It’s Raining Cats and Frogs!

2014 Ohio 4-H Conference

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What are Companion Animals?

- Animals that have a special relationship and association with people
- Are partially or totally dependent on people
- Live in close proximity of people
- Bond with people
- Interact with their owners
- Mutual or reciprocal action or influence between animal and owner

What 4-H Projects are Available?

• Pet Rabbit, Project No. 227
• Pocket Pets, Project No. 220
• Cavy, Project No. 215
• Cats – Purr-fect Pals, Level 1, Project No. 216
• Cats – Climbing Up!, Level 2, Project No. 217
• Cats – Leaping Forward, Level 3, Project No. 218
• Reptiles & Amphibians, Project No. 365.13
• 4-H PetPALS, Project No. 230
# Rabbit Resource Handbook

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Number</th>
<th>228R</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topic Area</td>
<td>Companion Animals and Rabbits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skill Level</td>
<td>Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Fair Eligibility</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Type</td>
<td>Individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copyright Date</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Project Description

Order this book only once and use for several years. It contains essential subject matter information for members taking a market rabbit, breeding rabbit, or pet rabbit project. This is an excellent source for skillbuilding.

- View Project Sample Pages
- Visit eStore for direct shipping and out-of-state orders

## Comments

**4-H Member (Beginner)** on January 31, 2014

It was very informative. A must have for people that take the Market Rabbit project.

- Add your feedback
# Pet Rabbit Project and Record Book

**Project Number**: 227  
**Topic Area**: Companion Animals and Rabbits  
**Skill Level**: Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced  
**State Fair Eligibility**: Yes  
**Project Type**: Individual  
**Copyright Date**: 2003

## Project Description

Complete this required project book every year a pet rabbit project is taken. Use with 228R Rabbit Resource Handbook.

- View Project Sample Pages
- Visit eStore for direct shipping and out-of-state orders

## Comments

Be the first to add your feedback!

Add your feedback
Pocket Pets Resource Handbook

Project Number: 220R
Topic Area: Companion Animals and Rabbits
Skill Level: Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced
State Fair Eligibility: No
Project Type: Individual
Copyright Date: 2011

Project Description
This resource handbook contains essential information for members taking a pocket pet project. Species include gerbils, hamsters, mice, and rats, and topics covered include history, selection, handling, housing, nutrition, health, reproduction, grooming, and showing. This one-time purchase is a valuable resource for the small-animal enthusiast.

View Project Sample Pages
Visit eStore for direct shipping and out-of-state orders

Comments
Be the first to add your feedback!
Add your feedback

Project Rating
Be the first to add a rating for this project!
Add your rating
Ohio State University Extension

Pocket Pets Project and Record Book

Project Number: 229
Topic Area: Companion Animals and Rabbits
Skill Level: Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced
State Fair Eligibility: Yes
Project Type: Individual
Copyright Date: 2011

Project Description:
Complete this required project and record book every year a pocket pet project is taken. Species include gerbils, hamsters, mice, and rats. Use with 229R: Pocket Pets Resource Handbook.

Comments:
Be the first to add your feedback!
Add your feedback

View Project Sample Pages
Visit eStore for direct shipping and out-of-state orders
New Project Search
Cavy Resource Handbook: A 4-H Guide to Guinea Pigs

Project Number: 215R
Topic Area: Companion Animals and Rabbits
Skill Level: Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced
State Fair Eligibility: No
Project Type: Individual
Copyright Date: 2012

Project Description
This resource handbook contains essential information for members taking a guinea pig project. Topics covered include general care, history, anatomy, selection, housing and equipment, records, nutrition, health, reproduction, show preparation, marketing, and care. This one-time purchase is a valuable resource for every cavy enthusiast.

Comments
Be the first to add your feedback!
Add your feedback
Ohio State University Extension

Cavy Project and Record Book

Project Number: 215
Topic Area: Companion Animals and Rabbits
Skill Level: Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced
State Fair Eligibility: Yes
Project Type: Individual
Copyright Date: 2012

Project Description
Complete this required project and record book every year a cavy (also known as a guinea pig) project is taken. Use with 215R Cavy Resource Handbook: A 4-H Guide to Guinea Pigs.

