by vets in New York City.

We look forward to a brighter, safer future for all companion rabbits thanks to the Medgene RHDV2 vaccine. We continue to strongly recommend rabbit guardians vaccinate their rabbits where the vaccine is available and to take biosecurity precautions. Visit

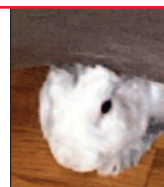
(Continued on page 7)



Saying Farewell To a Beloved Foster Bunny Named Hardy
Page 4



A Drumroll for Bunny Awards That Celebrate Special Achievements
Page 7



When Lenny Flicks His Water At Us, We All Get the Message
Page 9

FAQ: Medgene RHDV2 Vaccine

This House Rabbit Society fact sheet was written by Iris Klimczuk and Christie Taylor, Ph.D., and was reviewed by Anthony Pilny, DVM.

What kind of vaccine is it?

Medgene's RHDV2 vaccine is made of a single "subunit" or part of the RHDV2 virus that, when administered properly, results in a robust immune response in the rabbit that we observe as near-complete resistance to rabbit hemorrhagic disease. More vaccine information from Medgene is available [here](#).

How is Medgene's vaccine administered?

This vaccine is administered in two subcutaneous doses, 21 days apart and (according to preliminary reports) once a year thereafter to maintain the advertised efficacy.

How long after my bunny is vaccinated will the vaccine be effective?

Properly administered, Medgene's vaccine will be fully effective 35 days after the first dose and 14 days after the second injection. Data on the booster is not yet available.

How effective is this vaccine?

In Medgene's preliminary tests, all vaccinated rabbits survived a "challenge," which means that researchers intentionally injected the live virus that causes RHD into rabbits who had been fully vaccinated with Medgene's vaccine; 100% of vaccinated rabbits survived this challenge in laboratory conditions.

What does Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) mean?

The vaccine is not yet fully licensed by the USDA, but instead has been given Emergency Use Authorization. As part of the EUA process, Medgene has demonstrated preliminary vaccine efficacy and safety. Additional efficacy and safety studies are under way as the company works toward a full product license.

Photo: Jane O'Wyatt



Mel.

EUA makes Medgene's recombinant vaccine available for any state veterinarian in the U.S. who wishes to distribute the vaccine in that state. This authorization does not require confirmed cases of rabbit hemorrhagic disease in the state.

Is this vaccine safe?

Additional data must be generated by Medgene and must meet final safety criteria for full approval, but Medgene's vaccine has undergone extensive preliminary testing and these data do suggest this vaccine is safe.

What are possible side effects to this new recombinant RHDV2 vaccine?

So far, Medgene's safety testing studies report only rare instances of swelling at the injection site that resolve within 48 hours. Other possible side effects are a temporary slight fever and/or lethargy for one to two days.

Who decides if the new vaccine may be used in my state?

State veterinarians authorize and direct vaccine use in each state, including recordkeeping and identification requirements.

Who can purchase the vaccine?

Under Emergency Use Authorization, Medgene Labs is distributing vaccine only to licensed veterinarians in authorized states. Licensed veterinarians should contact Medgene Customer Service at (605) 697-2600 for more information on approval status in their state and how to purchase vaccine.

Does Medgene's new vaccine require the use of rabbits in its vaccine production?

Rabbits aren't used in the general manufacture of this vaccine. However, a limited number of rabbits are required to determine the safety and efficacy of the vaccine under federal law. Once this vaccine receives full authorization, no additional rabbits will be required to produce the vaccine.

Can my rabbit be vaccinated with the new Medgene recombinant RHDV2 vaccine if previously vaccinated with Filavac or Eravac?

Yes.

Will the imported Eravac and Filavac vaccines continue to be available or will Medgene's recombinant vaccine replace them?

Since the U.S.-made Medgene recombinant RHDV2 vaccine option is now available under Emergency Use Authorization, the USDA will no longer approve new import permits for the two European RHDV vaccines. There will be a transitional period where veterinarians with supplies of Eravac and Filavac on hand will use up existing stock. Veterinarians' existing USDA vaccine import permits will not be rescinded, but these permits will not be renewed once expired, nor will any new permits for imported RHD vaccines be issued.

(Continued on page 3)

FAQ

(Continued from page 2)

What does the new recombinant RHD vaccine cost?

Medgene expects the cost to be comparable to the two previously imported RHDV2 vaccines. Medgene's vaccine is available for purchase by licensed veterinarians only at this time. These veterinarians and their practices will determine prices, so the cost may vary and might include required recordkeeping such as identification requirements (like microchips injected under the skin or tattoos), which may also be reflected in the veterinarian's cost of vaccination.

Photos: Janie O'Wyatt



Otto and Cher.

How do I find out if the recombinant vaccine is authorized for use in my state?

Check under "Vaccine Accessibility" on Medgene Labs' website for an updated list of states that have authorized the distribution of the RHDV2 vaccine. If your state is not listed, ask your veterinarian to reach out to Medgene's Customer Service line directly at (605) 697-2600 or you can also inquire directly with the Office of the State Veterinarian in your state.

If the recombinant vaccine is not yet authorized for use, let your state veterinarian know of your interest in vaccinating your rabbit against RHD with this vaccine to encourage authorization.

Does Medgene's RHDV2 vaccine "shed"?

No, this vaccine does not involve any infectious virus or whole viral particles and cannot cause viral shedding in vaccinated animals. However, if a vaccinated animal is infected with RHD, it may shed virus without showing symptoms.

Can the recombinant vaccine be given to pregnant or nursing rabbits?

Safety studies have not yet been completed for these rabbit populations, but the available data suggest this vaccine will eventually be approved for use in pregnant and nursing rabbits.

Do I still need to practice biosecurity if my rabbits are vaccinated?

Vaccination is the best protection you can give your companion rabbit. Continued biosecurity and decontamination is a good idea under most circumstances. For those choosing not to vaccinate their rabbit(s) for any reason, we recommend that strict biosecurity continue at all times. Caregivers should maintain strict biosecurity for immunocompromised rabbits as they are still at significant risk before and after vaccination. We also recommend decontamination in the event of known or probable exposure – for instance, if a family pet returns home with a wild or feral bunny. Those who are particularly risk-averse may wish to continue some measure of biosecurity after vaccinating their rabbits, such as removing shoes before entering the home. We highly recommend continuing biosecurity in areas where RHD is endemic and suggest contacting your local House Rabbit Society chapter to learn more about the best practice for your region.



Peanut.

HRS asks that caregivers and chapters abide by the recommendations of their respective state veterinarian and any state and local ordinances pertaining to RHDV2 when determining updated biosecurity practices. We understand that standards and risks vary widely between states where RHD is endemic and those where it has not yet been diagnosed. Some states' policies may also differ based on the potential risk that RHD presents to threatened and endangered wild rabbits like the New England cottontail and the Lower Keys marsh rabbit.

