

Ferret Connection



Official Newsletter of the Oregon Ferret Shelter

Winter 2008-2009

Wintertime Means Ferrets and SNOW!



Frank totally getting into this snow thing

By Jeni Clark

Oregon doesn't get a lot of snow. But it does get some. I am always surprised and fascinated by it since I come from Huntington Beach, California, where snow has been banned by city ordinance since way before I was born.

Since Oregon doesn't see a lot of snow, my ferrets also don't get to see a lot of snow. But all that changed on December 15th.

I love to give my ferrets new experiences. And I wondered what the ferrets would make of the whole "cold white stuff" thing. So my husband, James, and I opened the back door and put little Darkpaw outside for just a minute.

Note: Darkpaw was my first ferret, so she gets to be the star in many of my ad-

ventures. Maybe it IS favoritism. I can neither confirm nor deny it.

Well, Darkpaw sat at the door's edge for a second, whiskers frantically flying as she did a sniff to end all sniffs. Then she made a break for it, running through the snow for a second, and we made a wild dash after her. She stopped when the snow got up to her belly. Then she decided she didn't like it. REALLLLL-LY didn't like it! James picked her up and she was shivering like crazy. Awww. Poor little girl.

Well, we have eight ferrets now, and we wanted to see if they would all hate it too. (Maybe we are a bit sadistic.) But we needed something more convenient than taking them outside one by one.

James, ever the problem-solving engineer, brought in a baking sheet covered

in snow and put it in the middle of the floor on a towel. Then we let them explore.

There were only two ferrets who liked it, Snoball and Frank. Frank, however, didn't just like it, he LOVED it! He really went to town! The cold didn't seem to bother him as he did several fabulous whole-body snorgles through the mini-drift.

Frank adored his snow experience so much that he became quite possessive of the snow at some points, warning others off so he could fully spread out in the baking pan of winter delight.

Continued on page 2

IN THIS ISSUE

Ferrets + Snow
Front Page

A Word From
the Director
Page 2

The Zeppo Files
Page 3

Queen Elizabeth
and her Ferret
Page 4

Volunteering
Page 5

Update on the
Giving Tree
Page 6

The Grinch
Page 7

FOFS Fundraiser
Page 8-9

Adrenal Disease
Page 10-11

Weasels Dancing
in the Park
Page 12

A Word from the Director

By Chris Mathis

This last year has been a real shocker in many ways! First off, we saw almost one ferret per day come through our doors! Yes, you can believe what you are reading!!! The recession has left many homeless, and the ferret population is also losing their homes. Everyone is eating hotdogs instead of steak.

Times have been very tough at the ferret shelter. For the first time in 25 years, I have had to humble myself by requesting food donations from companies and the general public. Dave was one of the lucky ones to keep his job at the Oregon Air Guard, but with prices going up on food, utilities, gas, and taxes, it has been a tough year. Our supporters at the monthly ferret meetings have really dug down deep in their pockets to help the shelter buy food! Many many thanks everyone!

Of course, with more incoming ferrets come more surgeries. We had 10 adrenal surgeries to do before Christmas. Our vet bill is very high (\$6,500) at this time. Dr Meg Frey has been an absolute angel to not take our oldest son as ransom until this bill is paid. Our Santa Paws experience this year was not very good due to our local weather. We got snowed out of two weeks of pictures. That really hurt! Dr. Frey has been generous to enough to donate two adrenal surgeries a month, and this has helped. Still waiting for surgery are: Jasper, Fingers, Ashley, Ace, Duke, Sniffles, Sam, and Critter. If you would like to help out any of these ferrets, you can donate to our PayPal account on our website.

On a happy note, the Weasels Dancing in the Park fundraiser is set for August 1st at Hammerle Park in West Linn, OR. We have our music lined up and a tentative okay from our auctioneer. If you are interested in helping out at this event, please let us know. Donations for this event are welcome.

The following email was received last week! We are very excited to share it with you! This donation will allow the ferrets, our surgery suite, and staff to keep operating in all conditions!

