

Safe Haven Rabbit Rescue, Inc.

# Safe Haven Scoop

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## A Time for Thanks.....



*By Karen Augustynowicz, Director*

Fall is always one of my favorite seasons. It just never seems to last long enough! As we enjoy the fleeting fall, I wanted to be sure to send out a big “Thank you” to the Safe Haven donors and volunteers who enable us to continue our work.

I also love Thanksgiving! Not so much for all the food, but more for the thoughts promoted by the holiday. And so, in this newsletter, we wanted to be sure to convey our thoughts of how thankful we are for the generosity shown

by our donors and volunteers. And to convey the wish that your support will continue going forward. We just cannot do it without you.

Safe Haven is now fifty-five percent sanctuary rabbits. With various medical needs, veterinary bills are our biggest expense. So, our Holiday Wish is for your continued donations! *We just cannot do it without you.*

And, of course, we wanted to wish you a

## HAPPY THANKSGIVING!!

**Enjoy the Newsletter!**

**Wishing you, your family and bunnies a Blessed Holiday Season.**

*With sincere thanks,*

*Karen Augustynowicz, Director*  
Safe Haven Rabbit Rescue, Inc.

### Questions about care?

Do you have questions about caring for your rabbit? Zoom call help available for nail trims, grooming, litter-box training, bonding, etc.

Please contact us via our [Contact form](#) if you have care question (*no medical questions, we are not vets*).

No charge.



**Donate**



## *Did You Know....*

*By Linda Torlay, Safe Haven Educator*

**Did you know** there are two types of wild rabbits, related to the common Eastern Cottontail, that live around water and are excellent swimmers.

Some may look at a wild rabbit and see a wild rabbit like any other wild rabbit but if you look closer there are some subtle differences.

The Marsh rabbit, found throughout Florida, the Florida Keys, and other Southern states along the coast inhabit areas near bodies of fresh and brackish waters finding refuge in the dense thicket and grasses. The Florida Marsh rabbit, The Lower Keys Marsh rabbit (Florida Keys) which is an endangered species, and the Carolina Marsh rabbit are the subspecies within the group.

Marsh rabbits are a little smaller than Cottontails with an average weight between 2 to 2.5 lbs. They have more darker and light brown coloring thru their fur and a smaller tail that is light brown on the underside unlike the white of a Cottontail. They have small, round, short ears with an almost black edging that lightens during the spring and summer months. Marsh rabbits have smaller back feet and they tend to walk on all fours like a cat as opposed to hopping having adapted to 'marshier,' less solid ground. They are strong swimmers and will submerge themselves in waters with their ears laid flat back and exposing only their eyes and nose to avoid discovery. Marsh rabbits breed year-round because of warm supportive climates producing up to 6 litters a year bearing between 2 – 4 kits a litter.

The Swamp rabbit can be found thru out the Southern-Central states such as Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Georgia. It too inhabits areas near bodies of fresh and brackish waters finding refuge in dense thicket and grasses.

Swamp rabbits are larger than both Cottontails and Marsh rabbits with an average weight between 4 to 5.5 lbs. They too have more darker and light brown coloring thru their fur but their belly and undertail is white like a Cottontail. Swamp Rabbits have a reddish-brown colored ring around their eyes. Swamp rabbits have a shorter breeding season usually between February thru August but if in an area that is warm year-round, they can breed year-round. They produce 1 – 3 litters a year with 4 – 6 kits a litter.



Marsh Rabbit



Eastern Cottontail Rabbit



Swamp Rabbit

## Our second Virtual Fundraiser - The 2023 Goat Games August 7th-13th, 2023

With your support the Safe Haven Team came in 6th Overall!

Thank you So Much to all our Donors!

We were so excited to be a part of the **4th Annual Goat Games** hosted by Catskill Animal Sanctuary and sponsored in part by the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS) and The ASPCA.



In 2020, Catskill Animal Sanctuary created The Goat Games as a response to urgent fundraising needs during COVID — and to give folks a taste of fun and athleticism in the wake of the canceled Olympics. The following year, they selected sanctuaries across the country to participate and the Games grew to a total of 10 teams, raising thousands of dollars to help save animals!

In 2023, there were 17 GFAS Sanctuaries competing in the games.