Do I need to sanitize vegetables for my vaccinated companion rabbit?

House Rabbit Society recommends rinsing all greens intended for your pet rabbit whether they are vaccinated or not. However heroic decontamination of greens involving sanitizing chemicals, or an extensive series of washes, are not necessary for vaccinated rabbits.

Can my vaccinated bunny safely go outside?

Your local HRS chapter will guide you through the recommended steps to help

(Continued on page 4)

Farewell to a Beloved Foster Bunny

By Jane O'Wyatt

In February, 2012, Cindy Stutts, former head of NYC Metro Rabbits, fielded a distress call about a large colony of bunnies in a backyard in Brooklyn. Since rabbit rescuer Marcie Frishberg worked at a high school in the neighborhood, Cindy asked her to investigate. Marcie found that one well-meaning man, unversed in the basics of rabbit care, had been attempting to feed the rabbits and protect them from the damp, freezing weather. He had erected a haphazard shelter of tarpaulins and had been trying to find homes by offering free baby bunnies to people in the neighborhood. "We counted," Marcie recalls, "and there were 50 Californian mixes: two dads and three mothers; the rest were babies." It was an overwhelming situation, which Marcie initially ameliorated by providing hay and information and arranging for spay/neuter surgeries. But in March, with a severe winter storm on its way, she shifted gears and put out a life-or-death call for volunteers to take in the "Brooklyn Bunnies," and foster homes were found for all.

Hardy and his brother Laurel were less than a month old when a bunny volunteer rescued them from this precarious backyard encampment. For now, they had a warm, dry and friendly foster home. In theory, a foster home is

temporary – until a rabbit can find a good adopter. However, it would be months and in some cases years before many of the "Brooklyn Bunnies" found permanent homes, and Laurel and Hardy bounced from one fosterer to another. After they were adopted by a woman in the Bronx, they were returned the following day, Laurel limping. The brothers' bond failed during the cage rest required by Laurel's broken hind leg, and, as a result, they went to separate foster homes. They had lived in at least five different households in two years when in the spring of 2014 Hardy came to me as a foster, and Laurel (renamed Hoyt) was adopted as a partner bunny by a rabbit-savvy couple from New Jersey. Given their history, it's not surprising that both brothers were skittish when they arrived in their new homes.

In the beginning, Hardy was the most anxious rabbit I had ever fostered. He hid and tensed and flinched when touched. Though fearful, he didn't bite. Slowly gaining confidence in his new quiet and peaceful environment, he accepted praise and tolerated brief head scratches, which in time led to his acceptance of further petting and careful cuddling. Because Hardy seemed to take a cordial interest in the succession of other foster bunnies in the guest pen next to his own and because he was still

Photo: Jane O'Wyatt



7 Brooklyn bunny babies at Marcie's.

Photo: James Szymanski



Brothers Laurel and Hardy.

anxious around strange humans, his Petfinder listing said that he could "only be adopted as a partner for another bunny." Marcie included him in several speed-dating events. His conduct with

(Continued on page 5)

FAQ

(Continued from page 3)

promote the safety of your companion rabbits in the face of this ongoing disease while observing the appropriate practice for your region. Advice you receive regarding biosecurity practices might differ significantly from chapter to chapter and this is a result of regional differences in risk assessment and policy dictated by your state's authorities.

What Government Is Doing Regarding RHD:

Federal Government

USDA's Center for Veterinary Biologics (CVB) granted Emergency Use Authorization/EUA to the experimental RHDV2 vaccine made by South Dakota-based Medgene Labs in October 2021 in an effort to make this vaccine available quickly while it undergoes the full USDA approval process.

State Government

Where authorized for emergency use by state animal health authorities, Medgene's RHDV2 vaccine can be sold directly to licensed veterinarians according to the state veterinarian's directives. More than half the U.S. states have already authorized emergency use for Medgene's recombinant vaccine, including some states without RHD outbreaks. Veterinarians should contact Medgene Labs directly to purchase vaccine.

Farewell

(Continued from page 4)

other rabbits appeared polite, but he didn't really click with the females whose people were hoping for a love-at-first-sniff partnership, even when I hosted speed dates in Hardy's home.

In December 2014, an energetic, two-year-old orangey-brown lop named Honey moved into the pen next to Hardy's. Because she was totally blind, I immediately took Honey to Animal Medical Center's Dr. Katherine Quesenberry, who said the cause of her blindness was trauma, possibly from an

attack by a cat or a dog. Despite this devastating injury, combined with deafness, Honey was gentle and quite calm. She loved to be petted, leaned into every caress and quickly made herself at home. Although the odds of her being adopted were poor, I imagined that she might be adopted as a partner for a sighted, "caretaker" rabbit whose human was a compassionate, knowledgeable bunny person. Such relationships existed, I knew from my experience taking care of other people's rabbits. (In a long-bonded pair in which one partner becomes blind, the sighted partner is usually extremely solicitous of the other,

guiding and grooming.) I was hopeful when Honey was scheduled for a speed date with Larry, a handsome widower whose person was an exotics vet. The date, however, was a failure, because Honey, disoriented and agitated in the alien environment of the vet's office, simply ran around in small, obsessive circles. Cindy, who was in charge, put a stop to the speed date, because she intuited that Larry was freaked out by Honey's behavior and might attack her. Honey and I returned home, where she thumped and zoomed through her accordion tunnel. Hardy seemed glad to

(Continued on page 6)

Photos: Jane O'Wyatt



Sage and Hardy at a speed-dating event.



At Petco Union Square, Hardy waits to go home.



Honey had been blinded in both eyes.



Honey and Hardy in side-by-side pens.

Farewell

(Continued from page 5)

see her again and stretched out on the side of his pen closest to hers.

In 2018, when it looked as though neither Hardy nor Honey would ever be adopted, I asked Marcie if she would try to bond them. They were, of course, sort of bonded already, and I wondered if they could share a pen. Marcie agreed, and initially the relationship looked promising: They appeared to enjoy physical contact with each other. Alas, though Honey really liked lying close to Hardy, she seemed oblivious to his desire to be groomed. He also liked cuddling, although he didn't groom her either. There always came a point during bonding sessions when cuddling wasn't enough for Hardy, and he would attempt to hump Honey, which she didn't appreciate. He would then try to pursue her when she moved away from him – a truly alarming response. Hardy thereby showed that he was not “caretaker husbun” material. After the bonding experiment, the arrangement of side-by-side four-by-six-foot pens continued. As before, Hardy and Honey spent a part of each day beside each other, separated by a single layer of fencing.