We are pleased to announce that your organization has been awarded a 3000 watt generator and transfer kit through the Power to the Paws program, courtesy of the Petfinder.com Foundation and our friends at Merial. You will be contacted within the few months by a nearby Honda dealership who will arrange for you to receive your generator. It may take awhile as there are stock shortages but rest assured you will hear from them.

We are excited to be able to provide this assistance to you as you continue in your tireless efforts to save adoptable pets. We hope this will make things a little easier in the toughest of times. We'll be passing this great news on to your local press as well, so don't be surprised if you get a call — be prepared! Keep up the great work.

— Lynn Katz, Specialist, Shelter Outreach, Petfinder.com

Continued from front page

Here are some pictures of the ferrets' snow experience. The one on the left shows Snoball exploring the baking pan along with Frank. The one on the right is where Frank discovers that he is not the only one there, and he tries to muscle Snoball out of the snow. "MY SNOW!" he seems to say.

There was much merriment and mirth until, inevitably, the snow melted, at which point they all joined in for a long cold drink.

So, as far as snow goes, I would say that "Two out of eight ferrets interviewed would recommend snow to their ferret friends, as long as they didn't get in the way." Well worth the effort!



Snoball and Frank having a blast!



Frank setting some boundaries

Guest Columnist: The Zeppo Files

Drawing by Nori Nettleton



Zeppo has returned to Earth because someone needs an ass-whuppin'

Channelled by Tracy Johnston

Dear friends, I must say that after much contemplation and mental agitation, I have found it in my best interest to return in some form to Earth.

Now, please do not get me wrong. I

when you are lounging on a cloud in the great beyond with unlimited supplies of FerreTone and chicken treats, but I felt that I had to do my duty and not deprive the public of my greatness!

So, because I had taken the bridge, I had to find a way back across. At least

You people know who you are, and we know what you do. Testing vile substances on unsuspecting ferrets, poking and prodding and injecting like we were an alien species instead of creatures of this earth! How would you like it if I put you in a cage and stuck something in or up you? I figured as much!

have nothing much against Earth. After all, I spent my formative years there in the care of my mistress, who, I might add, did a fine job for a human. But, in the words of our new president, "The time has come to take action."

Now that can prove to be a bit difficult

in a temporary fashion when it suits me! That is where my mistress comes in. She was always such a willing slave that she would do anything, and I do mean anything for me... so... I have returned!

So be what you wish dear reader... sad, glad or mad... it matters not a hoot

to me. I will write and you will read.

Since I have gotten your attention, at least I hope I have, let me tell you something that has come to my attention some years back that distresses me greatly.

We have in our midst in Portland a most evil stench — and that is the stench of our brethren, yes, us... the domestic ferret, being used as laboratory test animals on the hill. Now naming names may not be the best thing to do in my first article since my return, so I will refrain THIS TIME!

You people know who you are, and we know what you do. Testing vile substances on unsuspecting ferrets, poking and prodding and injecting like we were an alien species instead of creatures of this earth! How would you like it if I put you in a cage and stuck something in or up you? I figured as much!

The time has come to end it all and stop unnecessary testing on ferrets! What the heck, let's start a new way of thinking along with a new president and stop testing on animals all together! How about it? I mean, after all, maybe we could put the word "humane" back in human, see how that works for once.

Humans, they think they know it all but I'm here to tell you that you don't — and ZEPPO, well Zeppo, he knows a lot!

Until next time dear readers...keep your tail up and your nose to the ground....

— Zeppo

DO YOU HAVE AN IDEA FOR AN ARTICLE?

Please send it to the Editor,
Jeni Clark, at
oregonferretshelter@comcast.net

Send us anything — pictures,
drawings, cartoons, articles,
beer, whatever!

Queen Elizabeth I and Her Ferret Friend

Queen Elizabeth the First ruled from November 17, 1558 until her death on March 24, 1603. She was a patron of the arts, a master of diplomacy, a brilliant strategist, and the inspiration for thousands of artists and explorers. Her reign was known as England's "Golden Age". Queen Elizabeth was indisputably one of the most skilled and intelligent leaders of her time.