The Safe Haven Team members:

- ◆ Astrid Hesse
- ◆ Cheryl Bitner
- ◆ Emiliya Shotwell
- ◆ Amanda Perrotti and
- ◆ Karen Augustynowicz

all worked very hard reaching out to friends, family members, and fellow bunny lovers to keep Safe Haven in good position on the leaderboard throughout the competition. With many of the other sanctuaries being much larger than us, we maintained a very impressive position for the

bunnies. A **huge** Thank You goes out to all these volunteers!

Sawyer, one of our sanctuary bunnies due to glaucoma, served as our Team Captain. He got a few extra treats those days!

Even though our donations this year were down from the prior year, we hope 2024 will be a better year for everyone and look forward to participating again. We hope you will too! Your donations mean so much.



## *Educational Corner*

*by Linda Torlay, Safe Haven Educator*



### **Scrub-A-Dub-Dub ... Should I be routinely bathing my rabbit in a tub?**



The overall, general answer, is **no** for several reasons. Rabbits will groom and ‘wash’ themselves and each other, you do not have to. You can assist your rabbit when he is shedding their coat by gently brushing him to assist in removing fur that seems to be lost all at once and/or in excess but a healthy rabbit does not need to be bathed.

A rabbit’s fur has natural oils which help keep the fur in good condition. A healthy rabbit’s fur is glossy and soft. Bathing, even when using a rabbit approved shampoo, strips the rabbit’s fur of those natural oils.

Most animals find bathing stressful and rabbits are no exception. A wet rabbit can also chill easily which can lead to secondary trauma such as pneumonia, respiratory infections, hypothermia, skin infections, and stress alone can cause injury from trying to escape on a slippery surface or send a rabbit into shock.

There can be extenuating reasons why you would need to bathe your rabbit. An older rabbit, one with dental malformities, spinal issues, or arthritis may not be able to groom and wash himself properly and thus find their tail end (or muzzle if dealing with dental problems) becoming soiled. If that should happen spot bathing (for the sake of this article I will elaborate further on cleaning the tail end but the same principle can be applied to the muzzle), otherwise known as a ‘butt bath,’ like a sitz bath for humans, is recommended to remove soiling from fur as opposed to wetting the entire body for sanitary, comfort, and avoiding secondary health problems such as urine scaling and sores. Place a rubber mat or towel in your sink or tub for your rabbit to sit on and use a cup to pour water over the affected area. Only tepid warm water should be used and if you use shampoo make sure to use only shampoo that is recommended and safe for rabbits. Towel dry the wet area gently by blotting because rabbit skin is fragile and tears easily. A hair dryer set on the lowest warm setting and held at a far enough distance to not burn the skin is beneficial to remove dampness left from towel drying, taking on and off breaks, so you do not overheat your rabbit. During this time make sure he is kept comfortable and does not take chill. If your sink or tub has a spray nozzle hose that too can be used if it is gentle enough to apply water to the affected area.

Dry ‘butt baths’ can be an option if the area is not too heavily soiled. Cornstarch or arrowroot powders are best. Gently work powder in a rubbing motion with your fingers thru the fur down to the skin and gently comb thru the area to remove debris and excess powder. Do not use a brush in caution of fragile skin. Never ever should scented, flea, or powders containing pesticides be used. If you need to trim matted fur do so cautiously. Even the slightest nip into fragile skin can quickly turn into an emergency.

Should your rabbit accidentally get wet by upsetting their water bowl (most often a cause) or some other event, towel drying is best, and if fur is soaked use a hair dryer as described above.

## Adoptions Updates!

*Tate - Adopted!*

*August 5, 2023*

*By Julia VanOllefen and Patrick Hughes*

*Patrick writes:* Tate joined us a few months ago and he has quickly settled into his new home. He's not a shy rabbit. Right from the start, he was on a mission to explore every nook and cranny of the room. We have to keep a close eye on him when he's outside his pen because his curiosity is endless.