Over the years, Hardy became calmer, more communicative and affectionate, more playful and lovable – and a little fatter. Visitors did not alarm him, because he felt safe. His moods and state of health became very easy to read, and he read me effortlessly. On occasions when I was obtuse or engrossed in work, he took to banging his pellet dish loudly against his water bowl to get my attention. It always worked: he had trained me well. However, because Hardy and Honey did not share a pen, and our place was nowhere near to being a bunny theme park, I worried that Hardy was bored. (Honey seemed content.) But

Photos: Jane O'Wyatt



Initially the bonding sessions seemed promising.

since both rabbits had suffered trauma before they arrived, I would like to think that I have been a “good enough” foster parent to them: that the quiet stability of their home – along with petting, toys, willow tents, Cottontail Cottages, good hay, pellets, banana slices, greens and medical care – gave Hardy and Honey much of what they needed.

When Hardy died on October 19, 2021 at the age of nine and a half, our pet sitter Jade Chan kindly wrote, “He was shy and nervous when I first met him, but he blossomed into a happy smiley bunny who loved to be touched and petted. He loved his food, his playpen and world. He appreciated his life.”

Honey seemed more confused than sad for about a week afterwards. She continued to eat well and bustle around her pen as usual, but she did do something out of the ordinary: she banged her pellet dish loudly against her water bowl several times. Trained by Hardy to respond to the clink and clatter of this maneuver, I was spooked, because Honey had never done it before. She repeated it three days in a row, and from the first, I was convinced that Hardy was sending greetings through Honey from wherever



Hardy.

he now was. In my grief I accepted these communications gratefully, and then they stopped. Honey has not banged her pellet dish against her water bowl again. Hardy's memory lingers, and Honey remains her sweet, cuddly, busy self.

My Most Valuable Bunny (MVB) Awards

By Megan Hilands

As I have met more and more bunnies over the years, I am increasingly (pleasantly) surprised at just how distinct and varied their personalities can be. Now that we have three bunnies sharing our home—and I work from home—I am all the more aware of each bunny's unique quirks and lovable (usually!) characteristics. It is in this spirit that, as we approach the end of 2021, I would like to celebrate each of my bunnies with my home's (drumroll) first annual bunny awards!

Each bunny will be awarded one baby carrot in celebration of the achievement.

Award: Most likely to start a search party when the humans are 'missing'

Winner: Nala

Did you sleep in too late on a Saturday? Spend too much time working when your bunnies' dinner time is rapidly approaching? Never fear – Nala the bunny will come to the rescue!

Whether Nala wants attention or just wants to confirm precisely where her humans are at all waking hours, she is sure to come looking for you up the stairs and even across uncarpeted sections of the floor. In another life, Nala might have been a shepherd perhaps.

Photos: Megan Hilands



Nala chinning the baseboards amidst a search for her humans.

Award: Most likely to compete in the bunny Olympics

Winner: Charlie

Whether a 48-inch-tall exercise pen, a human's desk, or even sometimes the humans themselves, there are few summits Charlie the bunny cannot scale. While his athleticism has proved to be an extra challenge for bunny-proofing, his antics are amusing and he looks very graceful when he jumps to places much higher than his own height with ease.

(Continued on page 8)



Charlie might be wondering why the humans have deemed so many interesting locations to be off-limits!

Holiday Cheer

(Continued from page 1)

and sick, and who require extensive veterinary care and treatment.

Enjoy the holidays and thank you for all the support and encouragement you have provided over the years. We will continue our work, knowing that our efforts are appreciated by so many of you.

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.

Vaccine

(Continued from page 1)

rabbit.org/rhdv to learn more about what you can do to help keep your rabbit safe.

Separately, on Sept. 28, it was announced that two domestic rabbits in Ramsey County in Minnesota tested positive for RHDV2. This is the first report of RHDV2 in Minnesota. An investigation to determine the source of the infection is ongoing.

As of now, there have been confirmed RHDV2 cases in Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, South Dakota, Texas, Utah and Wyoming, as well as in Canada and Mexico, affecting both wild and domestic rabbits. Officials report a death rate of about 90%, which is why strict precautions must be taken by rabbit guardians, including vaccination.

Awards

(Continued from page 7)

Award: Most likely descended from royalty

Winner: Simba

Think you can have your breakfast before Simba does? Think again. This little but fierce bun will put you in your place every morning with a thump (and sometimes a growl!) if you think you can start brewing your coffee before serving her morning pellet blend.

Unsurprisingly, Simba also spends the most time of any bunny in the rabbit castle we purchased.

Award: Best groomed

Winner: Simba

As is fitting for a princess, Simba makes sure she always sets up regular “salon” appointments (with her human at home). Out of all of our bunnies, Simba is by far the easiest to groom and actually seems to enjoy being combed. So there’s no wonder why her coat looks so silky smooth.

Award: Most interesting sitting locations

Winner: Nala

Wedge in between the carpet and the sofa, in a corner facing the wall, even next to the bookshelf— these are just a few of the unusual places Nala has decided to park herself for a quick rest. No one can really say for sure why she finds these spots so comfortable.

Award: Biggest social butterfly

Winner: Charlie

Whether you’re his usual humans or are just visiting for a bit, there’s a good chance Charlie will like you almost immediately. If you come anywhere near him, Charlie will usually run over to you and periscope. Preferably, you will reward his enthusiasm with some head pets and a nose boop or two. I have rarely encountered a bunny who so genuinely seems to love being around people.

That’s it for the 2021 awards! I can only imagine what new antics the bunnies will start in 2022.

