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Welcome!

Welcome to the November edition of the *QGPR Weekly*. A big thank you to Amy for being the guest editor of the *Weekly* while I was away!

Open Days are held on the first and third Saturdays of every month at the Bald Hills Scout Den, 508 Bracken Ridge Road. Come along, say hello and check out our range of stock and piggies for adoption.

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 Refuge

Last month, the number of guinea pigs adopted dropped due to school holidays. The Refuge really needs to find good homes this month for the current guinea pigs in care, as historically the next few months are peak periods for surrenders, especially December and January. The Refuge needs to free up cages so that we are able to take these guinea pigs. We also need new foster carers to help us through this busy period. If you are interested in becoming a foster carer, please complete the form at <http://www.qldguineapigrefuge.com.au/foster-carer-application.html>.

We have lots of new summer stock ready for our next open day on Saturday, 7 November. Please come along to support us and the guinea pigs in our care.

Rachel – Refuge Coordinator

What's On

Guinea Pigs for Adoption



Trouble (11 months old)

Trouble is a lonely desexed male looking for a girlfriend to share a cage with. Trouble was found free ranging in a football field and was given his name by persistent volunteers during his rescue.

He has come a long way since then and will now happily eat veggies straight from your hand and loves falling asleep on his foster parents.



Des and Bella (2 years and 2.5 years old)

Son and mum, Des and Bella are as close as two piggies could possibly be. They love each other's company and snuggling up together. Bella is desexed and has had a broken front foot

which is fully healed but means she will need a home with no ramps. They love running up and looking out the front of their cage waiting for food and will eat out of your hand, but are a little shy in unfamiliar surroundings

These guinea pigs, and many more, are looking for their forever homes and are \$20 each. Desexed guinea pigs 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](#).

Guinea Pig Food Facts

Foods from the Garden

There are many things around the back yard that guinea pigs love to eat and are very nutritious for them.

Common weeds are those such as dandelion, catsear, clover, chickweed and sow thistle, to name a few. It important to be able to correctly identify a weed so as not to risk feeding your guinea pigs something that may be poisonous to them.

It is also important to only ever pick weeds from places you are sure have not been sprayed with any pesticides or herbicides, as this could be fatal for your guinea pig. Younger plants are more nutritious than older plants.

Dandelions are popular with guinea pigs. They love the leaves and the flowers. Dandelions are high in vitamin C and calcium and they also contain potassium which makes it a balanced diuretic.

Catsear, or false dandelion as it's also known, contains lots of vitamins and minerals. It is high in potassium and calcium and has antibacterial properties. It too is a powerful diuretic.

Sow thistle is not actually a thistle and is related to the lettuce family. The leaves are high in vitamins C and A, thiamine, riboflavin and niacin. It has many medicinal properties, including being antibacterial and a mild laxative and liver/gall bladder tonic, so it is beneficial in many ways. It is, however, high in nitrates which could be toxic in large amounts.

Chickweed is safe to feed in small amounts and is nutritious.

Clover is a popular weed for guinea pigs. Both the flowers and leaves can be eaten. It should be fed sparingly though as is high in calcium.



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

Piggy Shop

The Qld Guinea Pig Refuge Online Piggy Shop Facebook page has now been closed down due to confusion between the Online Shop page and the actual Refuge page.

However, stock is still available for online purchase and delivery. Photos of current stock will be posted on the Refuge's Facebook page and be available for online purchases until the next open day, when stock will be taken to be sold.



New stock will then be posted on the Facebook page for the next fortnight. Thank you for your continued support in buying our products to help fund the work we all do for these beautiful little animals.

Meet the Team - Donna

A little about you?

Hi, my name is Donna. I am a mum of two non-furry children and 13 fur babies, one Chihuahua and 12 guinea pigs.

We adopted our first three piggies in February 2009. I loved them so much, I started volunteering and fostering just a few months later.

Most memorable piggy moment?

I do not have a most memorable moment as there has been too many. But hand raising tiny babies in need, has always stuck in my mind.



What is something people may not know about guinea pigs?

Something people may not know is that, totally blind piggies can lead a completely normal, long life.

Medical Facts

Heat Management and Heat Stroke

Guinea pigs can suffer from heat stress when exposed to temperatures around 30 degrees Celsius and over. It only takes around 10 to 15 minutes for a guinea pig to develop heat stroke in these temperatures.

Guinea pigs are unable to sweat to cool down, so their core body temperature begins to rise. Heat stroke is quick hitting and the detrimental effects are fast moving.

Heat Management

To help your guinea pig cope with the hot weather, the following cooling methods should be used:

- Ensure water bottles are always full with cool water. If your piggies drink a lot of water, add a second bottle.
- Use ice packs or frozen water bottles. Place a number in the freezer so when one thaws, you have another for their cage. If you are out all day, a one or two litre milk bottle filled with water and frozen lasts longer than a small ice pack. Make sure all ice packs or bottles are wrapped in newspaper or cloth to protect the guinea pigs paws.



- Tiles and bricks are great to put in your guinea pigs' cage on a hot day. They stay cool for long periods of time.
- Frozen ice treats are great to cool your piggie. Cut up fresh fruits such as rock melon, watermelon, strawberries etc. and put in an ice cube tray with water. Freeze overnight. Place in a heavy dish that can't be tipped over. However, these should be used sparingly as fruits are high in sugar.

- Fans and air conditioners can be used if your guinea pigs live indoors. Make sure that the air flow isn't directly onto the cage. Symptoms of heat stroke include lethargy, drooling, panting, convulsions, increased heartbeat, weak limbs and inability to move. Heat stroke can hit guinea pigs even when in shade on a hot day.

How to Treat Heat Stroke

If your guinea pig displays any of these symptoms, please take it to the vet immediately as heat stroke can be fatal. Vets can administer sub cut fluids and electrolytes to your guinea pig that it can quickly absorb. If you can't get your guinea pig to a vet, follow the below treatment plan.

1. Cool your guinea pig. Place it in a bowl or sink of lukewarm (not cold) water up to 4cm deep. Gently and slowly spread this water over your guinea pig for approximately 10 minutes. Do not use cold water or submerge your guinea pig as this will cause their body to go into shock.
2. Hydrate your guinea pig. After cooling their core body temperature in the water, it's time to rehydrate their bodies. Administer half strength hydralite through a syringe extremely slowly in the corner of their mouth. Administer in small .25ml amounts so you do not aspirate them. If you do not have hydralite, use plain water.
3. Restore energy levels. Using the same method in step 2, feed your guinea pig Nutrigel (available from vets and produce stores) or a small amount of honey mixed 3/4 parts with water. Feed 2ml every two hours until your guinea pig is more responsive.
4. Allow your guinea pig to recover in a quiet, dark, cool place in-between feeds. This will allow their body to rest and minimise stress.
5. Take your guinea pig to a vet as soon as you can.

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.

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