

A Dozen Wild Reasons to Never Abandon a Rabbit Outdoors



1. It is Not Natural

A domesticated pet rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*), is not native to the Americas and the environment is foreign to them.

Find a rabbit rescue group or a humane society where you can take your rabbit instead of turning it loose outdoors. The rabbit will have a much better chance of finding a good home.



5. Neighborhood Pets

The local neighborhood cats and dogs can be lethal to a defenseless bunny left loose outside. These rabbits do not know the territory and do not have escape routes in case they are

chased. Abandoned bunnies will not stray far from where they were left to fend for themselves.



2. Cars & Trucks

A pet rabbit has never had to dodge cars or navigate streets. They easily become "road kill" for unsuspecting motorists.



6. Predators

All rabbits are prey for predators. Consider that a cottontail rabbit who knows his territory has an average lifespan of six months.



3. Disease

Bunnies pick-up fleas, mites, fly maggots, and other parasites they are not exposed to as pets. Plus, wild rabbits are carriers of diseases that can kill domesticated rabbits.



7. Starvation

Rabbits that have had regular feedings and water given to them do not know what to eat. They do not know which plants are poisonous.



4. Wild Rabbits

Domesticated rabbits are descendants of European rabbits. They are only distant cousins to *Sylvilagus floridanus*, the Eastern Cottontail in America. While all 45

breeds of domestic rabbits can interbreed, they cannot breed with cottontail rabbits or hares. The embryos will not survive. Cottontail rabbits will also fight pet feral rabbits with sometimes fatal results.



8. Feral Rabbits

Areas already used as dumping grounds for pet rabbits are not a haven. A recent arrival to a feral rabbit colony will have to fight for territory and can be maimed or killed. An unsprayed female

rabbit can produce a litter of babies every 31 days adding to the problem. A city park full of rabbits is not an idyllic place for a former pet.

9. Cougars



10. Snakes



11. Eagles



12. Coyotes



& Bears, Foxes, Weasels, Wolverines, Bobcats, Owls, Mink, Hawks, Lynxes, Wolves

It May Be Against the Law in Your State: Most states have animal cruelty laws that make it a misdemeanor offense and in some States a felony to abandon a pet including rabbits.