Photos: Megan Hlandts



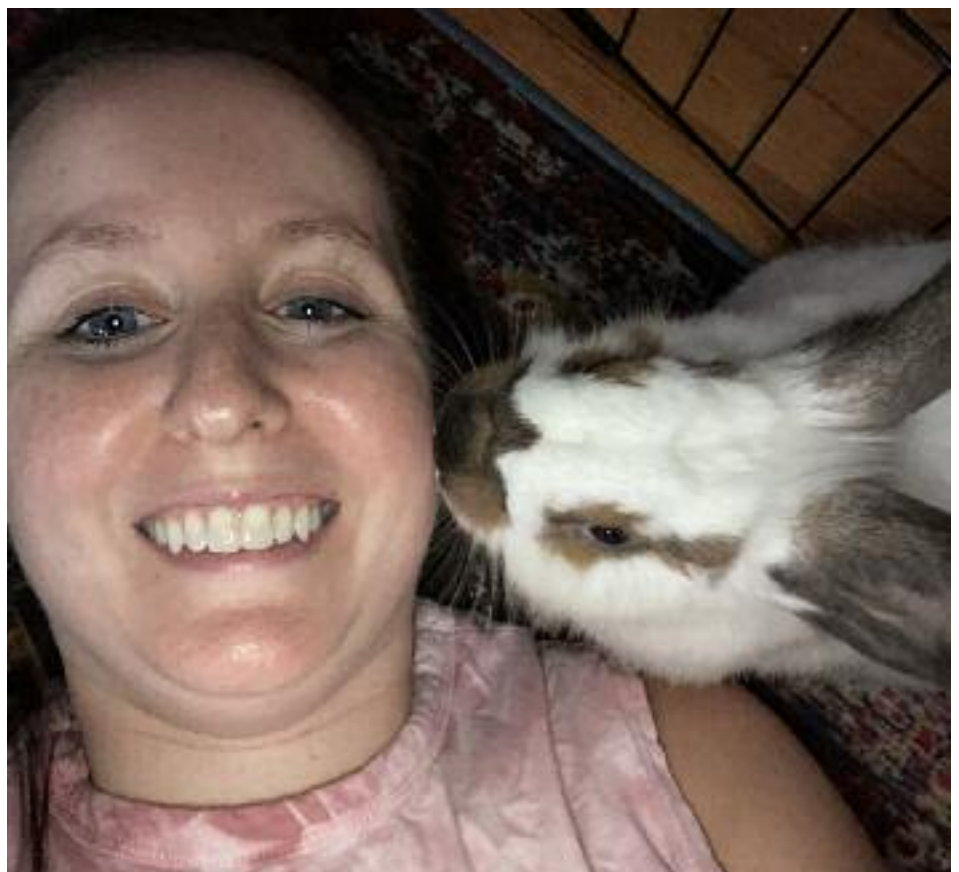
Simba in her castle – and yes, she is using Nala’s foot as a pillow!



Simba is ready for her grooming appointment. Hurry up, human!



▲ Nala wedging herself between a toy and a box...and, of course, her human (Nick).
▼ Charlie grooming/inspecting my face.



When Lenny Flicks His Water at Us, We Get the Message

By Samantha Rowan

Lenny, our young-at-heart senior rabbit, has always had an affectionate relationship with his water dish. Sure, it's something to drink water out of, but it's also someplace where he can dip his front paws and then wash his face or just rest his paws in while he is contemplating his next move. When Lenny is in his pen and not under the couch doing his research or whatever it is he does under there, there is a good chance that he's standing with his paws in his water dish.

We recently celebrated Lenny's eighth year as a member of our family – and maybe his roughly ninth or 10th birthday. You'd think that after such a long stretch together, we'd know everything there was to know about our pet – his habits, his noises, his needs. Lenny, though, has always surprised us by finding new places to loaf or communicating new desires, most of which are around food.

In our work-from-home setup, I sit with my back to Lenny's enclosure and am fairly close to him. Although he's pretty free-range most of the time, there are days where he settles close to his beloved water bowl and I can hear him eating or drinking peacefully throughout the day. A few weeks ago, I was on a call and

Photo: Samantha Rowan



Lenny: where the research happens.

heard Lenny drinking water like he normally does. There was a silence – and then I felt a distinct flick of water across my feet.

I glanced over to Lenny, who was staring at me with his paws in his water dish and thought, “Oh, that was probably an accident. How cute!” I went about my business and didn't think about it until the next day, when my husband was getting something out of the filing

cabinet nearby. He seemed to jump a bit and looked down at Lenny.

“Did you just flick water on me with your paws?” he asked. Lenny responded with his typical, intense stare – and then hopped to the box where we keep his food. He nosed it with the desperation of a pet who never eats and stood on his hind legs. “You're not getting any more kibble. But I'll top up your hay.”

Lenny seemed satisfied with an infusion of new hay to complement the meadow hay that was already there and tore right in. But the flicking didn't stop. My son was flicked later in the week and it's been steady since then. Sometimes Lenny even does it when one of us is standing right there watching him – there is no subtlety to this rabbit – and he seems delighted when he makes us stop what we're doing to spend a few extra minutes with him on the floor.

We're lucky that at almost 10, Lenny isn't slowing down. In some ways, he's speeding up and there are days when I look at his intense little fluffy face and wonder what he's got in store for us next. Maybe that's what his constant research activity is about!

Your Bunny and the Holidays

By House Rabbit Society

It's holiday season again, a time of year that can be both fun and stressful for you and your rabbit. In the midst of all your holiday preparations, here a few tips to keep your bunny safe and happy over the next few weeks.

Plants and Christmas Trees

Be aware of seasonal plants that are brought into the home.

Despite the common perception, poinsettia plants are not poisonous. That's not to say your bunny should eat them,

since they can cause mild intestinal discomfort in some sensitive individuals. But they should not cause serious illness.

Some holiday plants, such as holly, mistletoe and certain types of ivy, can be toxic. To be especially safe, keep ALL plants and fresh green decorations up and out of your bunny's reach. Put them in a room where your bunny doesn't usually romp, or place them high enough to be out of reach of little teeth.

Pinecones are generally safe distractions and make festive bunny chew and throw toys at this time of year.

If your Christmas tree has not been treated (with fire retardant, pesticides, etc.) or painted, then it should be safe to chew. Note that natural chemical compounds in some evergreens may cause the bunny's urine to turn more orange than usual, but this is not a health concern.

Take a critical look at your tree before adding the ornaments and lights. Low-hanging decorations can be inviting toys. On lower limbs, use safe plastic or wooden ornaments that a rabbit can

(Continued on page 10)

Holidays

(Continued from page 9)

safely nibble, tug or steal. Always supervise closely when a bunny is loose around the tree.

Lights, Cords, Decorations

When there is a Christmas tree, there are often extra electrical cords and lights, which bunnies can and will chew. If possible, put your Christmas tree in a room where the bunny doesn't play. If this isn't possible, you can make your tree "off limits" to your rabbit by placing a puppy pen around it, or you can use the pen to section off the part of the room where the tree is, keeping the bunny safely away. This will help keep you and your rabbit safe from chewed electrical cords and preserve your favorite Christmas ornaments, as well.

If you put up electrical decorations during this season, make sure the cords are far away from the bunny. Plastic wire protectors may help slow down a curious bunny. However, these will not necessarily prevent a determined rabbit from chewing through the plastic to the wires. So you should keep them tucked away and out of reach.

Be alert about synthetic tinsel and garlands which, if ingested, can cause stomach trouble or impactions. And be conscious of potpourri. Some rabbits enjoy nibbling on it, and there's no telling what potentially harmful chemicals or preservatives might have been used in the potpourri you're using.

While wrapping and opening gifts, keep in mind that tape and ribbon are not good things for rabbits to eat, but they seem to be especially attractive playthings to some bunnies. As a substitute, give white tissue paper and you'll enjoy watching some happy playtime.

'Tis the season for candles and fireplaces. Keep the first high out of reach and the other enclosed so your bunny can't investigate too closely. Even cold ashes can be harmful, as they are very caustic if combined with water (including saliva!).