Is it any wonder, then, that she loved ferrets?

Her love for the little fuzzies is evident in her portrait "The Ermine Portrait of Queen Elizabeth the First", which currently hangs in the Courtauld Institute of Art. In it, she poses with her pet ferret, who sports a jeweled collar (as well as some unferretlike ermine spots — see inset).

Ferrets were something of a status symbol of Elizabethan times. In 1390, a sumptuary law was passed that allowed only the very wealthy in Britain to be able to own a ferret; ownership was restricted to those earning at least 40 shillings a year, which was quite a sum in those days.

It is known that Queen Elizabeth bred white and albino ferrets, which she then gave as gifts to her friends and courtiers. White ferrets were favored during the Middle ages, and to receive one as a gift, especially from the Queen herself, was a great honor.

In the portrait, the ferret is painted in a very affectionate pose. As anyone who has owned a ferret knows, getting one to sit still long enough for a photo, let alone a portrait, is quite a task. However, if you are strongly bonded, your



"The Ermine Portrait" of Elizabeth I, circa 1585, by Nicholas Hilliard

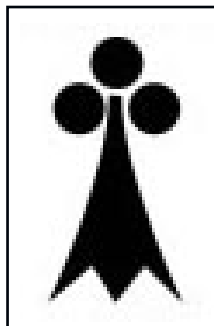
ferret will often climb on you, thinking of you as just another place to explore. And sometimes, if you are very lucky, they will even fall asleep in the crook of your arm or in your lap. One can imag-

ine the artist watching in amusement as Queen Elizabeth tried to maintain her royal bearing with a ferret up her lacy velvet sleeve.

Nicholas Hilliard, the portrait artist, was the author of an important treatise on painting called "The Art of Limning". In it, he says that the "wise drawer" should "watch" and "catch these lovely graces, witty smilings, and these stolen glances which suddenly like lightning pass and another countenance taketh place". Certainly, the ferret's antics must have given him many opportunities to catch the Queen's true and lovely countenance. For this memorable glance into the Queen's life, we are forever in his — and Elizabeth's ferret's — debt.

Why Did the Artist Add Heraldic Ermine Spots?

According to several sources, the artist supposedly took poetic license in adding the heraldic ermine spots to the ferret's coat. Elizabeth was known as "The Virgin Queen", and an ermine was considered a symbol of purity in those times. According to legend, the ermine would rather die than soil its pure white coat. The artist meant his additions to flatter both the queen and the ferret.



Volunteers Needed: How You Can Get Involved

We invite you to join our unique team as an Oregon Ferret Shelter Volunteer! Without the talents of many compassionate and generous people, just like you, donating time to our shelter, we would not be able to keep our doors open year-round.

Our volunteers are directly responsible for our daily success and operation. Due to this continued support, hundreds of ferrets have been adopted. Ultimately, each volunteer, with their every contribution, helps our ferrets find their new "Forever Homes".

Here are some of the things we need volunteers for:

- *Shelter Cleaning Day* — consists of cleaning each cage, feeding, checking water bottles, and letting the ferrets out to play.
- *Clipping Toenails* — handling each ferret and trimming toenails (after proper training).
- *Enrichment of Ferrets* — changing out toys and putting ferrets out to play.
- *Ferret Adoption Outreach* — visiting different stores, such as PetSmart, with ferrets from the shelter that are up for adoption, and educating the public; done on a monthly basis.



Shelter ferrets, like Piper, need your help to keep them healthy and happy until they find a forever home

- *Sewing* — making bedding and toys for the shelter ferrets.
- *Petfinder.com* — updating the internet adoption site for our ferrets.
- *Office Duties* — filing, making copies, organization of products, and so on.
- *Shelter Upkeep* — sweeping, mopping, organization of supplies, and so on.
- *Veterinary Transport* — transporting ferrets to and from the vet's office.
- *Newsletter/Website* — helping with the production of our newsletter and/or up-

dating our website.