Comments
Be the first to add your feedback!
Add your feedback

View Project Sample Pages
Visit eStore for direct shipping and out-of-state orders

New Project Search
Purr-fect Pals, Level 1

Project Number: 216
Topic Area: Companion Animals and Rabbits
Skill Level: Beginner
State Fair Eligibility: Yes
Project Type: Individual
Copyright Date: 2005

Project Description
Learn about being a good cat owner by taking this beginning-level project. You learn about cat breeds, behavior, good health, grooming, and feeding. Designed for youth in grades 3 to 5, but may be taken by youth in the first three years of this project. Cat 1 can be taken for three years.

View Project Sample Pages
Visit eStore for direct shipping and out-of-state orders

Comments
Be the first to add your feedback!
Add your feedback

Project Rating
Be the first to add a rating for this project!
Climbing Up! Level 2

Project Description
Build on what you learned in Cat 1 by taking this intermediate-level cat project. Learn more about cat identification and characteristics, training and showing, health and nutrition, and responsible cat ownership. Designed for youth in grades 6 to 8, but may be taken by youth in any grade after completing Cat 1. Cat 2 can be taken for three years.

View Project Sample Pages
Visit eStore for direct shipping and out-of-state orders

Project Rating
Be the first to add a rating for this project!
Add your rating

Comments
Be the first to add your feedback!
Add your feedback
Leaping Forward, Level 3

**Project Number**: 210

**Topic Area**: Companion Animals and Rabbits

**Skill Level**: Advanced

**State Fair Eligibility**: Yes

**Project Type**: Individual

**Copyright Date**: 2005

**Project Description**

Dig deeper into some of the cat topics you've already explored in Cat 1 and Cat 2 (breeds, nutrition, health, and behavior) and meet some new topics (genetics and aging cats). Investigate cat-related careers and practice your organization and presentation skills. Designed for youth in grades 9 to 12, but may be taken by any youth after completing Cat 1 and Cat 2. Cat 3 can be taken for three or more years.

- View Project Sample Pages
- Visit eStore for direct shipping and out-of-state orders

**Comments**

Be the first to add your feedback!

- Add your feedback

**Project Rating**

Be the first to add a rating for this project!
Reptiles and Amphibians – Project Idea Starter

Project Details

Project Number: 365.13
Topic Area: Self Determined
Skill Level: Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced
State Fair Eligibility: Yes
Project Type: Individual
Copyright Date: 2009

Project Rating

Overall rating (out of 5)
3.8

Learning: 3.5
Interest: 3.5
Fun: 3.5
Appeal: 3.5

Comments

4-H Member (Intermediate) on February 27, 2014
I liked this project a lot. I just wish there was more about amphibians.

4-H Member (Intermediate) on January 6, 2014
I would try to get this project up more—when I go to the fair, there aren't very many people to compete against, and a lot of members don't even know this project exists! I do like the project though, getting to learn about caring for reptiles and the natural world. Some of the mini-projects are a little bit difficult.
Project Details

4-H PetPALS Leader’s Guide

Project Number: 230GPM
Topic Area: Animal Sciences
Skill Level: Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced
State Fair Eligibility: Yes
Project Type: Group
Copyright Date: 2003

Project Description

4-H PetPALS is an intergenerational program that links youth and their pets with senior adults. Specially-trained master 4-H volunteer leaders teach youth the skills they need to interact with residents in health care facilities such as assisted living and nursing home facilities. By applying the power of the human-animal bond, 4-H members learn to select, socialize, and train their pets. Youth apply the lessons in this 214-page, experientially-based curriculum to develop their leadership and citizenship skills. 4-H PetPALS allows young people to be models for residents in health care facilities and the community at large as they demonstrate the significance of human-animal...
4-H PetPALS Project and Record Book

Project Number: 230
Topic Area: Companion Animals and Rabbits
Skill Level: Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced
State Fair Eligibility: Yes
Project Type: Group
Copyright Date: 2013

Project Description:
This project and record book helps 4-H members set goals for the year and keep records of their 4-H PetPALS activities and accomplishments. Youth must belong to a 4-H club or group with a master 4-H PetPALS volunteer leader. This project can be repeated as long as youth re-enroll in an established 4-H PetPALS club, or club or group with a master 4-H PetPALS leader, and activities are completed under the supervision of an adult (4-H PetPALS leader, project helper, health care facility staff, parent, etc.). Completion of a new project book is required each year.