Photo: Kerstin Aumann



Snowball.

Be aware of low-lying candy, snack bowls and gingerbread homes, or your buns will have a (potentially dangerous) feast on holiday treats. Coffee tables and end tables are usually low enough for a healthy bunny to easily hop up and partake of your festive offerings. Salty snacks are particularly risky, since a rabbit can actually ingest a fatal overdose of salt if he or she eats too much (e.g., chips, salted nuts, etc.)

Company and the Hubbub of the Holidays

Many families have friends and family members for short or long visits around this time of year. This will inevitably interrupt your rabbit's customary routine and atmosphere. If you have

family members who don't understand house rabbits, make sure you take the time to prepare both your company and your rabbit for what to expect. This could be a great opportunity to educate your friends and family about rabbits and rabbit behavior.

To reduce your rabbit's stress, try to stick as close as possible to the routine. Make sure you remember to give the rabbit plenty of attention and reassurance. If your bunny is particularly sensitive to noise and activity, you may even want to move him or her to a quieter room while your company is visiting.

Don't be shy about laying down some ground rules for your company, especially if they include children. ***Never leave your rabbit unsupervised with a child.***

Small visitors may be tempted to chase, pick up or inadvertently mishandle your bunny. It could take only a second for a potentially crippling or even fatal accident to occur at the hands of a well-meaning, but overly affectionate, child.

If you have guests who are particularly interested in visiting your rabbit, don't allow them to handle the bunny without first properly instructing them about safe handling. Let visitors know that a rabbit's digestive system is very delicate, and though bunnies may be adorable when they sit up and beg for treats, overfeeding them can be killing them with kindness.

With these precautions in mind, we wish you and your bunnies a fun-filled, joyous holiday season!



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Bunnies Need Brushing

By House Rabbit Society

National Hair Day was celebrated on Oct. 1, but we don't need a special day when it comes to grooming our rabbits.

Rabbits shed every three months, which is why grooming your rabbit regularly is essential. Besides keeping a rabbit healthy and clean, it is also an opportunity to make sure your bunny's body is in good condition and no problems have arisen. A rabbit's skin is very delicate so it is important to groom a bunny gently and carefully.

- Rabbits need to 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 as cats do, and don't need to be bathed. A stressed, wet rabbit can



Greyson.

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



Roxy.

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.

November Is Adopt a Senior Pet Month

By House Rabbit Society

This month, HRS is celebrating senior rabbits. Life expectancy for a house rabbit is between 8-14 years. A rabbit is considered to be a senior sometime between the ages of 5-8. Signs of aging start to appear at different ages, depending on size of the rabbit, genetics, the quality of care received, and whether the rabbit has a partner.

A well-cared-for house rabbit can age gracefully and enjoy many golden years. Your rabbit may need some level of nursing care at some point in his or her life. Expect this and know that the rabbit will be grateful for your loyalty and love. Caring for our elderly companion rabbits is part of the commitment we make to them that honors the years of love and friendship we have shared with them – and they with us.

[Learn more](#) about preventative care to help keep your aging rabbit healthy.



Funny Face and Plain Face were 13 years old when this photo was taken.

Bring On the Toys!

This Oxbow Timothy “small animal hideout” stuffed full of hay is one of Peach's favorite toys.

She likes to throw it around, pull out pieces of hay, and chew on the outside.

Rabbits need toys and enrichment activities to satisfy their urges to chew and dig, and the more toys and stimulation they have, the happier they will be. Having many different kinds of toys will help to keep your bunny mentally and physically fit.

Peach.



That Was an Interesting First Year: Recollections From a Lionhead

By Enzo Leggio,
Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group alum

(Enzo was adopted about a year ago by Jessica R. Leggio. He wants to express his thanks to the Long Island volunteers who helped find him a home.)

Hmmm... The first thing I remember was my buddy and I being chased in the grass by these big weirdos. I was young, hungry and scared. These hoomans had stamina. They must be part bunny. Then, we were caught.

After that all I remember is being alone, my undercarriage was shaved, and I was sore. Still scared, not as hungry, still young. I heard people talking. Evidently, I am "cute" and about 5 months old. I guess my birthday is sometime in October...if I did my hooman math correctly.

Hey! Who are these new hoomans? Where am I going and WHY am I in this small box? What's all this? A car ride? WHOA WHOA WHOA...I don't like this. This can't be safe...phew, we stopped. This box is small. I need more room. And a snack. Definitely need a snack. Where am I? And who has the snacks?

((THUMP)) HEY! ((THUMP)) HEY!! Put me down and let me...oh. Thanks. Now where am I? ooh hay! In a box! Thank goodness for the box...I needed that. Now for munch and crunch and oh! WOW! They gave me green stuff! Lettuces and dandelion...numnumnum. OK. I'll eat because I'm hungry, but I'm still scared. And still young.

((STRETCH AND YAAWWWN)) ahhh nice nap. I think I'll munch some more of that hay in the box. Yeaahhhh that's better. Now to assess the situation. I'm not hungry. I'm a little scared. I'm still young. And, Evidently, I am still "cute." Now what is this obstacle stopping

Photo: Jessica R. Leggio



Enzo.

me from exploring? Let me see...I'll just stand up here and measure how tall... oh...just above my ears...I got this.

((THUMP)) ((THUD))

That was too easy. WOOOOO I'm freeeeeeeee...OK I guess I'm gonna be here for a while.

Hey, wait! I just got here! Why am I going back in that small box?! Unhand me, I say! Put me down or I will ... ((THUMP)) ...WHO is this and WHY is she coming in this rolling cart with us?

Goo'day Madam. I am called Enzo. I am "cute," young, not hungry, scared again, and now very curious. Georgia, is it? Lovely to meet another bunny. Do you know where they are taking us?

We stopped. The hooman says we're both going to meet someone new...maybe an adopter. They better have snacks.

Oh good. They're letting me out first. Hmmm new smells. Comfy carpet for my feet. WOW! A tall obstacle to hop

in and out of. There's hay in there...and weird plastic cups. Wonder what I can do with those. Ooooooo a couch! I shall go see what's under there. This place is ok. I don't think I want to leave.

Hey! No! Stop chasing me. I AM STAYING! This is my new home. Tell Georgia she's out of luck. I like the couch and the carpet and the hooman here smells like banana. YOU'RE NOT CATCHING ME.

((RUN)) ((EVADE)) aaaaand captured. DANG. Back in that small box.

Oh look. The hoomans kept Georgia in the tall obstacle with the hay. HA! She can't run free like I did. Georgia looks scared. She's digging and biting at her box. I bet that hooman picks me. I AM "cute," after all.

What's happening now? I'm staying in my new home? Did the banana-scented hooman pick me? The other hooman is leaving with Georgia. I AM staying. OK.

