



Edition 11 – April 2015

In This Issue:

Welcome!	1
Around the Shelter	1
What's On	1
Piggies for Adoption	2
Sponsorship	2
QGPR Online Shop	3
Meet the Team	3
Health Facts	4
Piggy Food Facts	4

Welcome!

Happy Easter and welcome to the April edition of the *QGPR Weekly*. We're settling in well to our new location for open days! If you haven't had a chance to come and visit, you can find out the address by sending a message to the [QGPR Facebook page](#).

The *Qld Guinea Pig Refuge* was founded in 2013 by a group of volunteers dedicated to supporting, rescuing, and finding homes for lost, abandoned, unwanted and mistreated guinea pigs.

Beth – Editor

Around the Shelter

We now have over 30 guinea pigs looking for their forever homes, so if you're thinking of adopting your first piggies or adding to your piggy family, now is the perfect time. Don't forget to come and check out our new open day location at Bracken Ridge. With our shop, piggy parlour, adoptables, and lots of volunteers, we're happy to help where we can.

We always have an increase in people wanting to surrender their guinea pigs just before Christmas, Easter and other school holidays. Another service QGPR offers, which you may not know about, is boarding your piggies when you go on holidays. Please consider this option before looking at surrendering your guinea pigs.

Tabitha – Shelter Manager

What's On



Piggies for Adoption



Opal, Pearl and Crystal

Opal, Pearl and Crystal are mother and daughters. Mum, Pearl (centre), is a curious girl who comes to the door of her cage to see what's for dinner! Opal (left) is a sweetie who loves to cuddle with her mum. Her younger sister Crystal (right) is a cheeky girl who popcorns around the cage. They are a bonded trio who love to snuggle together.



Turbo and Racer

Turbo and Racer are two lively brothers born at the refuge before Christmas. They really live up to their names as they love to do speed laps around the cage and snuggle up together

These piggies, and many more, are looking for their forever homes and are \$15 each.

Desexed males are \$30 each. They come fully health checked, worm and mite treated, and are living at their foster carer's home where they receive lots of handling time. If you are interested in adopting, please fill out our [Adoption Enquiry Form](#).

Sponsorship

Sponsoring allows you to help us help piggies in need.



Pregnant guinea pigs often find their way into our foster program, often as a result of incorrect sexing, backyard breeding or full breeder shut downs.

Female guinea pigs can become fertile from four weeks of age. Hardly more than a baby herself, little Coco is on pregnancy watch as a result of being left in with males for too long after her birth. Due to her age, a pregnancy would be high risk both to Coco and the babies. She will spend 10 weeks with an experienced carer who will monitor her diet, health and weight gain.

While it is too early to know if Coco is pregnant, we need to plan for the babies that she may have. Our largest single intake was of 26 pregnant females when a breeder closed down. With potentially one to nine babies for each pregnancy, in cases such as these it would be easy to have an extra 100 guinea pigs born needing to find homes.

Sponsoring a pregnant female helps us to save more pregnant girls, ensuring that they and their babies have a happy and healthy life where they will never be forced to go through the risks and suffering often associated with pregnancy and birth.

All sponsorship amounts and one-off donations over \$2 are completely tax deductible. For further information, please visit the [Sponsor](#) section of our website.

QGPR Online Shop

A strawberry house is the perfect addition to your piggy's home this winter.



A lot of people choose to house their guinea pigs outside in a patio or two storey grass hutch. These strawberry houses fit perfectly into the enclosed part of your piggy's hutch, providing added warmth as the overnight temperature starts to drop. They should be removed while it's still warm during the day. These are also great for inside set-ups in constantly air-conditioned homes.

They are fully machine washable, with a removable inner base for spot cleaning. Available online for \$20, plus postage.

All profits from these sales go directly back into the rescue, rehabilitation and care of QGPR guinea pigs. We post within Australia only, using pre-paid satchels. For more information, go to our [online shop](#).

Meet the Team

Bruce

A little about you:

I am a foster parent and get all the 'lively' piggies for handling. I also make grass pens for the shelter to sell and use on open days. I have adopted five piggies of my own.

How did you become a piggy volunteer and foster parent?

My daughter wanted a cat and I said no. So we settled on guinea pigs. My wife became involved with another shelter and roped me in to help as well. It is a nice family thing we do together.

Most memorable piggy moment?

Bringing a piggy back from illness and depression. I thought he was going to die. I ended up adopting him because he found a place in my heart.



What is something people may not know about guinea pigs?

They all have different personalities which will come out once you earn their trust.

Health Facts

Vitamin C Deficiency and Scurvy

Guinea pigs are not able to produce their own vitamin C. It is therefore essential that they are supplied it in their food. If a guinea pig does not receive sufficient vitamin C in its diet, bone and blood vessel abnormalities can develop, along with enlarged adrenal glands, bleeding in the limb joints, rib muscles and intestines. The average guinea pig needs between 10 and 30 mg/kg daily for good health.

Signs of vitamin C deficiency include the following:

- lethargy, weakness, unwillingness to move;
- hopping instead of walking, enlarged or stiff limb joints;
- not eating, loss of weight, diarrhoea;
- eye and nose discharge;
- rough coat;
- tenderness to touch (may cry out in pain if restrained);
- poor flesh condition; or
- internal skeletal-muscular haemorrhage.

Some of these symptoms, such as eye and nose discharge, may also indicate other serious illnesses like a respiratory infection. If your guinea pig is showing some of these signs, do not assume this is 'just' a lack of vitamin C and fail to provide critical veterinary care for a serious illness. Vitamin C rich foods include capsicum, kale, spinach, and parsley.

Please note that information provided is general only. If you have any concerns about your guinea pig's health, please ensure you seek appropriate veterinary care.

Piggy Food Facts

Carrots

Carrots are a guinea pig's version of chocolate and are a favourite for many. The amount of carrots fed, however, should be limited as

carrots have a high sugar and vitamin A content and are not that high in vitamin C.

As a guide, a carrot every other day per guinea pig is sufficient as part of a varied diet of fruit and vegetables. Carrots also have a high water content, so overfeeding could risk bloating.



Guinea pigs are able to eat the green tops of the carrots, but again give sparingly as these are high in calcium. Remember fresh hay and water should always be available to your guinea pigs.

To access the QGPR food list on our Facebook page, click [here](#).

QLD Guinea Pig Refuge...

...are pleased to provide Pig'n'Mix, Hay and Mite & Worm treatment at locations other than our shelter. Please use the contact information below for your closest location to arrange a suitable time with our volunteer. At least 24 hours notice is appreciated.

Pig'n'Mix - \$5 per bag | Hay Biscuit - \$4 | Worm & Mite Treatment - \$5 per pig

Please ask about our loyalty programs!

Location	Contact	Pig'n'Mix	Hay	Mite & Worm
Loganholme	jlc8330@hotmail.com	✓	✓	✓
Bracken Ridge	oatjodie@gmail.com	✓	✓	✓
Bray Park	0490423405	✓		✓
The Gap	achkruse@live.com.au	✓		✓
Lockrose	jessicareay353@hotmail.com	✓		✓
Browns Plains	aaronskywroe@hotmail.com	✓		✓
Thorneside	me1_03@live.com.au	✓	✓	✓
Mt Cotton	natalie.garden@qimr.edu.au	✓	✓	✓
Wynnum	chris.rollie89@gmail.com	✓	✓	



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