'THE ADVENTURES OF ROSIE RABBIT'

By Will Lankstead

for my Son Sean

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'ROSIE '

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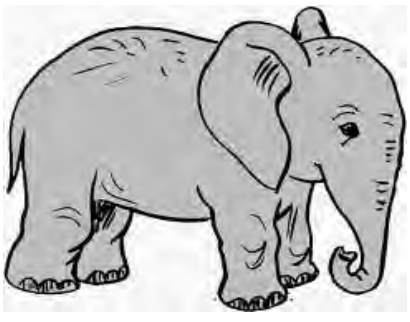
'Auntie Meg's Marvellous Menagerie of Perfect



Pets'

In the High Street of the town of Froomdale stood many shops. There was a Butcher's, a Cake Shop, a Florist, a Greengrocers and opposite the Bank stood 'Auntie Meg's Marvellous Menagerie of Perfect Pets'.
It was in fact, a Pet Shop.
Auntie Meg considered herself to be everybody's favourite Auntie, and the wide beaming smile she gave to everyone who entered her shop made them feel a part of a large family.
She sold puppies, kittens, budgies, hamsters, Parrots, Guinea pigs and Mice, Stick Insects, Goldfish, Chinchillas and last but not least Rabbits.
I think she would have even sold an Elephant if her shop had been big enough!



It was a very busy shop; especially at weekends when customers could be seen coming out carrying boxes and bags, bird cages and fishtanks with all manner of pets inside them.
One sunny day, two children Oscar and Amy came into the shop with their Mum & Dad. A little brass bell tinkled above the door as they entered.
'Good Morning!' Auntie Meg said, beaming a great big smile, ' what can I do for you?'



'Look at all of these animals!'

The children were very excited and jumped up and down at the counter. They looked excitedly into the many fishtanks and cages which contained lots of different animals.
'We'd like to buy a pet please,' the Father said, 'what would you recommend?'
Auntie Meg thought for a moment: 'Well,' she said, 'it all depends on what kind of a pet you have in mind.
We've got lots to choose from.'
'I think they've got their minds set on a Rabbit!' the Mother said, 'do you have any rabbits in stock?'
'I'm afraid I only have the one left, but, I've lots of Hamsters, Guinea pigs and little mice; even a brown rat if you'd like one!'
'A rat?! Goodness me, no!' replied the Mother, 'ugh, horrible things!'



'An 'orrible rat!'

'Would you like to see the Rabbit?' Auntie Meg asked.

"Please! Please!' Oh, yes please!' the children shouted excitedly.

Auntie Meg took the children over to the cage where the Rabbit was kept.

The Rabbit was very cute and just like a fluffy ball of fur with long ears and bright brown eyes. It had a little fluffy white bobtail.



Auntie Meg opened the cage lid and gently lifted the Rabbit out. She held it firmly in her arms as the children gently and softly stroked its fluffy head. It's little pink nose twitched as it licked a paw and began to wash one of its ears. The Rabbits long whiskers moved quickly from side to side. It was a very friendly rabbit!

'It's gorgeous!' Katy the little girl laughed.

'Oh, Mummy, Daddy, please let us buy the rabbit! Please, please, please!' they both shouted excitedly.

'Are you sure you wouldn't like a puppy or a kitten instead?' the Father asked, 'a stick insect or a Goldfish?'

'No no no!' the children shouted, 'we want the Rabbit! Pleeaassee!'

The Mother and Father eventually agreed.

“You will both have to look after it!' Mother stated. 'Feed and water it. Change it's bedding and exercise it. It's a great big responsibility looking after a pet you know. It's not something you should take lightly! The Rabbit will totally depend on you both for absolutely EVERYTHING!! You won't be able to say: Oh, I'll feed it later! I'm just watching television or playing a computer game at the moment.'

“We wont Mummy! We won't!” the children chorused.

So, Auntie Meg put the Rabbit into a special cardboard box to carry it home in. Their Father also bought a brand new wooden rabbit hutch which had two rooms! One for living and eating in, and the other for where the Rabbit could sleep.