(Continued on page 13)

Rabbit Named Trouble Shines at Petco Event

By Priscilla Kane

The Petco event on Sept. 26 was amazing. We had five Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group volunteers who attended the event at the Petco in West Babylon, N.Y. We also had a rock star rabbit named Trouble from a local shelter who visited with us for a couple of hours.

This little guy was so good, and he got a ton of attention. We had a great day with him! The goal of the event was to

educate and help answer questions about rabbits as pets. We tried to let people know how to care for a rabbit before making a commitment. It's always inspiring to spend the day with the volunteers because we all share the same passion: the love of rabbits.

We met a woman who was an empty nester with two children away in college. She had bought a rabbit as a companion

(Continued on page 14)



From left, Priscilla Kane, Amy Basile, and Jennie and Christina Berner helped out at the West Babylon event.

Recollections

(Continued from page 12)

Reassess the situation. I am the only bunny, a little hungry, kind of scared, and still young. I wonder if the hooman has a snack.

Hmmmm lots of hay in this box. Good. I can eat and get comfortable here. Water ... water, I could use water. Ah...there's a bowl of water. Why is that giant weirdo who smells like bananas staring at me? She is always staring at me. Are my ears crooked? Is my tail scrunched? Oh well. Nap time.

((STRETCH)) ((YAAAAAAWWWN)) Where am I? Oh yes. Giant weirdo, smells like bananas. Comfy carpet on my feet. Lots of hay. Water. Aaaaaand I'm hungry. Wait a minute...is she bringing me green stuff? Lettuce and dandelion? She calls it "ENZO GREENS." I am Enzo. Greens for me! I think I could like it here. Wonder if she'll let me stay.

How long has it been? Am I still young? She calls me handsome. Am I still "cute?" I think the hooman makes great Enzo greens and I always have fresh hay and water. I can explore under things, and although I have measured, I cannot jump the tall obstacle she keeps me in while she's gone all day. Assessment...

This is better than being scared, hungry, and outside with all the scary things. I am putting my foot down ((THUMP)). I am staying here with this banana-scented hooman. I am hers and she is mine.

Oh good. She's on top of the couch that I like to go under. I am still a little scared, but a decision is a decision and she is mine.

((HOP)) ((SHUFFLE)) ((STARE AT HER FACE)) ((MARK MY TERRITORY))

AH!! Why is she jumping up? Doesn't she know I just marked her? The couch too, for that matter. Now they will both smell like me.

WHAT? NO! I am fine. There is nothing wrong with me. My kidneys are fine. I DO NOT have a UTI. UGH... clearly my new giant weirdo has a lot to learn about bunnies...

One Year Later

What's all this? What's a "gotcha" day? Ohhh we celebrate you being mine? I expect lavish gifts of expensive hay, plenty of Enzo Greens, and maybe some banana. As a "Thank you," I will finally allow you to nuzzle my lion mane and be more open minded to head pats. I will also now circle your feet, unmake your bed, and provide multiple nose

boops when I want your attention. Eventually, I will use you and the male hooman as furniture and perch atop you both when you're in my spot in front of the fan. Yes, happy "gotcha day," you giant weirdo. I'm glad I kept you.



Enzo and Jessica.



Enzo at rest.

For Your Viewing Pleasure

Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group has an informative YouTube channel with how-to videos about rabbit care. Rabbit volunteers Katie Scarr and Mary Ann Maier recently filmed three new videos with Dr. Jennifer Saver of Catnip & Carrots Veterinary Hospital. Here are the videos:

[Recognizing Arthritis in Rabbits: An Overview for Owners](#)

[GI Stasis vs. Bloat](#)

[How to Administer Eye Medication for a Rabbit](#)



Observing arthritis in the back legs.



Administering eye medication.



Feeling the stomach.



Feeling the cecum.

Rabbit Named Trouble

(Continued from page 13)

and we answered her questions. She walked away with a lot of information, and she was invited to join the LIRRG

Facebook page so she could continue to learn and ask questions if she needed help.

Just imagine if we could continue to spread our knowledge as volunteers by doing more events such as this one.

What a great world our rabbits would live in! The dream is for all rabbits to find their one and only forever home so they never ever have to leave it!

What Is Your Rabbit's Favorite Way to Snuggle?

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, "Is your rabbit comfortable with human touch? What's his/her favorite snuggle style?" and here's what they had to say.

"Peanut places her head on my leg to ask for pets and snuggles and if you stop petting before she's ready she'll kiss and nudge you to keep going!" – Erica R.

"Mae enjoys a full body massage including her furry feet." – Susanne I.

"Franklin loves being pet and will plop down next to you for head and full body rubs. Even if he's exploring he will stop for pets." – Pamela P.

"Winnie is very particular with human touch – each person varies! With me, she loves being brushed on her head with a soft boar-bristle brush. She'll rest her head forward on something and just relax" – Angela S.

"Sophie bows her head to me, then melts into the carpet. I start with a head rub, then I pet her from her head all the way to her cute little rump. She enjoys snuggling her 8-pound body in her tiny bed. She feels secure in small spaces." – Danielle P.

"Lucy loves her head and cheeks rubbed. She melts." – Diane K.

"Latrice likes couch snuggles." – Thea H.

"Zach loves rubs." – Doreen O.

"Skyler loves backs! Sienna loves being pet in her hop and flop." – Brooke S.

"Daniel is the biggest attention-seeker I know. He will literally flop on his side in order to get my attention so that I can rub his head. Daniel LOVES to be pet, kissed and cuddled. If I take too long to pet him he will nip me to let me know I better start!" – Lauren O.

"Ellie loves all attention! She'll nudge me when she wants pets, thank me with

(Continued on page 16)



Peanut.



Sophie.



Mae.



Lucy.



▲ Franklin. ▼ Winnie.



▲ Latrice. ▼ Zach.



Favorite Way to Snuggle

(Continued from page 15)

kisses, then push her head back under my hand for more. She also loves resting her head in my hand for forehead and cheek rubs.” – Emily V.

“Foster bun Weston enjoys gentle head rubs.” – Denise B.

“Noah craves as much touch & body contact as he can get with humans.” – Shari Z.

“Diego will thump for attention.” – Rachel S.

“Schnozzy loved to sit on my chest so he’d get pets and kisses on his head. He could do this for hours! However it always had to be on his terms. He could jump off whenever he wanted to.” – Lisa S.

“Arlo is skittish about human touch when he’s active but when he lies down in his curved cat toy he wants to be patted!” – Joseph C.

“Gus loves head rubs, and will chew on your pants or dig and nip at your ankles to demand them, if necessary! Virgil will settle in on my lap/tummy and sit there for a LONG time while I pet him.” –Tracey

“Trixie always tugs on my clothes, turns around, and then backs herself up to me for a bunny butt massage.” – Heather F.



