

ferrets in need



Newsletter

Issue 2, December 2003

Merry Christmas ...

... and welcome to the second edition of our bi-monthly newsletter designed to keep every member in touch with what's happening at Ferrets in Need.

If there's anything you'd like to

see discussed in the next issue, or you have an article or photograph you think might be suitable for the newsletter, please contact the editors at editors@ferretsinnneed.org.uk, or via the contact details

available on the Ferrets in Need Web site at www.ferretsinnneed.org.uk

Until next time, here's wishing you a Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year!

FIN Members Show

The 2003 members show was held at The Mersey Hotel pub in Widnes on Tuesday 28th October. There was an excellent turnout.

As expected, the standard of ferrets was very high indeed. However, it is my sad duty to report that one member, Marie Harris, cheated by entering a medium sized badger named Mashy that had been painted to look like a polecat ferret! Even worse, he came first in the polecat class!

Our judge, Carol Pope, had a tough job choosing the winners, and we would all like to thank her for her hard work. Special thanks should also go to Sam Hennie for spending most of the evening recording and organising the entries.

Best in Show was a coloured hob, Bobby, owned by Joanne and Charlotte Varley. Not only is Bobby an attractive and well-mannered ferret, but he is also blind, making his and his owner's achievement all the greater.

Well done to all the winners!

Bill Beck

See page 2 for the full show results



The winners of the polecat class. From left to right, Mashy owned by Marie Harris, Flora owned by Sam Hennie, Travis owned by Marc Faulkner and Daffy owned by Joanne & Charlotte Varley



The winners of the sandy class. From left to right, Andrew owned by Stephen Ringland, Maggie owned by Yvette and Dave Lamb, Barney Bear owned by Ann & Bill Beck and Ash owned by Sue Hopps

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**Results of the FIN Members Show, 2003,
held at the Mersey Pub Hotel, Widnes, on Tuesday 28th October**

Sandy	1st	Andree	Stephen Ringland
	2nd	Maggie	Yvette & Dave Lamb
	3rd	Barney Bear	Ann & Bill Beck
	4th	Ash	Sue Hopps
Albino	1st	Jem	Joanne & Charlotte Varley
	2nd	Red	Joanne & Charlotte Varley
	3rd	Gwyn	Clive Williamson
	4th	Charlie	Margaret & Tony Winstanley
Polecat	1st	Mashy	Marie Harris
	2nd	Flora	Sam Hennie
	3rd	Travis	Marc Faulkner
	4th	Daffy	Joanne & Charlotte Varley
Coloured	1st	Bobby	Joanne & Charlotte Varley
	2nd	Lily	Carol Owen
	3rd	Rupert	Ann & Bill Beck
	4th	Braindead	Marie Harris
Kit	1st	Jonathan	Stephen Ringland
	2nd	Weasel	Carol Owen
	3rd	Andrew	Stephen Ringland
	4th	Zach	Sam Hennie
Senior / Infirm	1st	Sid	Joanne & Charlotte Varley
	2nd	Bobby	Joanne & Charlotte Varley
	3rd	Boo Boo	Ann & Bill Beck
	4th	Warren	Stephen Ringland



Marie Harris with her 'badger', Mashy

Best in Show - Bobby, owned by Joanne & Charlotte Varley

Caption Competition



Here's a picture of one of the more than one hundred ferrets needing homes at the C & D Ferret Sanctuary in Cadishead, near Manchester

This little kit, called Ruth, was sent to a rescue because she was 'nasty', but the picture lies. She turned out to be a real sweetheart.

We're offering a small prize for the best caption sent in to the editor, at editors@ferretsinnneed.org.uk

Do you have a picture that we could use for a future caption competition?

Ferrets in Need Events Diary

We are in the process of organising the Events Diary for 2004, however FIN socials are always held on the last Tuesday of every month at the Mersey Pub, Widnes (at the foot of the Runcorn Bridge).

Bookings for our outdoor fundraising activities won't start until the first quarter of the new year. Don't worry we will have plenty of outdoor activities, we have been informally asked to go back to most of the events that we attended in 2003!

You'll find full and up-to-date details on all of our events, and directions on how to get there, on our Web site (www.ferretsinnneed.org.uk).

Ruth Corbett

Tuesday 30th December 2003

Tuesday 27th January 2004

Tuesday 26th February 2004

Tuesday 30th March 2004

Saturday 3rd July 2004

Saturday 17th July 2004

Bring & Buy Sale

at the Mersey Pub Hotel Widnes. Bring along your unwanted Xmas presents! 20% of sale price to FIN funds. Starts 7.30pm

Racing Competition

at the Mersey Pub Hotel Widnes. If you've got a speedy ferret, then bring it along. £1 racing entry fee. Start 7.30pm

Social Evening

Mersey Pub Hotel Widnes, 7.30pm

Annual General Meeting

Mersey Pub Hotel Widnes, 7.30pm

Croft Carnival

Racing tubes, FIN stand & walking area. Arrival by 11.00am to be in position by 12 noon. Carnival starts at 12.30pm.

Winwick Carnival

Racing tubes, FIN stand & walking area.

The Mercia Ferret Welfare & Rescue Show on the 19th May 2004 near Coventry is also worth adding to your diary. Contact Rose Morris on 024-76614811 for more details.

FIN does FINGS for Ferrets!

Although ferrets from certain foreign countries will be allowed to travel into Britain from the 3rd July 2004 onwards without being quarantined for 6 months on arrival, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (defra) has still not issued guidelines on the requirements for ferret travel. Consequently, a member of FIN contacted Beverly Hughes MP to see if something could be done to pressurise defra into clarifying the requirements as soon as possible.