He also bought a large bag of hay for its bedding. Two plastic bowls; one for it's food and the other for clean, drinking water.

The wooden hutch had quite long legs so that it could be raised up from the cold ground and away from any predators such as foxes.

The children's Father said that the hutch would be placed against the rear wall of the garage facing the back garden. It was generally a nice warm, sunny spot. But, once the weather became cooler towards Autumn and Winter, the hutch would be brought into the warmth and shelter of the garage.

The children and their parents lived just on the edge of the little town. The Farmer's fields stretched out beyond their back fence.

The wooden rabbit hutch



Both of the children did exactly what they had promised once the Rabbit was brought home and for several weeks afterwards.
They made sure the Rabbit, which they had named Rosie, was well looked after. She always had clean drinking water and fresh food everyday such as hay, carrots, celery, parsley and lots of other tasty things. Rosie loved special treats like strawberries, raspberries, apple, pineapple and bananas!
The children kept the wooden hutch clean and dry and replaced her bedding of hay every two days. Rosie was such a happy and contented Rabbit. She didn't miss the other animals from the Pet Shop that she'd made friends with. She was never lonely as the children spent as much time as they could with her everyday.
When they brought her inside the house she became house trained and learnt how to use a litter tray, just like a cat!
They had to make sure that she didn't chew any electrical wires or eat or drink things that could do her harm. The children also let her play outdoors in the back garden with them. They would use a harness with a lead attached and although letting her roam freely, they always kept her safe and secure. Rabbits are quite timid creatures and can easily be frightened.



'Rosie wearing her harness and lead.'

Everything was going very well; the children were happy, their parents were happy, but most of all Trosie was very happy.
But sadly one morning, all that was about to change.
It would be the start of an adventure which would change Rosie's life forever!

It was a beautiful Spring morning; Friday, the last day of the school week and just before half-term holidays. Once the four o'clock bell sounded at the end of that day, they would be on holiday for a whole week! Just imagine, one whole week off school! No more boring lessons, yucky school dinners or homework!
The children quickly finished their breakfast and dashed outside to feed Rosie. They gave her some fresh hay and sliced carrots with lots of cool, clean water, before changing her bedding.
The boy Oscar, held the rabbit gently and carefully in his arms whilst his sister, Amy changed the bedding after sweeping out the hutch.
Suddenly, they heard their Mother's voice calling loudly:
'Oscar! Amy! Come on and hurry up! You're going to be late for school!'
'Coming Mum!' they shouted.
The children quickly finished what they were doing and after putting Rosie back into the hutch they closed the little wooden door. It had a little bolt on it that had to be slid across into its holder.



'The door bolt'

'Come on! Hurry up!' their Mother shouted, ' I'll drive you to school on my way to work.'
In their haste, Oscar neglected to make sure that the bolt was fastened properly. The hutch door swung open slowly as a gentle breeze blew acoss the garden.
Rosie Rabbit peeped out. She was very frightened and unsure of what to do. She'd never been out of the hutch on her own before. The two children and their Mother had by now left for the school in the family car.
The hutch door swung open further. Rosie could see all of the garden now. She sniffed the air and raising her ears listened for any familiar sounds. She couldn't hear the children's voices laughing and shouting as they ran and played with her, as she usually did. She moved just her head out of the hutch doorway. The softly blowing breeze tickled her whiskers as it gently ruffled her fur. Rosie gave another sniff. There were some unfamiliar smells. She could hear a dog barking in next door's garden. She knew what a puppy dog was from her days in the Pet Shop. But, this one sounded much bigger and louder!
Rosie began to move closer to the edge of the open hutch in order to get a better view. Perhaps she should just stay where she was in the warmth and safety of the rabbit hutch?
She had everything she needed: food, water, warmth and a sturdy roof over her head to keep out the rain, wind and cold. But still, today was warm and sunny and she couldn't hear the soft pit-a-pat of any raindrops on her roof.
Slowly, she moved closer to the edge, until suddenly she fell out, falling head over tail onto the grass below. Luckily, she escaped without injury!
Rosie looked up above her. The hutch seemed a long way off!