Comments:
4-H Member (Advanced) on March 8, 2014
This is a GREAT project that you can take for many years!

Add your feedback

View Project Sample Pages
Visit eStore for direct shipping and out-of-state orders
New Project Search

Project Rating
Overall rating (out of 5): 5.0
Learning: 5.0
Interest: 5.0
Fun: 5.0
Appeal: 5.0
Add your rating
Statewide Opportunities

• Companion Animal Judging at Ohio State Fair
  – Friday, July 25
  – Counties can send 2 juniors and 2 seniors in each of the project areas

• Companion Animal State 4-H Achievement Award
  – Winner receives an award trip to National 4-H Congress, Atlanta, Georgia
The Pet Rabbit

• Friend and companion
• Daily interaction with humans
• Good temperament
• Housed close to people
• Purebred or mixed breed

Small-pets.lovetoknow.com
Temperament and Communication

- Social animals
- Prey animals
- Communicate through
  - Vocalizations
  - Facial expressions
  - Scents
  - Direct contact
  - Body language (postures)
Relaxed Rabbit

- Silent, purring, or clicking noises
- May gently grind teeth
- Head protrudes forward
- Ears at ease
- May lay on belly
- May lay on side with legs stretched out

Alert Rabbit

- Head held up
- Ears forward
- Sits up on all fours or hind feet
**Playful Rabbit**

- Jumps, bounces, leaps
- Twists
- Kicks to one side

**Startled Rabbit**

- Eyes wide open
- Sclera visible
- Ears up, together
- Head up & alert
- Sitting, up on toes
**Submissive Rabbit**

- Crouched down close to ground
- Tries to appear small, unthreatening
- Ears may be pinned back, or 1 ear up & 1 down
- Indirect or no eye contact
- Tail tight against body

**Fearful Rabbit**

- May be silent, may scream
- Rapid breathing
- Ears pinned flat back
- Facial muscles tight, eyes bulge
- See sclera
- Freeze position, pressed to ground
- Warn with thumping hind legs to ground
**Aggressive Rabbit**

- May loudly grind teeth, grunt, howl, hiss
- Usually followed by bite
- Ears pinned back, may shake head
- May look stiff-legged
- May scrape ground with front feet, kick with hind
- May chase

**Stressed Rabbit**

- May appear rigid, ears may be up
- May grind teeth, growl, squeak, scream
- Nictitating membrane may cover eye
- May shed excessively
- Tries to hide, avoid petting
- Rapid breathing
Bringing Your Rabbit Home

- Housing
- Food Crock
- Water Crock or Bottle
- Feed
- Litter Box
- Chew Block
- Toys & Treats
- Grooming Supplies
- Carrying Cage
- Harness and Leash
Litter Training

- Naturally clean animals
- Pine or aspen shavings
- Non-clay cat litter/pellets
- Start by putting box in cage
- Put scent in box
- Move box into small area
- Multiple boxes may help
Exercising

- Inquisitive and playful
- Rabbit proof area
- Exercise pens
- Harness and leash

Precautions to take
- Predators
- Snakes
- Toxic substances
Showing

• Counties have different completion and judging requirements
  – During county fair rabbit shows
  – During small/companion animal judging/interviews

• Knowledge of exhibitor
• Rabbit’s health and condition
• Handling
• Examining
• Showmanship
• Skillathon
Rabbit Agility
Rabbit Hopping
Pocket Pet Projects

- Gerbils
- Hamsters
- Mice
- Rats

Ohio State University Extension

Black Broken Merle Mouse

Gerbil

Golden Short-haired Syrian Hamster

Black Hooded Rat
Organizations

- American Gerbil Society
  - [http://www.agsgerbils.org/](http://www.agsgerbils.org/)

- American Fancy Rat and Mouse Association
  - [http://www.afrma.org/](http://www.afrma.org/)

- California Hamster Association
  - [http://chahamsters.org/](http://chahamsters.org/)
Handling a Gerbil

To grasp a gerbil, the over-the-back grip is recommended.
To pick up a gerbil, the base of the tail should be gripped. Never attempt to pick up a gerbil by the end of the tail because the tuft and tail skin may pull off.
Handling a Hamster