Our goal is to provide the best care for the ferrets in our shelter. We work with all skill levels and with all kinds of situations: kids (under 14 must be accompanied by an adult), schools, community service, and much more. If you don't see something you might like to do, then talk with us and we will find just the right way for you to help.

If you would like to help out, please give us a call at (503) 557-8369.

Help! Help! We are BUSTING at the seams!!



As of this writing, we have approximately 115 ferrets. And more are coming in each day.

With so many to take care of, extra volunteers are needed. If you have some spare time after work during the week, or even an hour or so on the weekends, we could use your help. You would be amazed at what can be accomplished in an hour.

Some areas in need of help are:

- Wednesday cage cleaning
- Getting ferrets out to play
- Nail trimming
- Water bottle filling
- Cleaning play cages
- And much much more.

Please give us a call at (503) 557-8369 to volunteer.

Update on the Giving Tree Ferrets of the OFS



After her adrenal surgery, and boosted by the kindness of her sponsor, little Hillarie is now ready to be adopted into a “forever” home of her own.

This year was an especially lucky one for the Oregon Ferret Shelter. We submitted 15 kids to the Giving Tree, and the resulting outpouring of gifts and love surprised even long-time shelter owner Chris Mathis.

Our furkids got some really fantastic stuff this year. We received many Hidey Hole cubes from www.littlefeetferret-bedding.com. They are so perfect for



Hillarie, a spirited 4-year-old sable sprite, was quite proud of her Christmas stocking!

our shelter cages! We were very grateful to get them — and so were the ferrets! They love to sleep three or four to a cube if they can, even moving from other levels to pile up inside like sardines.

We also received many crocheted eggs (you can order them from vieirarob@msn.com). These were hastily stashed by many appreciative ferrets.

Some people sent us huge boxes of toys. Some sent in bottles and bottles of FerreTone, while others sent in batches of much-needed kibble. We were amazed at the level of generosity from our Giving Tree sponsors.

There was one sponsor who did our furkids a special kindness. She made stockings for them with their names put on each, then filled them with goodies. It was fun to see these huge stockings hung from the cages with care!

But with all of the season’s joy comes some sadness. Spanky and Cookie both passed over the Rainbow Bridge. Cookie’s death was a complete surprise — she seemed fine one day, then crashed the next. We miss her greatly. Spanky passed over on Christmas Day, but not before he got to see all the wonderful gifts that his good-hearted sponsor sent to him. We are grateful to their sponsors for helping make their last days joyous ones.

Here is an update on the rest of our babies.

- Aphrodite — This tiny gentle beauty got adopted with her friend Zeus! A Christmas miracle!
- Powell — This blind little boy got adopted! Wonderful!
- Fizzgig — This boy got his adrenal surgery, recovered nicely, and is adoptable.
- Hillarie — This little girl got her adrenal surgery and is ready to be adopted.
- Sniffles — This little boy is still waiting for his adrenal surgery.
- Coby — this little boy is waiting for Sniffles’ adrenal surgery so they can be rehomed together.
- Shelly — This tiny white sprite with a black spot on her nose is in a foster home, being adored (as she should be!).

- Tigger — She is still waiting for a permanent foster home along with Casper and Sushi.

- Casper — He is still waiting for a foster home with Tigger and Sushi.

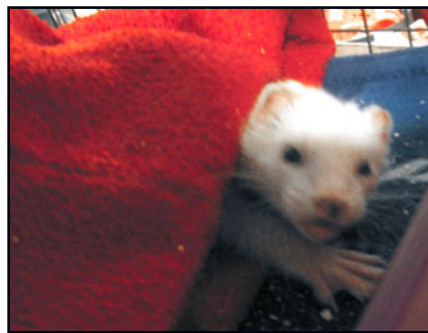
- Sushi — She is still waiting for a foster home with Casper and Tigger.

- Mario — This little guy is still waiting for a permanent foster home.

