

Edition 25 – June 2016

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Welcome!

Welcome to the June edition of the *QGPR Weekly*. You may have noticed our fresh new look with our beautiful logo and banner. Many thanks to Karen from Gidgeymo Illustrations for her support and expertise with our new design!

Our Open Days are held on the first and third Saturday of each month at the Bald Hills Scout Den, 508 Bracken Ridge Road. We have for sale our own Pig'n'Mix, hay and lots of stock for your piggies' every want and need.

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. We are 100% volunteer run, with the majority of our funds raised through Open Day sales. We thank all those who support us, either as volunteers, foster carers, adopters, donors or customers!

Beth – Editor

Around the Refuge

QGPR had a fantastic time at the Pig Day Out last month. Our stall was a huge success, with all proceeds going to help the guinea pigs in our care.

With most of the guinea pigs rescued from free-ranging along the railway line by a fellow shelter, New BeGUINEAings now in our care, we have seen some births and unfortunately a few deaths as a result of their poor health. Luckily, the guinea pigs that have birthed so far have only had single bubs, making it easier for the mums to care for them.

QGPR continues to receive a large number of surrender requests each month, with the Refuge accepting 15 guinea pigs into our care in the last two weeks alone.

With the arrival of the colder weather, we remind you to keep your guinea pigs warm, especially at night. Please read our *Cold Weather Management* and *Medical Facts* articles for tips. QGPR sells lots of warm and cosy winter beds at our Open Days so please come along and stock up.

Rachel – Refuge Coordinator

What's On



Saturday, 18 June 2016

10am–3.30pm

At the Bald Hills Scout Den, 508 Bracken Ridge Road
All adoptions require pre-approval. A link to our online adoption form can be found on our Facebook page or website.
Forms need to be submitted at least two days prior to open day for processing

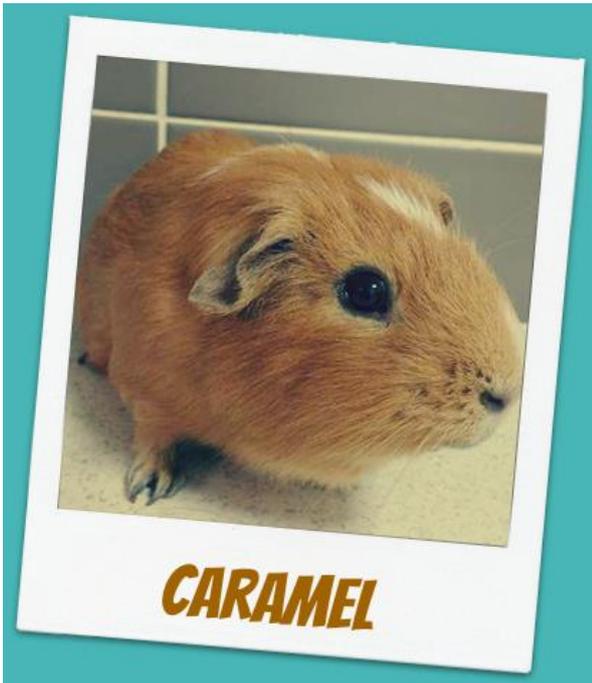
For more details...  Qld Guinea Pig Refuge

Guinea Pigs for Adoption



Crunchie Munchie (28/08/2015) and Amy (05/12/2015)

Meet Crunchie Munchie (desexed male) and Amy. Amy is the grey and white piggy. She is shy by nature, but very cute. Crunchie Munchie is curious and loves to come to the edge of the cage for food. These piggies are gorgeous and would suit a family that has older children.



Caramel (25/04/2014)

Say hello to Caramel! This lil cutie is such a quiet and chill guy who doesn't mind a cuddle and a scratch behind the ears. He is looking for another boy to be mates with.

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](#).

Sponsorship

The Refuge has a number of male guinea pigs in need of desexing so they can find their new best friends. You can help us with medical costs by sponsoring a male, or with a one-off donation. While desexing costs in excess of \$100, any amount is appreciated.



These boys are not able to be paired with other males for a number of reasons, most often because they have been living with females and are aggressive towards other males. Having a girlfriend will make them much happier!

If you can help cover the cost of the desexing surgery and aftercare, donations can be made by PayPal to qldguineapigrefuge@live.com, or directly into our bank account.

Details are: Qld Guinea Pig Refuge Inc.

BSB: 124 006

Account number: 2207 4473.

All donations over \$2 are fully tax deductible.