Ben Bradshaw, the Minister for Nature Conservation and Fisheries, outlined the envisaged requirements in a reply to Beverly Hughes, the text of which is reproduced opposite. So a little progress has been made,

and people who want to bring their ferrets into the UK now have some idea of what to do to prepare their ferret for immigration into the UK.

"Thank you Beverly for caring about all creatures great and small"

(Editors note: we weren't sure about allowing the use of the word 'immigration' in case this led to a flood of complaints about asylum seeking ferrets! However, we decided that any incoming New Zealand ferrets could be classed as political refugees; since ferrets were banned in New Zealand earlier this year they're now being hunted to death by extremist groups.)



Zen Ferret

From the Minister for Nature Conservation and Fisheries
Ben Bradshaw MP, 11th November 2003

'The EU Regulation on the non-commercial movement of pet animals will apply from 3rd July 2004. From this date we expect that, in terms of rabies requirements, ferrets entering the UK from EU Member States and "low risk" third countries will have to be first microchipped and then vaccinated. It is also envisaged that ferrets from these countries will have to be treated against ticks and tapeworms between 24 and 48 hours before checking in with an approved transport company on an approved route into the UK. These details will need to be recorded in an official passport (if the animal enters from another Member State) or an official certificate (if the animal enters from a "low risk" third country) issued by a government-approved vet. The relevant document will need to accompany the animal on its journey into the UK. Ferrets entering the UK from "high risk" countries will still have to undergo six months quarantine.

'Although the above is how we expect the system to operate, there are still some details which have not yet been agreed. When agreed, they will be published in Commission Regulations. We will not be publishing any literature on the new Scheme until we are sure of all the details.

The Ultimate Ferret Xmas Present

Take one large cardboard box. Cut a 10cm (4") hole in one side, about 20cm (8") from the bottom. Plug a piece of normal 10cm diameter tubing into the hole (not essential, but fun).

Throw in a some dried pasta, some shredded paper and a handful of treats. When you unwrap your own Christmas presents, screw up the paper and throw this into the box as well. Fabulous fun for ferrets!

Carol Owen

Ferret Research

One of our members, Livi Parkins, conducted a ferret housing survey, and she's kindly provided a summary of her results below. Thanks Livi, and we're looking forward to hearing about

the results of the maze learning work you did with FIN ferrets for your final year project. Our ferrets had great fun and really enjoyed the treats and the presents. They're wondering

when you're coming back with even more treats :-)

Ferret Housing Survey

This summer I finished an HND in Welfare of Animals with Business Management. For my final year project I examined alternative housing regimes for pet ferrets. I decided to investigate this, as housing is a very important aspect of ferret keeping.

As a basis for the report, a questionnaire was sent to various ferret newsletters, sent out with Ferrets About orders and some were filled in via personal contact with friends and at FIN meetings.

The questionnaire examined how ferrets are housed, the size of housing and the amount of human contact received. It also asked the owner's opinion of the minimum and optimum size home for a ferret.

An impressive 74 questionnaires were returned; 46%

from the UK and 49% from the USA. From this it was found that 69% of owners kept their ferrets inside, 22% were kept outside and 9% were housed both inside and out.

Choosing a home for the ferret is very important to ensure the health and well being of the animal, and the ease of responsible ownership. There are a variety of choices now available for ferret owners. The market has moved away from wooden hutches to aesthetically pleasing plastic cages. There is also the option of having ferrets free roaming in a room or throughout a house.

The results showed that it's important for ferrets to receive a high level of attention and care. Having a cage or specified area enables the ferret to

have somewhere safe to go if required. This is paramount if the ferrets are free roaming around the house. Their accommodation should be clean, dry and spacious with separate areas for sleeping and playing. The size of the cage should relate to the size and health of the ferret.

The most important fact to be considered when keeping a ferret is the amount of human contact it receives. Ferrets are social animals and unless handled regularly they are likely to become anti social.

If you'd like further information or a copy of the questionnaire results, please feel free to contact me.

Livi Parkins
livi@ferretsinneed.org.uk

Best of the Web

Following on from the unprecedented success of my previous 'Best of the Web', I've decided to be a little bit more controversial for this issue. So in this article I'm going to be looking at ferret healthcare Web sites.

I'm sure we're all aware of the issue of using Frontline™ to treat ear mites, which has sparked off some controversy within the ferret world during recent months. But to everyone who just wants a quiet life I'll immediately say don't worry; I won't be pursuing that issue in this column.

My first choice this month is Beeston Animal Health (<http://www.wormers.co.uk>). It's not ferret specific, or even

particularly informative, but it does offer exceedingly good prices on ear cleaning products! I personally get Logic ear cleaner from them. The Web site has a clean appearance, is easily navigated, and is of course secure. So you don't need to worry about parting with your credit card details.

My second site is VetULike (<http://www.vetulike.co.uk/>), supported by the Medicom group of companies. It hosts a wealth of information on ferret related healthcare issues and should settle your mind should you fear for the worst in an unwell ferret. Of course, if you're worried about your ferret's health,

then you should take it to a vet immediately.

My third and final choice is PetEducation (<http://www.peteducation.co.uk>), an outstandingly large reference site comprising veterinary articles on just about any animal you can imagine. There's an entire section devoted to the domesticated ferret. But now it's time for the judge's decision

This issue's 'Best of the Web' award goes to PetEducation, primarily due to their absolutely fabulous library of pet health references.

Marc Faulkner
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Do you have a favourite Web site? If you do, then please email me with the details and I'll include it in a future review.