We thank everyone for their participation in the Giving Tree. Your kindness is greatly appreciated.



Mario was quite pleased by the fuzzy stocking that arrived at his cage doorstep. He says that he was sure he heard reindeer hooves on the roof.



Even though Mario still waits for a foster home of his own, he is cheered by the fact that there are people out there who care.

The GRINCH and the Giving Tree

It Takes More Than a Grinch to Stop the Spirit of Christmas

Sometimes the Winter Holidays can inspire the best in humankind, as people do wonderful deeds to help the poor and unfortunate in their midst.

And sometimes the Winter Holidays bring out the worst.

The wonderful deed: Each year at Christmas, Kris S. Mewton puts together a "Giving Tree" for shelter ferrets around the country. The Giving Tree is a way for people to play Secret Santa to a needy furkid. Shelters send in pictures and stories of needy ferrets. Kris places this information on a web page (the template resembles a tree). People can then click on a picture to find out why that ferret is at the shelter, details about their life there, and what he or she would most like for Christmas.

The horrible deed: This year, someone decided that they would ruin the fun by taking a shelter's ferrets off the Tree and sending them a "care" package that had no care in it at all! Instead, they sent a box filled with bubble wrap and a computer-generated nasty note!

The shelter that was "Grinched" was Fuzzy Follies Ferret Rescue & Shelter, located in Winter Haven, Florida. The shelter is run by Linda Lake, who is a generous and kind shelter owner and is well-respected in the ferret community. Even though her ferrets had already been chosen by a woman in Kansas (who sent a nice package!), someone used the information on the Tree to send her this cruel joke.

So far, nobody has been able to determine who sent the Grinchogram. The box was shipped from Grand Lansing, MI.

The ones who ultimately suffered most were the shelter ferrets: Rogue, Old Man, Peanut, Miss Tang, Dillion, Dawnee, Chewy, Bella, and Toby.

Upon hearing of this most dastardly deed, the ferret community pulled together to combat this heartless monster. A post was made to web-based ferret groups and to the FML, offering a reward of \$100 and a quilt to the person who could unmask the Grinch.



Picture by Kristine Barnes

According to the post, "This reward will go to the first person who can prove the name of the person (s) who sent the *mystery* card and empty box (with typewritten note) from Grand Rapids MI, addressed to Linda Lake — aka Fuzzy Follies Ferret Rescue & Shelter, December 2008. The Reward money (\$100 to date + Ferret Face quilt by Diane Iverson) is held in trust by kris — kriskius@neb.rr.com. A money order (along with the quilt) will be sent to the Name and Address within 3 days of verification."

During the time of the search, which ultimately proved fruitless, the ferret community rushed to make sure that

Linda Lake and her fuzzies had a great Christmas anyway. Many packages and donations were sent to the shelter, even more than would have been given had nothing happened! And the reward was also donated to Linda!

According to Linda, "My sweet little furbabies had a Christmas that they will remember for a long time. I was truly overwhelmed... The 'Grinch' didn't ruin my or the babies' Christmas. I truly feel it backfired on he or she."

So, even though the Grinch tried to steal Christmas from this hero of the ferret community, they ended up creating even MORE heroes of the ferret community! Us = 1, Grinch = ZERO!

Friends of Ferret Shelters Fundraiser Raffle

The folks down at the Friends of Ferret Shelters (FOFS), upon hearing of our record 170 ferrets up for adoption, held a fundraiser for us this January and February.

This group of exceptionally generous people is dedicated to helping ferret shelters in need of funding. Each month, they choose a shelter in need, operate a raffle using donated items, then pass on the proceeds.

The FOFS is operated by Susann Thiel and Lisa Oestereich. According to their website: "Some of the items in our raffles were generously donated by ferret shelters, talented artists and just-plain-ferret lovers all over the United States. Every cent of the proceeds from our raffles are donated to a hard-working ferret shelter in need of support. Our gift baskets are designed with a special theme — holiday, seasonal, or just-for-fun."

