

HOOVER-SENIOR LAB-OFF-SITE LEARNING PACKET DAY 1

Instructor: Meredith Hoover

Date _____

Program/Class: Animal Science Class - Juniors OFF-SITE LEARNING PACKET DAY 1 Period 1-4

State Indicator/Competency:

- 1.1.1 Identify types, composition, quality and compatibility of feeds, feed additives and feed byproducts
- 1.3.1 Identify, classify, evaluate and select animal species and/or breeds.
- 1.3.5 Estimate the environment's carrying capacity and its impact on animal health.
- 1.4.2 Describe diseases and disorders and their symptoms that are caused by microorganisms, parasites, genetic defects and environmental factors.
- 1.6.1 Describe the adaptations and special senses (e.g., sight, hearing, smell, touch) of animals and how they contribute to animal behavior.
- 1.6.2 Describe and identify innate animal behavioral traits (e.g., protection, ingestion, homing, sleeping, grooming, elimination, sexual, care-giving, combative, evasive, breed differences).

Instructional Objective(s):

- Students will be able to identify 2 facts about the animal with 100% accuracy.
- Students will be able to identify 3 environmental requirements, with 100% accuracy.
- Students will be able to identify how this animal can contract rabies, with 100% accuracy.

Method of Instruction:

Video and worksheet

Activities:

Students will be directed to take notes during lecture/demonstration

Students will read the following information

Students will complete the blizzard bag Worksheet and turn in the worksheet.

Basic Skunk Care

Many people who are curious or are looking for an exotic pet think that skunks may be the pet to choose. Skunks can be friendly, cuddly, trouble free pets; they can also be exasperating, costly, terrors.

A skunk can be a costly pet, especially the first year. Skunk kits cost between \$150 and \$500, and spay or neuter can cost up to \$250. Add to that the costs for food, cage(s), litter boxes, bed(s), toys, daily diet supplements, and other costs.

Although capable of living indoors with humans similarly to cats or dogs, **pet skunks** are relatively rare, partly due to restrictive laws and the complexity of their care. Pet skunks are mainly kept in the United States, Canada, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland and Italy.

In the United States, pet skunks can be purchased from licensed animal shelters, non-profit skunk educational organizations such as the American Domestic Skunk Association, Inc., or breeders with a permit from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. Baby skunk availability peaks during springtime, immediately following the skunk mating season. Some large fur farms sell surplus skunks to pet stores.

Verify that it is legal to own a pet skunk where you live. Many states have restrictions or special requirements, some cities also restrict keeping pet skunks inside the city limits. Don't buy a skunk without first checking your state and local wildlife and health regulations. Information on legal states is available on our [Legal States](#) page and at Aspen Skunk Rabies Research, Inc. Most states that do allow owning a pet skunk require maintaining state wildlife permits.

It is currently legal to own domesticated skunks in only seventeen states: Alabama, Florida, Indiana, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming. Buy from a licensed breeder or dealer. Dealers are required to have a valid APHIS-USDA license to sell skunks (considered wildlife animals), there are no state or local exemptions to the Federal laws governing sale of APHIS-USDA controlled animals. Most states also have state breeder/dealer permits that are required. Buying from "*backyard breeders*" may foster trade in wild-born animals and can affect further sales for legal breeders and dealers.

Make sure you have a vet willing to take care of a skunk before you get one, many vets will not care for skunks. In addition, ask the question, "What would you do if my skunk bites you or someone on your staff?" Skunks have paid the ultimate price for biting.

It's often believed that **skunks** all carry **rabies**, but this isn't true. Just like you or any other animal, a **skunk** has to be infected with **rabies** by being bitten by rabid animal. ... However, even an infected **skunk** cannot spread **rabies** unless the disease is active and he is showing symptoms.

THERE ARE NO APPROVED RABIES VACCINES LABELED FOR SKUNKS FOR VETERIANARIAN USE.

Some vets will suggest you give the skunk rabies shots, **but this does NOT prevent the state health department from taking your skunk if it bites** someone. If the bite is reported, the skunk will

normally be destroyed, so **DO NOT let people PET your skunk**. If you do, **ALWAYS** hold the head and let people touch the **BACK** only.