Skyler.



Sienna.



Daniel.



▲ Ellie. ▼ Weston.



Noah.



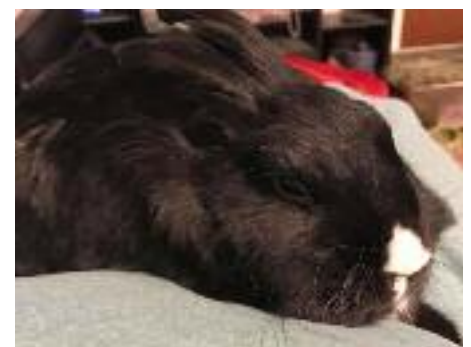
Diego.



▲ Arlo. ▼ Schnozzy.



Gus.



▲ Virgil. ▼ Trixie.



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

Drew

Drew's journey is a testament to the healing power of love and care. When he was rescued, he was in rough shape. His ears were covered in crusty mites. His feet were raw to the bone, likely from a wire-bottom cage or concrete flooring. His fur was stained and matted. Looking at him that day... we weren't sure what his prognosis would be. He went straight to the vet!

Thankfully, everything Drew was facing was able to be treated! His ear quickly healed after treatment. His stained fur grew out and his coat is a pristine white now that he lives in a clean, safe environment. He does have sore hocks that might never fully heal, but they've improved! He has to live on soft fleece.

Even at his physical worst, Drew showed affection to his foster mom and volunteers he has met. He is a friendly, puppy-like rabbit. If you're looking for a loving and playful member of your family, Drew is the boy for you!

Facts about Drew:

- Rescued May 2021
- Estimated age upon rescue: 1 year old

Yeti

Yeti was rescued by a kind human in Suffolk County who found him on her lawn matted and in poor health. Upon his first checkup with our rabbit-savvy veterinarian, he was found to have head tilt, and missing molars. He needs continuous molar trims every few months to maintain those that are left.

Despite his challenges, he enjoys hay-grazing, and he is very tiny, sweet, loving, and at times shy.

Facts about Yeti:

- Rescued December of 2020
- Estimated age upon rescue: 13 months
- Looking for a gentle human who will maintain his beautiful flook

Elle

Elle was rescued in Valley Stream by a cat rescue group. This beautiful girl was being bred for meat, and the outdoor hutch she was living in with four other rabbits was opened up to the wild after their prior owners were evicted.

Elle is an absolute sweetheart. She is a bit shy and it may take her some time to relax and let her guard down in a new home. With some effort, time and patience, she'll begin to slowly start exploring and sniffing you and you'll even see her fabulous binkies!

Facts about Elle:

- Rescued November 2019
- Estimated age upon rescue: 7 months
- Calm/Gentle, Reserved/Shy, Independent, Cautious
- Kid-friendly for ages 13+
- Loves to relax and spread her legs out



Drew.



Yeti.



Elle.

We Are Looking for Loving Homes:

These Rabbits Are in Foster Care With Rabbit Rescue & Rehab



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.

Eevee

Eevee is an adorable little brown lop and quite the ball of energy. Eevee would do wonderfully in a home with lots of open space to stretch her legs and to show off her athletic binkies. She loves to stay nearby and keep tabs on what her humans are up to, and will nudge you to a new spot on the floor if she thinks there's a better place for you to be sitting (she usually has a better place in mind!). Eevee will occasionally settle for petting, but often prefers a playful and interactive



Eevee.

relationship with less touching. She likes to keep busy – there is no such thing as too many toys. This wonderful little girl is spayed and ready for her forever home. If you are interested in adopting Eevee, please email nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com.

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.

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



Carmela.



Skye.

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

(Continued on page 19)

ADOPTIONS

Rabbits in Foster Care

(Continued from page 18)

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 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.

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 more shy than her brother, but is never far behind Blue and enjoys occasional head pets from quiet, gentle people who 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



Purple and Blue.

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.

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



Indigo.

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.

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

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



Honda.



Mario.



Dennis Hop-Per.

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

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



Vinny.



Snow Bun.



Sally.



Sunny.



Tully.



Colada.



Pumpkin Spice.



Sherlock Holmes.



Jack.



Honey Bun.



Sweeney Todd.

(Continued on page 21)

Rabbits at Brooklyn ACC

(Continued from page 20)



Otto.



Aloe.



Bun Bun.



Vanilla Bean.



Muriel.

Forever Homes Found!

We are happy to report that wonderful Flopsy, June, Pat, Skyler, Wade and Sugarplum and Pineapple were adopted since the last newsletter. Congratulations!

Detecting Illness Before It's an Emergency

By Dana Krempels

Probably because of their evolutionary history as prey animals, rabbits often show few outward signs of distress when they are ill or in pain. In nature, predators cue in on animals that act sick, instinctively knowing that these particular individuals will be easier to capture. Presumably, over evolutionary time, sick rabbits who had an inborn tendency to hide obvious outward signs of illness were less likely to be selected by predators while they were sick. These “genetically stoic” individuals thus have been more likely to survive an illness and leave more offspring to future generations than others who showed more obvious signs of weakness. The unfortunate side effect of this evolutionary marvel is that it takes a very attentive “bunny parent” to notice when Bunny is feeling poorly. A symptom as seemingly insignificant as hiding in an unusual place, sitting in a hunched position or refusing a favorite treat can signal that something is seriously wrong. Once you notice these subtle signs, there are several simple diagnostic measures you can take to determine whether an emergency trip to your rabbit-experienced veterinarian is warranted:

1. Offer a Favorite Treat

If Bunny refuses it, try another. If he absolutely won't eat, it's time to move to step two.

2. Take the Rabbit's Temperature

If you do not know how to take your rabbit's rectal temperature, it's a good idea to have your veterinarian show you how to do so before you have an emergency. Always use a plastic thermometer, to eliminate the danger of the thermometer breaking off inside if the bunny gives a strong kick or wriggle. Here is a link to an instructive temperature-taking video by an HRS licensed educator:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YZd10Hk0maA>

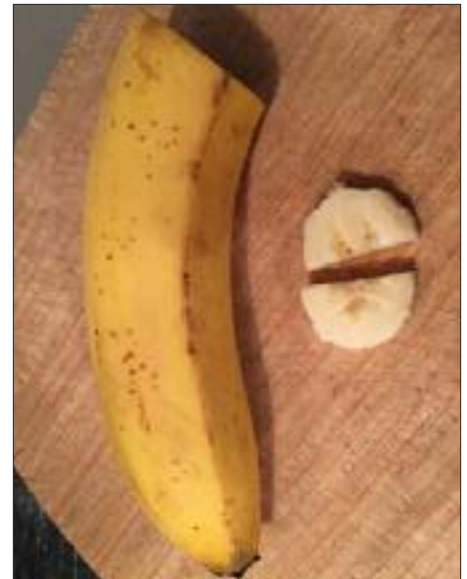
Instructions: How to Take Your Bunny's Temperature

Normal rabbit body temperature ranges between 101°F - 103°F (38.3°C - 39.4°C).