The raffle did very well, taking in \$1,278 for the Oregon Ferret Shelter. Shelter owners Chris and Dave Mathis were thrilled with the outpouring of generosity from the ferret community.

Highlighted here are some of the items that were in the raffle.



Rhinos, Dinos, and Hippos Bedding and Food Set: includes a bag of Evo, some high-quality fleece bedding, and a heart-shaped box full of treats.



Hearts Full of Love Bedding Set: contains a throw, two split hammocks, and two sleep sacks.



Creative Memories Sweetheart Scrapbooking Kit: has everything you need to complete a memory album plus a Littlest Pet Shop Ferret.



Freshwater Pearl Jewelry and Amethyst Earrings: "Gem of a White Pearl" necklace and earring set, plus a set of gold and amethyst earrings



A beautiful homemade rag quilt sewn by Nancy Busso. The pattern is "Trip Around the World".



Valentine Love Baskets for Mom and Furkid: Two baskets, one with Cru de Provence bath items and one with ferret goodies!



Not Your Mom's Compact Mirror Set



Clara Rodriguez Ferret Print



Precious Pooh Handmade Ferret Den: Fully lined, large ferret den that measures 15" x 10" x 8"



Ultra-adorable Ferret Scarf: Made by a volunteer for The Ferret Inn, it was one of the most popular items at the December AFA show in York, PA.



Ferret Tire Cover



Mermaid Beaded Jewelry Set: Handmade set with three mermaids frolicking amid beads colored in ocean hues.



Six-piece Ferret "Art By Joy" Set: Set of drawings by Joy Argento includes two ferret notecards, an 8" x 10" print set in a frame, a 5" x 7" version of the print (not shown), a 5" x 7" print of a hedgehog, and a rescue card.



Playpen with Carry Bag and Jeanne Carley Mousepad

A Personal Message From the Shelter Owners

The Oregon Ferret Shelter is currently housing 170 shelter ferrets waiting for homes. With the economy being scary for all, we are seeing approximately one ferret a day knocking at our door needing a new home! I often wonder how many people are leaving their own skin kids at hospital doors! Many need surgery, which isn't an easy feat to accomplish right now. We have 10 furkids waiting for adrenal surgery. We have a wonderful, understanding vet, but a \$5,700 vet bill still has to be paid.

We took in close to 230 ferrets last year alone and found new homes for 130. Of course, this doesn't account for the older ferrets left behind, those that are too sick to place in foster homes, or the permanent residents of the shelter.

Our current expenses are food (160

pounds per week) and litter (320 pounds per week). Our income is from adoption fees, donations, and sponsorships. Our faithful volunteers are the lifeline and the cornerstone of the shelter.

One story I would love to share with you is the story of a call received back in August from a young girl who was visiting a park in North Portland. She called us at 8:00 p.m. to say that she'd found a grocery sack with two ferrets in it. She explained she was unable to care for them but didn't want to leave them there without food or water. Dave and I jumped in the car and drove to North Portland to pick up the ferrets. They were malnourished and in very bad condition.

Since we microchipped all our ferrets, we scanned them and were shocked to find one of them had come from our

shelter! I tried calling the owner, but apparently they had been passed on to someone else who didn't care.

The one little girl was nearly 5 years old, and her friend appeared to be about two. We rehabilitated them back to good health and they were blessed with a new Christmas family.

We are often asked why we don't burn out or close our doors like so many others have done. I guess the answer must be that we cannot quit caring what happens to our little ferret friends. There are far too many people who need to know the joys of owning a ferret and the love they can teach us. Our job isn't done until we hang up our retirement shield.

— Chris and Dave Mathis
Oregon Ferret Shelter

An Introduction to Adrenal Disease

If you have a ferret, chances are good that you'll eventually become acquainted with Adrenal Disease, whether you want to or not. It has become very common in American ferrets, although according to several sources, it is not as common in other parts of the world.