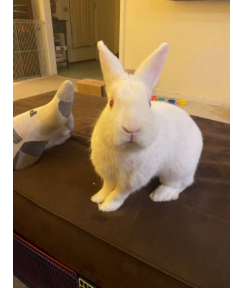
He is very well behaved. He spends a lot of time outside his pen and doesn't chew on furniture or the carpet. We are grateful for that, because that was a favorite activity of his predecessor. Although, he does have a funny quirk where he occasionally likes to lick the furniture. Usually he keeps the chewing to his toys or his hay tunnel. His one weakness is slippers which he loves to toss around and dig.



When we watch tv, he likes to hop on the ottoman and hang out with us. As he gets more comfortable with us, he is starting to tolerate being pet. It's not his favorite activity but we are slowly wearing him down. During the first few weeks, he would hop away as soon as he knew what was going on. Now, he allows us to pet his forehead for a period of time before he lets us know our time is up by giving a little grumble and hopping away.

One of his favorite activities is sprinting around the room. You have to be on alert when he is excited because there is a good chance he will jump on you. It's a shock when a rabbit comes flying at you and lands in your lap. He gives us a look that says "Remember, no pets". Then hops away after he has caught his breath.

We are lucky to have such a funny little guy.



*Thank you to Julia and Patrick for providing such a loving, enrichment filled home to Tate!*

## *Most Recent Adoptions!*

One of the perils of fostering, is the way these bunnies tend to worm their way into our hearts and homes. We don't see that as a bad thing though! It is actually comforting—and totally understandable. Congratulations to our most recent happy foster home adoptions!

### *Rocky & Ginger Adopted—Sept. 17, 2023*

Netherland dwarfs, Ginger & Rocky were taken into Safe Haven's foster program (4/14/21) when their care became too much for their owner. As a result of overbreeding, Rocky suffers from the genetic disorder known as "Max Factor". His mom, Ginger, was born with significant, painful malformations of her spine. Under the care of foster parents, Gail Petersen and Bill Mack, both Rocky (gray) and Ginger (brown) are thriving better than ever expected. As happens, they have also worked their way into both their hearts and have reached the status of "Adopted!" by their foster parents. Congratulations to all! We know they now have the best home for all their future holds.



### *Bentley Adopted—Oct. 28, 2023*



Originally found as a stray and turned into a South Jersey shelter, Bentley quickly won the hearts of his Safe Haven foster family. A big thank you to foster mom, Cheryl Bitner and husband Erik for turning his once rough life into one where he will get the best of care and all the love and attention he desires.

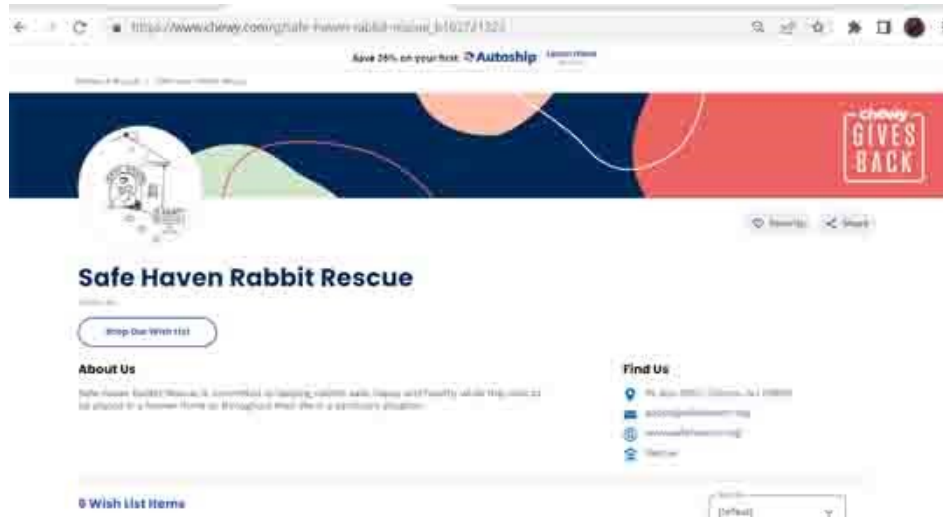
He is now known as "Franklin"! Congratulations to all.



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*We look forward to sharing their Adoption Update Stories in a future newsletter!*

*The Bunnies are already working on their Christmas Wish list!*



Click image to select and order through Chewy! Thank you!

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*The Bunnies will love  
You for it!*

*Thank you in  
Advance!*

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