How could she ever get back into it? It was far too high!
Firstly, Rosie looked to see if there was anything she could use to climb, but there was nothing. Sometimes, the children propped a long wooden plank against the open door of the hutch and she was able to run up it. But today, the plank was leaning up against the garden shed. What could she do?
The familiar house looked empty and very quiet to her.
Slowly and carefully, Rosie began to explore the back garden. It was quite a big space and had swings and a slide for the children.



Sometimes they had even taken her onto the swing but she didn't like it very much as it made her dizzy!
The slide made her feel even worse!
'WHOOSH!' they went as they slid speedily down to the ground.
Rosie thought her heart would burst out of her mouth, such was the shock!
So, the Rabbit began to explore the rest of the garden.
She saw the little 'Wendy' house, the garden shed, the clothes line with the clothes drying in the soft breeze, the little oval shaped pond with its many fish of bright orange, and lastly:
THE VEGETABLE PATCH!! Mmm, it looked good and smelled

delightful!
Rosie slowly and carefully made her way between each individual row of growing vegetables. She had a little nibble here, a sniff there before moving onto the next row.
'Ah!' she thought, 'this is rabbit heaven!'



Rosie began to explore the garden, the hedges and a wooden fence which ran around the garden. She found a hole in the wire mesh fence and made her escape from the garden and out into the farmer's fields beyond.
She has never been out in the wide open spaces before and found it very frightening. Everything seemed so big : the land around her and the sky up above. She made her way further into the field as she continued exploring. There were lots of strange noises and unfamiliar smells. Suddenly, Rosie came across an animal she had never seen before as she moves across the field. Although she is fascinated this stranger she is nonetheless very frightened.
She has very good eyesight and a very keen sense of smell, so she sniffs the air. What was this strange creature? It neither looked nor smelled like any of the animals she had shared the Pet Shop with. It was quite long with four little legs.

'Puppies or kittens, budgies and parrots, hamsters and mice.'



The Pet Shop window

Once again, she sniffed the air; her little pink nose scrunching up. The strange animal was quite large with a black and white striped body. It was a Badger!



The Badger

They both stopped and eyed each, all the while sniffing the air. Rosie spoke first: 'What kind of a strange creature are you?' The Badger recognised the faint smell of humans on the Rabbit. He knew what a rabbit was as he'd seen many of them in the fields. But this was somehow.....different.

He remembered it was the same scent he'd smelled when men had come looking for him and his family. They had come with vicious, barking dogs and had dug down into his home called a Sett, to try and drive him out. They had wanted to kill him and his family. He didn't know why, as he'd never done anything to them.
"You can call me Mr. Badger," he said, "or if you prefer Basil."
"Good morning, Mr. Badger," she replied, 'my name is Rosie and I am a rabbit!"
"Ah yes, I thought you were! I was just saying that to myself. My nose never lets me down.
I'm pleased to meet you," Badger said, " Now tell me where are you going this fine, sunny morning?"
"I'm at the start of an adventure," Rosie stated.
"An adventure?!" he said impressed, " and where will this adventure take you?"
"Wherever it will!"Rosie said bravely.
"It sounds absolutely splendid!" Badger shouted excitedly.
"Would you like some company on your adventure?" he offered.
Rosie thought for a moment, then replied" Yes, I think I'd like that. You'd be very welcome to come along. But tell me, what talents do you have that we could use on this adventure?"
"Why, my NOSE ofcourse!" he said rather boastfully
The two animals shook paws to make it a formal agreement and then set off together.
After awhile, they both stopped suddenly as another animal crossed their path.
"Halt! Who goes there?!" a voice boomed.
The rabbit and the badger were quite frightened.