Adrenal Disease, sometimes called Adrenal Associated Endocrinopathy, or AAE, can be caused by several things, all of them involving the adrenal gland. Sometimes tumors arise on the adrenal gland, causing it to hyperstimulate and pump excess hormones into the ferret's bloodstream, wreaking havoc on his or her system. Sometimes the ferret's body decides to build extra adrenal cells and increases the size of the adrenal gland, with the same result. (This is called adrenocortical hyperplasia).

When these hormones start rushing through your ferret's system, they can have a drastic effect on his or her health. Males, especially, can suffer greatly if not diagnosed and treated promptly.



Scout has lost most of his fur due to Adrenal Disease. Fortunately, he just had his surgery, so it may soon grow back.



This shows the typical pattern of hair loss in a ferret with Adrenal Disease. Notice the area around the base of the tail with thinning fur.

Here is some very basic information on this complex disease.

At what age does Adrenal Disease usually hit?

This condition typically strikes middle-aged ferrets. In my experience, if you have a Marshall Farms ferret, symptoms usually arise around the age of 4. A privately bred ferret may not get the disease until 5 or 6 years of age, or they may not get it at all. Some veterinarians say that Marshall Farms' practice of early neutering for their ferrets may have an effect on hormonal processes and may be responsible for the earlier onset of Adrenal Disease among their animals.

What are the symptoms of Adrenal Disease?

This condition has some fairly obvious symptoms.

- Loss of hair: The loss of hair is by far the most noticeable. The first hair is typically lost by the rump and tail, often leaving what is nicknamed a "rat tail"

by ferret lovers. After this, the hair loss continues up the torso, on the back of the ferret, until sometimes only the head fur is left.

- Itching: The ferret may start to scratch more often and more furiously.
- Coarseness in fur: The fur may become dry and brittle, losing its softness, and fail to regrow properly.
- Female sexually related symptoms: The vulva can swell markedly in females.
- Male sexually related symptoms: The prostate can become enlarged, which

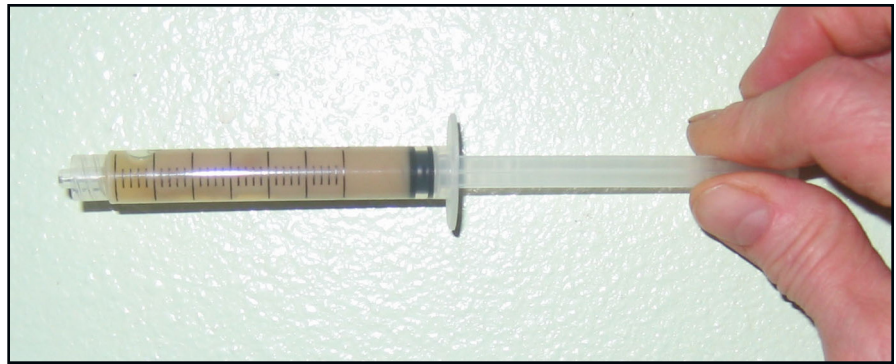


A hairless "Rat Tail"

causes some very serious side effects. The male ferret can become more aggressive, picking fights and trying to mount other ferrets housed around him. He may also try to mount other objects, like shoes. By far the worst side effect of having an enlarged prostate is difficulty urinating (from the blockage). The ferret can die rather quickly from this condition if treatment is not given.

How can I determine if my ferret has Adrenal Disease?

If you suspect that your ferret may have Adrenal Disease, you MUST get them to a veterinarian as soon as possible. A vet may be able to verify the condition simply by palpating the area and feeling for an enlarged gland or a tumor. They will, more than likely, do blood work to rule out other conditions,



This huge amount of pus was extracted from the prostate of a ferret with Adrenal Disease. A male ferret only weighs about 2 or 3 pounds. He was closer to death than anyone suspected.

if the afflicted gland is on the left side. If the gland is on the right side, the surgery becomes much more complicated due to its proximity to the vena cava, a large

handle your ferret's disease.