We've found that a good way to take the temperature is to gently cradle the bunny on his back – either in your lap or on a secure countertop with soft padding. The bunny's head and shoulders should be held gently against your abdomen, and the back allowed to curl into a “C” position, with the footpads facing the ceiling. Be sure the hindquarters and back legs are securely supported so that the bunny doesn't kick suddenly and injure himself. Once bunny is in position and calm, very gently and carefully insert a well-lubricated plastic thermometer no deeper than about 1 inch. If you aren't sure which of the two openings to use, note that the anus is the one that “winks back at you” when you touch it lightly with the thermometer tip, and that it is behind the urogenital opening (i.e., closer to the base of the tail).

The path of the rectum is almost parallel with the lower spine, and when bunny is cradled in a “C” position as described, the thermometer will naturally travel almost straight down, perpendicular to your lap.

Be sure to securely support the bunny's back end, and do not allow him to kick or struggle. If he does, carefully release him to a sternal (on his belly) position, supporting his back and hindquarters at all times. Talk reassuringly to him, and stroke him gently, and don't try again until he has calmed down. Depending on the rabbit's personality, you might have to try several times before you're successful, and if you are having trouble doing this alone, get a second person to “spot” for you. Never force anything. If you feel resistance, pull back, change position slightly, and try again. Be very gentle, as the rabbit colon and rectum are very delicate and easily damaged.



A small piece of banana is a good treat.



Use a well-lubricated plastic thermometer.

– What to do in case of fever:

A slightly elevated temperature (around 104°F/39.9°C) can be caused by emotional stress (such as a trip to the vet's office or the discomfort of a health problem), heat stress or the early stages of an infection. A very high temperature (105°F/40.5°C or higher) should be considered an emergency. Lifesaving cooling measures should be begun even before you leave for the veterinarian's office. If the body temperature remains too high for too long, irreversible brain

(Continued on page 23)

Detecting Illness

(Continued from page 22)

damage can occur, even if the bunny survives the ordeal. A good way to cool the bunny is to use cold packs or even bags of frozen vegetables, placing them under his belly and around his sides. You can rub his ears with an ice cube, but be sure not to cause frostbite by holding the cube there too long, or over-cooling. Rubbing alcohol swabbed on the ears will also help cool the bunny. It will usually take five to ten minutes of ice packs to bring a severe fever to lower levels, and you should continue to monitor bunny's temperature throughout the procedure, as long as it does not seem to be stressing him unduly.

– What to do in case of hypothermia:

A temperature lower than normal may be even more dangerous than a slight fever. Abnormally low body temperature (below 100°F/38.1°C) can signify shock or the very late stages of systemic infection, and should be considered an emergency.

It is of utmost importance to get the bunny's temperature up to normal levels, as most other medical treatments will not be as effective if the rabbit is hypothermic. To raise the body temperature, fill plastic bottles or Ziploc bags with hot water, and wrap them in towels to protect the bunny from being burned. Place the hot water bottles under and around the bunny, and monitor temperature until it is at least 100°F/38.1°C. At that point, loosely wrap the bunny in towels warm from the dryer, and get him to the vet right away.

If the hypothermia is due to the late stages of a systemic infection, it means that bacteria in the bloodstream have used up so much of the rabbit's glucose (blood sugar) that he cannot maintain a normal body temperature on his own. This must be treated immediately and aggressively, sometimes with intravenous antibiotics



An inexpensive stethoscope is a good investment.

and dextrose solution, which must be administered by your veterinarian.

If the bunny is refusing treats, but body temperature is normal, it's time to move to step three.

3. Listen for Normal Intestinal Sounds

It's worthwhile for every bunny parent to invest in an inexpensive stethoscope. Place the tympanum low on the abdomen, well below the ribs, and listen for soft, intermittent gurgling sounds. If the tummy is silent, you may be facing Gastrointestinal Stasis (ileus).

If the tummy is making very loud gurgles, your bunny might have a bad case of gas, sometimes associated with ileus. Gas pain alone can cause enough stress to send a rabbit into ileus, and it is important to get the gas and its associated pain under control immediately. The simplest home emergency procedures to

control gas pain (while waiting for your vet to call you back) are the following:

- Administer 1-3 cc of pediatric simethicone drops (available at most pharmacies).
- Begin very gentle abdominal massage. Place the bunny on a secure countertop and start very gradually, rubbing the sides of the belly, and gradually working your way deeper by actually holding the belly in one hand and gently kneading it in both forward and backward directions. If bunny shows any sign of pain, back off and massage more gently. It also helps to periodically raise the bunny up on his hindquarters as you massage, so gas bubbles can move about more freely. You can also do the reverse, carefully lifting his hindquarters into the air while gently massaging, being careful to not let him kick, jump, or hurt himself.

If your bunny is truly suffering from ileus, then your vet will probably want to prescribe additional medication, including:

- Analgesia: Banamine (flunixin meglumine) or meloxicam are excellent and safe for rabbits
- Intestinal motility drugs: Reglan (metoclopramide) and/or cisapride

Remember: If you are in doubt about your bunny's condition, don't hesitate to call your veterinarian immediately. Don't wait for an emergency to find a good rabbit-experienced vet who will be available at odd hours. For a referral to rabbit-savvy veterinarians in your area please visit the House Rabbit Society's site for veterinary recommendations.

*Copyright – Dana Krempels, Ph.D.
Senior Lecturer;
Director of Undergraduate Studies
Department of Biology,
University of Miami*

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 Nancy Schreiber at nshreibmd@gmail.com or www.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.



Luigi and Grace

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 2021

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
Long Island Bird & Exotics
Veterinary Clinic
333 Great Neck Road
Great Neck, NY 11021
(516) 482-1101

Licensed HRS Educators

NYC/Westchester:

M.C. Basile
Chapter Manager,
NYC House Rabbit Society

Mary Cotter
Founder, Rabbit Rescue & Rehab,
Adviser to Thump,
mcotter64@gmail.com,
(914) 643-0515

Jeanine Callace
Rofoyo.pippin@verizon.net

Alex McIe
alexlmcie@gmail.com

Marcie Frishberg

Gabrielle LaManna
New Fairfield, CT,
gabbysbunnies@yahoo.com,
(203) 746-7548

Cindy Stutts
bygolyoly@yahoo.com,
(646) 319-4766

Monica Shepherd, DVM

Long Island:

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Group, nschreibmd@gmail.com,
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Jennifer Saver, DVM