They peered into the long grass and could just make out what appeared to be a round ball shaped object. But, this wasn't like any ball Rosie had chased for the children. It was full of sharp spikes! Suddenly, it opened and there stood another strange creature. Basil the Badger sniffed the ball-shaped object, but got



too close and pricked his nose on one of the spikes.
"Ouch!!" he shouted. "Why are you covered in sharp spikes?"
"I'm a Hedgehog!" he stated proudly.
"My sharp spikes are to keep me safe," he added.
Then he asked: "Where are you both going on this fine, sunny morning?"
"We are at the beginning of a great adventure," Badger stated angrily, " and we neither know nor care where it takes us!"
"It sounds positively delightful!" said the Hedgehog.
"Er.....would you mind if I came along with you on this great adventure?" he asked, "that is, if you don't mind my company?"
"Ofcourse!" Rosie replied, " but tell me, what talents could you provide for us on our travels?"
"Why, my prickly spikes ofcourse! I'll be able to protect you if any other animals attack. My coat is very sharp!"
"Yes," said the Badger, "don't I know it!"
So, now there were three in this little band of adventurers.
The Rabbit. The Badger, and The Hedgehog.

A little while later they had reached a small wood of tall trees. Their branches stretched skywards and seemed to go on forever. Suddenly, something hard fell from the sky and hit Badger on the head: "Ouch!" he shouted again.
The three animals looked up but could see nothing amongst the branches and leaves growing at the top of the tree.
"Sorry!" a voice shouted from high up in the tree, "could I have my nut back please?"
A figure unexpectedly appeared on a stout branch about halfway up the tree.
"What kind of a creature are you?" asked Rosie Rabbit.
"Who me?" came the reply, "Isn't it obvious?"
Rosie shook her head: "Not to me, I'm afraid," she said somewhat apologetically.
"I'm a Squirrel!" the animal declared.
And with that he came bounding quickly out of the tree, so quickly in fact that he crashed heavily into Hedgehog who immediately rolled himself up into a spikey ball!
"Hey! That's cool!" said the Squirrel obviously impressed.
"So tell me, where are you three going on this fine sunny day?" he asked.
"We're going on an adventure!" Hedgehog declared in a muffled voice from inside the spikey ball.
"An adventure?!" the Squirrel asked fascinated," can I come?"
"No, oh no!" said Badger, "it's not for everyone."
But, Rosie Rabbit intervened and said: "Ofcourse you can! The more the merrier, but tell me friend Squirrel, what talents can you bring to our little band of adventurers?"
"Why, my speed ofcourse!" he declared as he suddenly ran up the tree at great speed and disappeared amongst the many leaves and

branches. All of a sudden, he reappeared once more and leapt over their heads! 'Whheeeee!!!'



'The Squirrel'

"I'll be able to quickly climb up the trees and warn you of any dangers," he shouted, as he disappeared amongst the leaves once again.

"I do wish he'd stop doing that!" Badger declared angrily, " he's making me dizzy. Suddenly, another hazel-nut fell out of the tree and this time hit poor Badger on the end of his nose.

"Ouch!" he shouted. It was still sore after Hedgehogs sharp spike.

"Sorry!" a voice replied as Squirrel went zooming above their heads along another branch.

So, now there were four members in this little band of adventurers. Together they set off through the trees.

Beyond the wood lay a meadow of wildflowers. It was a field full of beautiful colours and scents.



The sun made the day grow warmer as it rose in the sky.
It's bright yellow rays lit up all the flowers in the meadow.
Suddenly, a dark shadow passed above their heads.
The four friends stopped momentarily, unsure of what it was.
The shadow sped over their heads once more for a brief second.
“What was that?!” Rosie asked nervously.
They all looked upwards at the blue sky but blinked their eyes in the bright yellow sunlight.
The strange shape flew by again, but this time it landed on the petals of a tall orange flower.
It was a beautiful butterfly!



