

RESPONSIBLE BUNNY OWNERSHIP

Bunnies are a prey animal and one of nature's precious creatures. Ownership involves a responsibility to care for them for their lifetime, to shelter them from harm, feed and care for them and ensure that they have a bunny's life full of companionship, safety and happiness.

Considerations for Responsible Bunny Owners

- Bunnies are prey animals yet are not a predator to anything – because of their prey nature; they should be kept as indoor pets.
- Caring for a bunny involves caring for it for the term of its life, which may be a 12-year commitment.
- Bunnies are not a child's pet, they have fragile bones, sharp claws and frighten easily and need an adult to be responsible for their care.
- Bunnies should never be hit, intentionally frightened, kicked or picked up by the ears and they need exercise outside their hutch each day.
- Children under 8 yrs must always be supervised around a bunny, for both the child's and the bunny's wellbeing.
- A dog or other animal that can harm the bunny must be kept separated at all times and secured away from the bunny area.
- Bunny owners that live in an area with wild rabbits that have been exposed to the Myxomatosis Virus, that is carried by mosquito's are at high risk of exposing the bunny to this terrible virus, and a very painful death.
- Longhaired breeds, such as angora rabbits require extra care and daily brushing and should be kept indoors due to heat and rain.
- Bunny owners should be willing to take a bunny to a specialist bunny vet when it is injured, in pain or sick, as well as for regular vaccinations, nail trims and checkups.
- Bunny owners should be able to afford to pay for vet visits.
- Bunny owners must provide unlimited fresh hay and water, and fresh salad greens, vegetables and fruit twice a day. Never feed a bunny scraps or food that you would not eat yourself. If your bunny does not eat they can die quickly.
- Bunnies should live inside the house or in a secure, large, mosquito proofed wooden hutch that is sheltered from the heat and cold.
- Bunnies must have room to run, jump, and exercise daily, outside their hutch.
- Bunnies do not sweat and retain the heat; therefore, they must be brought inside the house on hot days when the temperature is above 25 degrees or their area heats up.
- Bunnies are sociable animals and are happier with a companion bunny.
- Bunnies should be desexed, for theirs and your sake.
- Bunnies should not be bred as this is contributing to the problem of the number of young bunnies euthanized each year - 75 bunnies a month at one shelter alone.
- If you can no longer care for a bunny, the bunny must be taken to an animal shelter. Always ask the question "Will the rabbit be euthanised if not rehomed?" It is illegal to release them into the wild. As they will not survive predators, weather and myxomatosis carried by mosquitoes.