

Smams Cleaning and Care- SOP

Objective: To house small mammals, under the care of Adams County Animal Shelter, in a comfortable, stress free, clean, environment with appropriate food, fresh water and allow them to express natural behaviors.

Ferrets:

Natural History and Behavior:

Ferrets are predators; predation comes naturally to them. Historically, they were used for hunting rabbits and keeping the rodent population under control. Ferrets are burrowers and like to dig.

They are crepuscular mammals and spend 14-18 hours a day sleeping. They are territorial, like to burrow, and prefer sleeping in enclosed areas. Ferrets are also very social and enjoy play.

Ferret enclosure set up

1. Choose a secure, well ventilated wire cage.
 - Ferrets are very flexible and can escape small openings. Keep this in mind when choosing an enclosure.
 - The height of the enclosure must be a minimum of 18inches.
2. Line the bottom of the kennel with soft material.
 - Shredded paper or care fresh paper may used
 - No foam or rubber materials should be used as these items may be chewed up and could cause an obstruction.
3. Provide a dark enclosed area for sleeping
 - A card board critter box or paper towel tube may be used
 - A hammock or sling can also be fashioned out of a towel.
4. Place a litter box, filled with pelleted litter, in one corner of the enclosure.
 - Ferrets like to back into a corner to urinate and defecate.
 - Litter boxes should be placed away from food and water.

Diet

5. Dry Ferret food should be available at all times.
 - Ferrets require a high fat and meat protein based diet. They cannot go for long periods without eating.
6. Use a ceramic bowl or sipper bottle to provide water.
 - Provide fresh water daily.

Cleaning and sanitation

7. Remove soiled materials from the enclosure daily.
8. If the enclosure is visibly soiled or has any odor, it should be washed and disinfected.
 - Disinfecting the enclosure
 - a. Remove the ferret from the enclosure and place him/her in a transport kennel.
 - b. Remove all toys, substrate, and laundry from the enclosure.
 - c. Spray down the enclosure with 4oz/ gal Accel. Let it sit 10 minutes.

- d. Then wipe down the enclosure with a wet wash cloth.
 - e. Set up the enclosure as stated in steps 1-4 above.
 - f. Place the ferret back in the enclosure and ensure he/she is secured.
9. If any medical abnormalities are noticed place the ferret on the tech list.

Enrichment

10. Appropriate Enrichment
- Care fresh or shredded paper
 - Paper towel tubes
 - Small cardboard boxes
 - Non clumping litter (for digging)
 - Any other ideas must be approved first

Rabbits:

Natural History and Behavior

Rabbits are ground dwelling prey animals. Rabbits are social animals but are also territorial and have been known to “box” during territorial disputes. Rabbits will use their hind limbs to thump when frightened or exhibiting aggression. Instead of using vocalizations Rabbits use scent as their predominant method of communication. Rabbits have open rooted teeth, meaning they continuously grow.

Rabbit enclosure set up

1. Use an enclosure that has a solid bottom and open wire/mesh sides.
 - Enclosure must be a minimum of 4 sq ft.
2. Line the bottom of the enclosure with care fresh for bedding.
 - Other suitable options are straw or hardwood shavings bedding.
 - Pine or cedar shavings should **NOT** be used as bedding.
3. Place a litter box, filled with pelleted litter, in one corner of the enclosure.
 - Clay litter can be used as another option but **DO NOT** use clumping litter

Diet

4. Place ¼ C. of rabbit pellets per 5lbs. of rabbit in a ceramic bowl.
5. Fill a basket with Timothy hay. Rabbits are hind gut fermenters and require a primarily hay based diet.
 - Hay should be available at all times.
6. A ceramic bowl or sipper bottle should be used to provide water. A sipper bottle is preferred.
 - Provide fresh water daily.
 - Monitor water throughout the day, as rabbits have a high water intake.

Cleaning and sanitation

7. Remove feces and wet bedding from the enclosure. Add fresh bedding where needed.
8. If enclosure is heavily soiled then the enclosure should be deep cleaned.
 - a. Remove rabbit from the enclosure
 - b. Throw away all of the bedding
 - c. Remove any toys, water bottles/bowls, and hay feeders.
 - d. Spray the enclosure down with vinegar and water. Wipe down the enclosure with a wet washcloth.

- e. Add fresh bedding, a clean water bottle/bowl, fresh hay, toys, and rabbit pellets.
9. Return the rabbit to the enclosure.
10. If any medical abnormalities are noticed place the rabbit on the tech list.

Enrichment

11. Care fresh or shredded paper
12. Toilet paper tubes stuffed with hay
13. Fruit branches(not treated with pesticides)
14. Hardwood chew toys
15. Exercise time in a play yard (under supervision only)
16. Any other ideas must be approved first

Guinea Pigs:

Natural History and Behavior

Guinea pigs, also known as cavies, are members of the rodent family and have open rooted teeth, meaning they continuously grow. These are social animals and can form strong bonds with other guinea pigs.

Guinea Pig enclosure set up

1. Use an enclosure that has a solid bottom and open wire/mesh sides.
2. Line the bottom of the enclosure with care fresh for bedding.
 - Other suitable options are straw or hardwood shavings bedding.
 - Pine or cedar shavings should **NOT** be used as bedding.
3. Place a plastic hide box in the enclosure.

Diet

4. Place ¼ C. of Guinea pig pellets in a ceramic bowl.
5. Fill a basket with grass or Timothy hay. Guinea pigs are hind gut fermenters and require a primarily hay based diet. Grass hay preferred.
 - Hay should be available at all times.
6. Use a sipper bottle to provide water.
 - Provide fresh water daily.
7. Peppers, oranges, and kale should be offered for Vit. C.

Cleaning and sanitation

8. Remove feces and wet bedding from the enclosure. Add fresh bedding where needed.
9. If enclosure is heavily soiled then the enclosure should be deep cleaned.
 - f. Remove guinea pig from the enclosure.
 - g. Throw away all of the bedding.
 - h. Remove any toys, water bottles/bowls, and hay feeders.
 - i. Spray the enclosure down with vinegar and water. Wipe down the enclosure with a wet washcloth.
 - j. Add fresh bedding, a clean water bottle/bowl, fresh hay, toys, and rabbit pellets.
10. Return the guinea pig to the enclosure.
11. If any medical abnormalities are noticed place the Guinea pig on the tech list.

Enrichment

12. Care fresh or shredded paper
13. Toilet paper tubes stuffed with hay
14. Fruit branches (not treated with pesticides)
15. Hardwood chew toys
16. Any other ideas must be approved first

Written by Angel Williams