“Hello,” said Rosie, “what kind of a creature are you? You are so beautiful. I've never seen anything like it before!”
“Thank you,” I'm a butterfly,” it replied.
“Humph! I knew that!” Badger said crossly.
“Tell me,” said the Butterfly, “where are you all going on such a fine sunny morning?”
“We are looking for an adventure,” said Squirrel. “We go wherever the path takes us.”
“That sounds absolutely wonderful,” said the Butterfly, “can I

come?"
"Yes ofcourse," Rosie the Rabbit replied, "but what talents can you bring to our adventure?"
The Butterfly thought for a moment before saying: "I can fly high up in the sky and find the best and safest paths for you to take."
Then with that, she immediately opened her beautiful wings and silently lifted off from the flower petals. She dived and soared, twisted and turned in the blue sky above their heads. Truly, she was a creature of breathtaking beauty and agility!
She landed very quietly on another flower.
So, now there were five companions on this great adventure.
Can you remember them?
Let's see, there was Rosie Rabbit



Basil the Badger



'Spike' the Hedgehog



'Squiggle' the Squirrel



'Beatrice' the Butterfly



Rabbits are not rodents but come from a family known as lagomorphs. They are herbivores which means that they eat carrots, vegetables, herbs and weeds and tree bark.
The rabbit is a very sociable animal and loves living in groups in a series of interlocking burrows known as a Warren.
When they are happy, they run, jump and twist in the air. This is called a 'binky'. They have good eyesight and sense of smell but surprisingly cannot 'see' something right in front of their noses!

Badger uses his great sense of smell and his eyesight which in daylight is not very good, but better at night. He is mainly a nocturnal creature, which means he's out and about more at night time. He only has small eyes and little ears, so relies mainly on his nose to find his food, friends and family.

The Hedgehog, so called because it makes little pig-like grunts when foraging for food. They have weak eyesight and have to rely upon their better senses of smell and hearing. They love to search through undergrowth and hedges looking for their food, which mainly consists of insects, snails, mice and frogs. It has a coat of stiff, sharp spines and will roll up into a ball if threatened or frightened. The Hedgehog usually likes to sleep of a day and come out at night. It is a solitary animal and sometimes hibernates in cold climates.

The Squirrel has excellent eyesight with his big eyes. It is very agile and lively. It has very sharp teeth which it uses to crack open nuts. It also likes to eat fruits, seeds, tree bark, buds and flowers. They have a long bushy tail which helps them to balance as they leap from branch to branch.
The Squirrel is usually a solitary creature but will share it's nest with others.

The Butterfly comes from the family known as ' Lepidoptera' which means 'scale wings'. It is an insect and tastes with its feet! It can only eat liquids such as nectar from plants. They have a long curled up straw-like tongue called a proboscis which they use to suck up the nectar! They have to wait for the Sun to heat them up before they can fly. They come in many different sizes and colours. They have six legs and two pairs of wings. The wings can be coloured for camouflage purposes to guard against predators, or have unusual markings such as 'eyes' to make them appear much bigger than they actually are!

The five companions now left the sweet smelling and multi-coloured meadow behind them. They had to crawl under another hedge and wooden fence, all of them ofcourse except for the butterfly who easily flew above it.
They steadily make their way into the field. The Sun was now high in the sky and it was very hot. Badger and Hedgehog were beginning to feel quite tired in the warm Sun, as they preferred the cooler, darker evenings. However, Butterfly was diving, swooping and soaring as the Sun's rays heated her wings. Squirrel had stopped to nibble on a small nut he'd brought with him.
"We have to stop for a moment!"Badger exclaimed, "Hedgehog and I are exhausted. We need to take a nap! Please!"
So, it was just Rabbit and Butterfly who went further into the field. Suddenly, a large shadow passed over them very quickly. At first, Rosie thought it was another butterfly, but upon it's return she could see that it was much too large to be a butterfly. Beatrice meanwhile, had landed on a flower partly hidden by a small bush.
The strange flying creature came back above Rosie, but this time sweeping much lower. She could feel the wind of it's wings as it passed over her head. As all Rabbits do when they feel scared or threatened, Rosie froze completely still. She couldn't move!
The creature came back screeching loudly. Rosie got a good look at it.
It had a long pointed beak, large bright orange eyes and a pair of very sharp and strong talons. It was a Hawk! The bird made a grab for poor Rosie with it's sharp talons, but luckily for her it missed. What could she do? Badger and Hedgehog were fast asleep and Beatrice the Butterfly wasn't strong enough to help her.