Cold Weather Management

With the weather finally getting cooler, it is extremely important to keep your guinea pigs warm. Ideally, it is best if they housed inside during the colder months; however, for many people this isn't possible. If you need to house your guinea pigs outside, please use the methods below to keep your guinea pigs warm:

- Cover the hutch with old blankets, sleeping bags and tarps from late afternoon
- Give the piggies warm beds and tunnels to cuddle inside of, such as cuddle sacks or material houses
- Makes sure all bedding is cleaned regularly so that it is dry
- Ensure the hutch is out of the wind and cover partially on windy days with blankets.



QGPR has a large range of warm cuddle sacks and tunnels available for sale at reasonable prices at our Open Days.

Meet the Team - Caroline

A little about you?

My name is Caroline and I am a teacher. When my daughters were 8 and 10 respectively, one was given a guinea pig by a friend. We bought a second female guinea pig to keep her company. Having pets is a great way to foster the love for

animals in children, and also to teach them to be responsible for looking after a pet.



How did you become a volunteer?

Over the 16 or so years since those two guinea pigs came into our lives, we have had a number of piggies, who we adopted from a refuge. My daughter, Louisa still owns two piggies and so do I. It was actually Louisa who introduced me to the QGPR. When I realised how many guinea pigs need care and temporary homes, I decided to foster guinea pigs.

Most memorable piggy moment?

My most memorable moment was when an abandoned guinea pig girl turned out to be pregnant and gave birth to two beautiful babies. I had seen other newborn animals like mice, cats, etc. who cannot see, have little fur and are pretty helpless. And here were these two baby guinea pigs, miniature replicas of adult guinea pigs, a few hours old, checking out their surroundings and having a nibble of any food lying around.

What is something people may not know about guinea pigs?

Guinea pigs have such individual likes and dislikes when it comes to food. All my guinea pigs have loved capsicum, which is extremely healthy for them and can be fed daily, but I am still to get two of my current fosters to eat it. The same two piggies won't touch corn, whereas my own piggies would kill for it. I mainly give them the husks and silk of the corn though, because corn is very sweet and can easily make piggies fat. I knew not to feed iceberg lettuce to guinea pigs but I also just learnt at the QGPR that cos lettuce is very healthy for piggies and can be fed daily.

Medical Facts

How to Identify and Treat URI's in Guinea Pigs

URIs (upper respiratory infections) are fast-moving bacterial infections of the respiratory system that are almost always fatal if not acted upon quickly. It's important to note that guinea pigs do not suffer from colds and viruses, only URIs, which are extremely contagious and often found in pet shop piggies.

URIs begin by bacteria entering the sinus area and develop by spreading to the lungs. These bacteria may not cause a problem for your guinea pig, but factors such as a lowered immune system and cold weather can allow URIs to develop. If the URI spreads to the lungs, your guinea pig will have a little-to-none chance of survival. To help prevent URIs, keep your guinea pigs inside and give plenty of warm hides and cuddle pouches in winter and ensure their diet is high in vitamin C.

There are several symptoms of URIs to look for. These include refusal to eat or drink, no faeces, a slight rumble in the chest when breathing, sneezing, coughing, lethargy and a puffed up coat. In more severe cases, you can see fluid coming from the nostrils and eyes, crusty and/or sunken eyes and difficulty breathing.



URIs are extremely fast moving, so if you notice any of the above symptoms in your piggy, it's imperative they are taken to the vet as soon as possible. The vet will prescribe antibiotics and may also prescribe other medications or place the

piggy on oxygen if necessary. The use of a vapouriser or humidifier once back home can also help to decongest sinuses and lungs.

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. A list of reputable cavy savvy vets in the Brisbane area who are experienced with small animals, especially guinea pigs, can be found by clicking [here](#).

Guinea Pig Food Facts

Root vegetables are plant roots used as vegetables. As they grow underground, they absorb a lot of nutrients from the soil. Root vegetables include yams, beets, sweet potatoes, carrots, turnips, artichokes, potatoes, onions and garlic. Some root vegetables are good for guinea pigs and some are poisonous, so it is important to know which are safe before feeding them. Root vegetables are great as they are full of nutrition but are also high in calories so too much can cause unwanted weight gain. Some root vegetables that can be fed are:

Carrots - high in beta-carotene, a form of vitamin A and also contain a good amount of vitamin C, which is essential for guinea pigs' health and immunity. Carrots are high in sugar and too much vitamin A can cause liver issues so these should be fed a couple of times a week as a treat. Carrot tops and leaves can also be fed, but sparingly as they are high in calcium.

Sweet Potatoes - both the leaves and the sweet potato can be eaten. High in vitamin A, C and E, all important for guinea pig health. The amount fed should be limited due to their high sugar, oxalate and vitamin A content, all of which can be detrimental to health in large amounts. Sweet potato leaves can be fed daily but the potato itself only fortnightly.

Root vegetables that should **never** be fed to guinea pigs are potatoes, onions, and garlic as they are poisonous.

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

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