Vaccines for distemper you can use DHPP Vanguard Plus by Zoetis:.. This is called Off-Label use of the vaccine due to Skunks are not listed on the label.

Do **NOT** over vaccinate your skunk! Warning: some skunks have adverse reactions to vaccines. Some have die, change personality's and other reactions.

DO NOT VACCINATE IF YOUR SKUNK IS SICK.

Know what you are giving to your skunk! Many people do **NOT** vaccinate any more.

It is very important that you have your skunk neutered. This should be done between 4 to 6 months of age depending on weight and health. Failure to do so can cause behavior problems, can be extremely stressful, and can cause health problems for the skunk.

If not spayed some females can go into a constant heat, they may pee or leave puddles on the floor. If a male skunk is not neutered he may start dribbling pee on the floor. Some skunks may be aggressive. Skunks CAN go into heat as early as nine months of age.

Vets should use isoflurane gas when doing surgery on your skunk. Surgical glue has performed well to secure wounds and prevents unnecessary scratching and infection.

Skunks can climb, especially young skunks. Fractures and internal injuries can easily occur if the skunk falls. Don't think that you can leave food out on the table or counter if there is any chance that your skunk can get to it. Skunks have pushed chairs, moved boxes, climbed up the box to the chair to the table and been found happily sitting on the table munching on snacks left out. They are especially good at wedging themselves in a tight space to climb up several feet to somewhere they want to be.

The striped skunk naturally inhabits a wide variety of habitats, particularly mixed woodlands, brushy corners and open fields interspersed with wooded ravines and rocky outcrops. Some populations, particularly in northwestern Illinois, prefer cultivated areas over uncultivated ones

Do not use Lysol, Carpet Fresh, Fabreze, or plug in air freshener. Be **careful** with household cleaners! Many of these items can be **toxic** to any small animal.

Prepare foods daily. A skunk's digestive system can not properly digest most processed foods. A balanced variety of foods is best, vegetables, cooked grains, small portions of chicken or turkey, and small amounts of fruit.

Make sure your skunk eats regularly. Never let a skunk go a day without eating. Try favorite foods, meat, fruit, yogurt. If your skunk won't eat, force feed pureed foods if necessary.

Skunks need extra taurine and calcium. Try to use foods that provide calcium as well as other vitamins and minerals.

Get your skunk's blood work done. The minimum test is called Complete Blood Count and Serum Chemistry Profile You can use that as a base-line to go by with your skunk, your vet should check the results and make necessary recommendations. A routine X-ray in later years is a good idea too.

Skunks should be wormed with a safe wormer like Evict, Nemex2, Panacur, or one you may get from your vet. Make sure you worm your skunk.

Note: Wormers containing piperazine (piperazine citrate) have caused tremors, seizures, vomiting, and have been indicated as factors in several deaths, in skunks. Erliworm is a common brand of pet wormer containing piperazine.

Nails should be cut about every month, some skunks require trimming more often. Use large nail clippers or nail trimmers for dogs and cats, be careful not to cut the quick, have flour or styptic powder ready.



Nails Much Too Long



Cutting Nails



Properly Cut Nails

The pads of your skunk's paws may get cracked or scaly (especially during dry periods) and may need extra care. We use Udderly SMOOth cream or Bag Balm ointment to help soften and heal the pads.

NEVER leave your skunk outside unattended. They have no homing instincts like dogs or cats and will wander away, it is rare that they come back before something bad happens. With no scent glands to protect themselves, they are very vulnerable to predators.

Health problems include rectal prolapse, seizures, diabetes, liver disease, kidney failure, heart problems, calcium deficiency, excessive weight, allergies, general mal-nutrition, etc. With proper care most of these can be corrected **BEFORE** the problem starts.

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Worksheet

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

ANIMAL: _____

1. Write down two interesting facts you learned about the animal:

2. Where could you adopt this animal from?

3. How many states is this animal legal to own in? _____

4. What are the environment requirements for this animal?

5. How does this animal contract Rabies?

6. What are the special care needs of the animal?

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7. What kind of family would this animal be best suited for?

Closure:

Worksheet completed

Assessment:

Worksheet