The Hawk

Rosie began to run as fast as her legs could carry her. She was so frightened that she didn't run in any particular direction but, zig-zagged up and down, round and round across the field.
The Hawk made a swooping high-speed dive again. This time the bird's sharp talons were that close to Rosie that some fur was snatched up! The poor Rabbit even felt the wind off the bird's outstretched wings. It flew off up into the blue sky again, gaining height for another attack. The hungry Hawk probably wouldn't miss the next time.
Rosie could hear the bird's screeching cry as it began another dive. Once again, poor Rosie was frozen to the spot.
She closed her eyes tight shut!
Oh, if only she had stayed in the safety of the hutch in the garden. She missed the two children Oscar and Amy and her warm, safe home with plenty of food and clean, clear water.
Rosie held her breath waiting for the inevitable strike.
The bird was only a very short distance above Rosie's head, when suddenly a dark figure dashed quickly from the side and with a great force crashed headlong into the hawk which sent it

sprawling. The bird of prey beat its wings furiously in an attempt to take to the skies again, but once more the blurred figure crashed headlong into it, knocking the hawk over. It gave a loud screech as it clambered to its feet and after a short run took to the air. Rosie watched its fleeing figure disappear over the hills. It wasn't coming back!

"Well,"a voice said, "that's taken care of him! He won't try that again in a hurry!"

Rosie turned to see a large rabbit standing in front of her.

She sniffed the air: "You're a rabbit, just like me!" she exclaimed.

"Yes, I suppose I am," the other rabbit replied. "I hope you don't mind me saying, but although you look like a rabbit, you er....how shall I put it? You don't exactly SMELL like a rabbit, if you know what I mean?"

"That's because I'm a domesticated rabbit,"Rosie explained.

The other rabbit looked puzzled.

"A 'whatsticated' rabbit?" he asked

"I was born in a Pet Shop." she said. "You DO know what a Pet Shop is, don't you?"

The wild rabbit shook his head: "No, I don't believe I do!" he said.

Suddenly, from out of the bushes where they'd been hiding when they had heard the hawk attacking, came the Badger, Squirrel, Hedgehog and Butterfly. The wild rabbit immediately took up a stance of being ready to fight each and everyone of them.

He was such a brave rabbit and nothing scared him.

"These are my friends," said Rosie.

She introduced each of them.

"My name's Hilltop," he said proudly.

Just then as if out of nowhere, dozens of rabbits appeared.

"These are my friends and family," announced Hilltop.



'The Wild Rabbits'

Greetings and pleasantries were exchanged between them all.
"So tell me," asked Hilltop, "what brings you and your friends around these parts? I've not seen you before."
"We're all on an adventure," Rosie explained.
"Where to, may I ask?" Hilltop replied.
"Oh, here and there, wherever the road takes us!" boasted Hedgehog. "Would you like to join us?"
Much to Rosie's surprise the Wild Rabbit without any hesitation said: " Ah no ! I don't think I will. Thank you for your offer, but you see, I'm perfectly happy here where I am with my family and friends. I don't need anymore than that. I suppose you were all very unhappy where you live, otherwise you wouldn't ever have left!"
"No, no, it was nothing like that," the Squirrel declared. "You see, we each met Rosie Rabbit and it sounded very exciting and inviting. She was embarking on an adventure all on her own, and we each wondered what lay beyond the hedges, the fence and the gate. I thought there was something better to be found."
"Hmm,"Hilltop nodded, "well, all that I can say is that I'm very happy to live here. As you've just seen we have enough excitement and adventure on a daily basis to last us a lifetime! We have to watch out for hawks, owls, stoats, weasels and foxes everyday!"

“But, that doesn't sound a very nice place to live,” Hedgehog said.
“Oh, but it is!” Hilltop replied. “We have sweet grass and lots of water to drink from the little stream, but most of all we are free to run and play in the sun. We live in burrows under the ground to keep us snug and warm on cold, rainy days. As a matter of fact, you are all welcome to stay with us if you wish. We have plenty of room. What do you think?”
Rosie Rabbit, Basil the Badger, Squiggle the Squirrel, Spike the Hedgehog and Beatrice the Butterfly all gathered together a little bit away from Hilltop. They discussed the rabbit's offer. After a very short while, they all agreed that it would be a very nice place to live. They were worried about what Hilltop had told them about the other animals, and were afraid they might be attacked, but having seen what Hilltop had done to the Hawk made them feel a lot happier and safer. If any of the other rabbits in the warren were like him they could fight anything!
It was much better to be part of a large group than on your own!