But make no mistake: The only cure for Adrenal Disease is surgery. You can control the symptoms with medicine, but you cannot cure the problem. And medicines always have side effects.

But make no mistake: The only cure for Adrenal Disease is surgery. You can control the symptoms with medicine, but you cannot cure the problem. And medicines always have side effects.

and they may do an x-ray or ultrasound. However, since the symptoms are so clear and unique, a diagnosis is often made simply by viewing the hair loss, seeing the sexually related symptoms, and hearing about the ferret's behavior.

What are the treatments?

Adrenal Disease is best cured with surgery, where the entire adrenal gland is removed. This is a fairly easy surgery

vein. At that point, either only part of the gland will be removed, or chemical treatments, such as a monthly injection of Lupron, will be discussed.

Sadly, the surgery is typically quite expensive, around \$1,000. Ferrets are difficult to work on — their small size makes anesthesia and other surgical concerns ten times as difficult as they would be on a larger animal. This cost may make you look for other ways to

What happens if I do nothing?

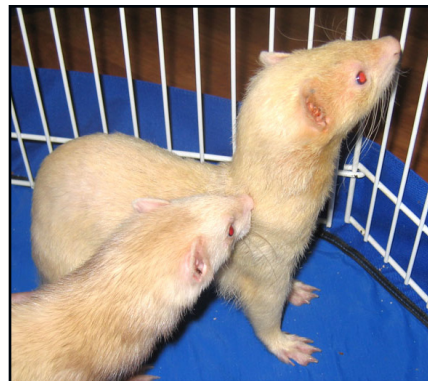
If you do nothing, several things will happen. First, you'll have a bald ferret. You may also have an angry ferret. You will more than likely have a sexually aggressive ferret.

If your ferret is female, she will have a very enlarged vulva, which is inconvenient and sensitive for her.

If your ferret is male, he may have a very enlarged prostate, which can be filled with pus and cause him immense amounts of pain. He will have trouble urinating as his urethra becomes blocked. Eventually, this blockage can kill him.

In any case, your ferret may have malignant tumors causing the Adrenal Disease. If he or she does, then you run the risk of having a pet with inoperable cancer if you wait to get them diagnosed. That is a painful way to die, especially when it could have been prevented with a simple, though costly, surgery.

This is just a short introduction to a very complex subject. There is a lot of information on the web about Adrenal Disease, and every ferret owner should familiarize themselves with it. However, there is no replacement for your veterinarian: She or he is the best place to go to ask questions and get information.



The picture on the left is Jack before Adrenal Disease. The picture on the right is Jack after his diagnosis and surgery. His amount of fur loss was amazing.

Upcoming Events: Weasels Dancing in the Park 2009

Mark the date: Saturday, August 1, 2009. Get ready to get your weasel on because the Weasels Dancing in the Park fundraiser has been scheduled and locked in!

This year, the fundraiser will be held in Hammerle Park in West Linn, OR. The event will be sponsored by Ferret Depot, who graciously agreed to pay our park fees!

Let me repeat that: The event will be sponsored by Ferret Depot! YAY!

We are looking forward to seeing our friends in an outdoor setting — both our human and weasel buddies.

During this event, we plan to have a live auction to benefit the Oregon Ferret Shelter. Donated goods and services, such as products or gift certificates, will be available for purchase to the most determined buyer. Various ferret goods will be up for sale, including some fantastic homemade bedding.

The best part of the day includes games for owners and ferrets. Does your ferret



Here, Cinnamon, winner of the 2008 Digging contest, awaits the starting signal.

have the longest tail? Can they tip over a whole bunch of cans in a short time? Do they know the tube like the back of their paw (or like the top of the Ferret-Tone bottle)? Prove it by participating in these and other weaselrific games!

More news about the Weasels Dancing in the Park event will soon be available on the website. But for now, start training your ferrets and start shopping at Ferret Depot! Summer will be here before you know it!



Oregon Ferret Shelter

P.O. Box 1775
Oregon City, OR 97045

www.oregonferretshelter.org
oregonferretshelter@comcast.net