

LONG • ISLAND

PET

Gazette

CIRCULATION 7,500

GREGORY GRAMBO
and
RYAN MALLOY

THE FURRY FERRET

November 1993
The PET GAZETTE

pages 19,21



Ryan, the author, and his pet ferret

THE FURRY FERRET

*By Greg Grambo, Science Educator &
Ryan Malloy, Student*

Here's a fun pet who acts like a dog or a cat. It plays like a kitten or a pup and scampers around playfully. It does not claw furniture, bark all night, or need to be walked. The pet we are referring to is the ferret, an animal in the weasel family.

Ferrets are small, furry animals that weigh from 1 to 5 lbs when fully grown. The life span of a ferret is from six to twelve years. Males grow to 21-24 inches in length. Females are a little smaller growing to lengths of 16-18 inches. Like dogs and cats, ferrets need distemper and rabies vaccines.

Ferrets have short hair and shed their coat twice a year (winter and spring). Brushing is important to keep the ferret well-groomed and to keep your home free of unwanted pet hair.

Ferrets are affectionate animals that love attention. Although they are similar to weasels and have sharp teeth, they seldom bite. For a while a new ferret may nip at you. To terminate this behavior just tap it on the nose and say "NO!" Reward good behavior with cuddling, petting or giving a treat. The important objective

Continued on page 21

FERRETS



Continued from page 19

your training. In this way the ferret will learn good behavior and avoid bad behavior, rapidly. Playing with and handling the animal will help them become better pets. Ferrets love noisy squeeze toys and things that are dragged across the floor. They will jump after and roll up in anything your drag along the ground.

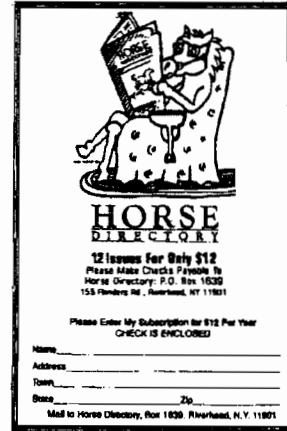
Baby ferrets can be brought home in a large box with air holes punched in the top, or

a cage. However, like dogs and cats, they require exercise and socialization.

Ferrets are instinctive hunters, hence they are curious animals that love to explore. But just like any animal, ferrets can get into trouble if left unattended for too long. Be careful to look inside places like the reclining chair, under the rocker, and inside the garbage can if your pet is missing. It is also important to "ferret-proof" your house in

the same way as you would "Baby-proof" a house. Hide all poisons and caustic substances in a cabinet that the ferret can not gain access to. Fill in all holes around pipes with window screening so the ferret cannot crawl under the floorboards where it could possibly get tangled in wires. Attaching a bell to your ferret's collar will make it easier to locate your pet. You should also have an identification tag on your pet. Keep a photo of your ferret handy in case it escapes outside to show neighbors.

Although ferrets love fruit, their diets also require protein.



Pet shops have a wide variety of specially prepared ferret food. Ask your vet, breeder or pet shop to get more detailed information on your ferrets health.

Ferrets should be purchased from a reputable breeder or pet shop to guarantee health. 🐾