THE END

Thank you for reading this story:
'THE ADVENTURES OF ROSIE RABBIT'

Other stories by this Author Will Lankstead are:

For children:
The Lazy Cockerel
Chi Lin
The Boy who loved the Moon
The Ram, The Wolf and the Scorpion

For adults:
'Converse' A book of Poetry
Tales of Murder, Mystery & Suspense Volume One
How to play the 5-string Banjo
'Canvas' A Book of my Artwork

James Lankstead 'The Artist who couldn't draw' and the 'If only Girl'.



Will Lankstead is a Musician, Writer, Artist, Actor & Photographer. He lives in Ireland with his wife and children.

'FASCINATING FACTS ABOUT RABBITS'

A male rabbit is called a 'buck'.

A female rabbit is called a 'doe'.

Baby rabbits are called 'kits' or 'kittens'.

Rabbits live in groups called a 'herd'.

They mainly live underground in 'burrows.'

A series of burrows linked together is called a 'warren'.

Rabbits are 'herbivores' which means they like to eat plants.

They have long ears which can be 10cms or more in length.

They can live as long as up to ten years.

Pet rabbits generally live longer than wild ones.

Those that live with humans are known as 'domesticated'.

Over half of the World's rabbit population live in the USA.

Rabbits can make babies very quickly.

Baby rabbits are born without fur and their eyes closed.

Not everyone sees rabbits as being cute and cuddly.

Some people see them as nuisances or a pest; especially gardeners.

They have very sensitive ears which can warn them of any danger.

They alert the rest of the group by thumping their feet on the ground.

They run in a haphazard zig-zag pattern when being chased.

If caught by a predator they have strong back legs to kick with.

Rabbits can also bite with their strong teeth.

They belong to the family 'Leporidae', gene group Lagomorpha.

They are mammals like humans and not rodents as once thought.

Some of the predators of rabbits are foxes, owls and hawks.

They have five toes on their front paws and four on the back.

Rabbits mainly 'hop' to get around unless under threat.

Wild rabbits fur is mainly brown or grey.

Pet rabbits can be many different colours.

Rabbits love to sleep up to 8 or 9 hours per day.

They eat their 'droppings' known as 'cecotropes'.

This isn't as disgusting as it may sound!

They contain essential vitamins, proteins and minerals needed.

On average the female gices birth to 4 to 12 kits in a litter.

A single 'doe' can produce 800 babies in one season!

The babies are weaned for 4 to 5 weeks.

They suckle on mother's milk only a couple of times a day.

Rabbits cannot vomit! [Ugh!]

There are nearly forty types of rabbits in the World.

The Rabbit was first introduced into Britain by the Romans.

They can have long or short fur and lop or upright ears.

Rabbits have whiskers like a cat to help them judge distances.

They dig burrows by using their sharp claws and strong back legs.

They can stand up on their back legs to get a better view.

They have very good eyesight.

Wild rabbits live in groups of ten to fifteen.

Pet rabbits need a hutch big enough to allow them to stand up in.

It should be up off the ground away from predators and damp.

It needs a dark area to sleep in and a light one to live in.

The soiled litter needs to be removed daily.

Rabbits need lots of exercise and watched to prevent escape.

Be careful letting your rabbit loose indoors as it can chew cables.

Do not let your rabbits claws to grow too long.

But they must be cut or trimmed by a qualified Vet.

Get your rabbit vaccinated against serious illnessess.

If you look after your rabbit it will be one happy bunny!

There are over 2 million pet rabbits in the UK.

Polish and Netherland dwarves are the smallest rabbit breeds.

The Flemish Giant is the largest breed.

Love and look after your pet and it will love you!



GOOD LUCK!!