The hamster should be fully awake before attempting to pick it up. Grasp the hamster with both hands, as shown in the illustration, to lift it out of the cage. To prevent the hamster from escaping, a small animal box or container should be close by to facilitate the transfer.
The one-hand method of grasping a hamster, as shown in this illustration, should be used only with very tame hamsters. This type of grip prevents the hamster from falling.
The hamster has very loose skin in the neck area. This is another method of picking up a hamster. A good deal of fur and skin should be grasped to prevent the hamster from wiggling loose or turning around and biting.
By using a receptacle, a hamster can be scooped up. A plastic stadium cup makes a good container. This facilitates transfer from the cage without fear of being bitten.
Long-haired Syrian (Teddy Bear)

Black-eyed Cream Syrian (Full cheek pouches)

Banded Syrian

Dark-eyed White Syrian
Roborovski Dwarf (Robo)

Chinese Dwarf

Campbelli (Campbell’s Russian Dwarf)
Russian Dwarf Winter White

(Winter Coat)
Handling a Mouse

Mice, like gerbils, can be picked up at the base of the tail. Never pick up at the tip of the tail because skin may slough off.
Grasp loose skin along back to restrain mouse.

By grasping loose skin along the back, the mouse may be inverted to determine sex.
Satin

Standard Mice (Ruby-eyed)

Frizzie Coffee Foxx

Long-haired White
Albino

Tailless Black Self

Agouti Standard Kitten Show Mouse
Handling a Rat

Pick up the rat by grasping it over the back and rib cage. By using this method, the pet can be placed in a small container or be examined to determine sex. Rats will struggle if turned belly up. NEVER pick up a rat by any part of its tail!
If the rat is in a wire mesh bottom cage, grasp as above and by the base of the tail, as shown in the illustration, to aid in freeing the claws from their grip on the mesh. NEVER pick up a rat by the base of its tail without grasping its body!
Blue Standard Solid
Berkshire
Satin
Dark-eyed White
Berkshire
Young Agouti
American Variegated Rex Dumbo Rats
Standard Hairless

Dumbo Ear Lilac Male (cutest baby rat ever!)
Cavies = Guinea Pigs

- Prey animals
- Depend on sense of sight and hearing
- Sense of smell not as important
- Very quick movements
- Can easily fall, get hurt
- May nip, tug with teeth
Baseline Postures

- Gurgling or murmuring noises mean contentment
- Relaxed body
- Lays down on belly or side
- Stretching for comfort or relaxation
- Eyes alert
- May raise head up or extend head out
- Leaping, kicking
- May lick good friends, including people
Aggression

- Mouth wide open, showing teeth
- Clack or rattle teeth, hiss
- Raises up on stiff legs
- Lifts head at right angles
- Squeaks or squeals
- Legs drawn in against body for protection
- May play dead, lying motionless on back
Anxiety/Fear

- Grinding or chattering teeth
- Shows sclera (whites of eyes)
- Eyes look all bugged out
- Frozen in place
- Huddles
- Sheds excessively
Ohio State University Extension

Reptiles and Amphibians

• Idea Starter – Self-Determined
• Build your own portfolio
Self-Determined Projects

• All other companion animals
4-H PetPALS

- People and Animals Linking Successfully
- 4-H PetPALS youth, taught by Master 4-H PetPALS Volunteer Leaders, teach appropriate pets to visit people in healthcare facilities, as well as other groups wanting animal-assisted activities visits
- Recognized by the American Kennel Club as a pet therapy group where youth and their 4-H PetPALS dogs can earn AKC titles
- Youth can be judged with their 4-H PetPALS animal
  - Companion Animal Day at OSF – July 25 (no dogs)
  - OSF Dog Show – July 31 (dogs only)
Master 4-H PetPALS Volunteer Training

- Registration deadline – March 7
- Training – March 15 – 4-H Center
- 4-H volunteers and older youth
- Great community service project

Aging Sensitivity Training
Testing to insure animal is appropriate for visiting
4-H PetPALS visit OSU Library during finals week interacting with more than 2,500 students
Cat Projects

• Erica Clouse, 4-H Alumnus, Guernsey County Slide Show

2009 Companion Animal Day Judging – Erica with her Bengal cat