



The Mini Page

Next Week:
Earth Day
turns 50

Issue 14, 2020

Founded by Betty Debnam

Hopping Into Spring



photo by Eric Sonstroem

Mini Fact:

The wild rabbit most often seen in the United States is the cottontail.

Rabbits at home

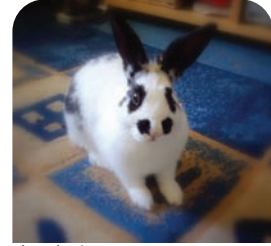


photo by Anne

Rabbits may seem cute and cuddly, but just like any other pet, each has its own personality. Some rabbits play more than others; some are easily startled and might run away or bite when they're scared.

Having a rabbit as a pet requires a **commitment**, or promise, to take care of the animal and spend time with it.

Housing

Some people like to keep rabbits outdoors in a rabbit **hutch**, or cage. However, experts suggest that pet rabbits be kept indoors to keep them safe from other animals and bad weather.

Indoor rabbits need a cage with a litter box. They can be trained to use the litter box just like a cat.

Exercise

Rabbits should be let out of the cage to play, but experts say they should be supervised while they're out. They like to play early in the morning and in the late afternoon.

Some rabbits chew on things they shouldn't, such as carpet, electrical cords or **baseboards**, where the wall meets the floor. Make sure you watch them when they're out of their cage!

Lots of kids have stuffed animals at home. One favorite is a bunny. In fact, some kids have real bunnies as pets.

Rabbits, both stuffed and alive, seem cuddly with their soft fur, long ears and twitching noses. To celebrate the arrival of spring, The Mini Page takes a closer look at rabbits.

Rabbit or hare?

You might think the words "rabbit" and "hare" describe the same animal. In fact, there are big differences between rabbits and hares.



A hare.

- Rabbits are born without hair and are blind. Hares are born with fur and with their eyes open.
- Hares are usually bigger than rabbits and have longer legs and ears.
- Hares can usually run faster than rabbits.
- Some rabbits live in

underground burrows, while hares have their nests above ground.

Wild rabbits

Many thousands of years ago, rabbits could be found only on the continents of Africa and Europe. Today, they live on every continent except Antarctica.

North American rabbits usually like to live alone. They can mate at any time during the year, but February to October is their main mating season. Male rabbits, or **bucks**, will fight over a female rabbit, or **doe**.



photo by Brent Myers

This red-tailed hawk has caught a rabbit to eat.

A pregnant rabbit builds a nest for her babies. She may have four or five litters of babies during a year, with five to eight kits in each litter. But rabbits have many **predators**, or other animals that hunt them, so many of the babies will not live to be adults.

What's for dinner?

Rabbits look for food at night. During the day, they hide in their nests and sleep.

Plants, including vegetables, grasses, clover and even tree bark, are their favorite foods. Four sharp front teeth (two on the top, two on the bottom) help them bite through tough plant stems and leaves.

A wild rabbit eats quickly, then goes back to its safe nest. Next, it passes partly **digested**, or processed, food. It eats the soft droppings, which still have minerals important to the rabbit's health.

Then it passes the food again, usually outside its nest. The rabbit will not eat these hard, dry droppings.

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Try 'n' Find

Words that remind us of rabbits are hidden in this puzzle. Some words are hidden backward or diagonally, and some letters are used twice. See if you can find:

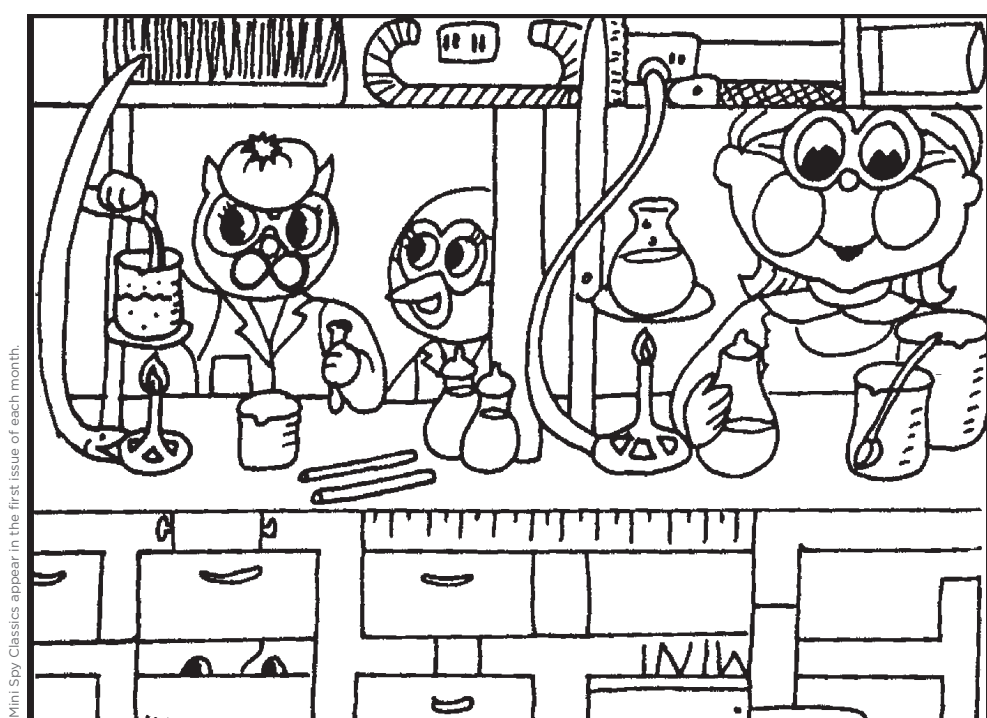


BASEBOARD, BUCK,
BUNNY, BURROW, CAGE,
CHEW, COMMITMENT,
DIGEST, DOE, DROPPING,
EARS, GRASS, HARE,
HUTCH, KITS, LEGS,
MATING, NEST, PLAY,
PREDATOR, RABBIT, RUN,
SPRING, VEGETABLES.

L S A B A S E B O A R D H D E
E T N E M T I M M O C Z S E O
G I A G N I T A M N G R D G D
S K R A B B I T U N A G I A W
B U N N Y S P R I E N R G C O
H G N I P P O R D R Q A E I R
A K C U B T P P L A Y S S N R
R W E H C S H C T U H S T E U
E X R O T A D E R P G Q D S B
T B Z V E G E T A B L E S T Z

Mini Spy Classics

Mini Spy and her girlfriends are doing scientific experiments. See if you can find the hidden pictures. Then color the picture.



Mini Spy Classics appear in the first issue of each month.

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- three number 8's
- word MINI
- top hat
- funny face
- letter T
- file
- candy cane
- tomato
- snake
- comb
- toothbrush
- ruler
- cleaver
- letter L

Mini Jokes



Ryan: What do you call a group of flying rabbits?
Rachel: The Hare Force!

Eco Note



Did you know the methane in cow burps traps 28 times more heat in the atmosphere than carbon dioxide? Cows' methane-filled burps make up about 15% of the world's total greenhouse gas emissions. Now ZELP, or Zero Emissions Livestock Project, has developed masks that turn methane-filled cow burps into water and carbon dioxide. The masks could start selling as early as next year.

adapted with permission from Earthweek.com

For later:

What would you need to adopt a bunny at your house? Look in your newspaper for ads from pet stores and make a list of the items you might buy when adopting a bunny.

Teachers: For standards-based activities to accompany this feature, visit: bit.ly/MPstandards. And follow The Mini Page on Facebook!



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