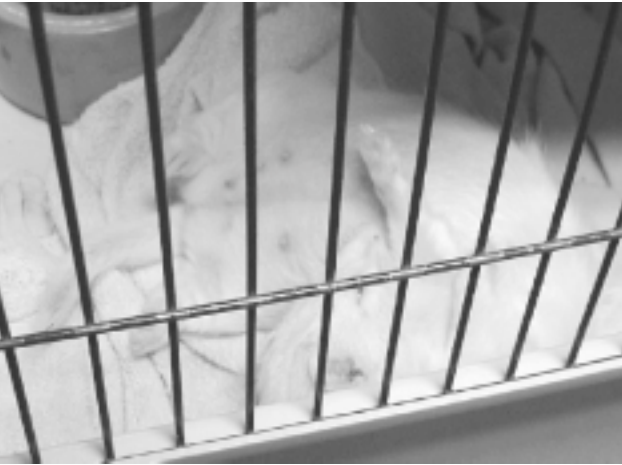




KITS AND CABOODLE

They grow up so fast...

It all starts with a handsome hob and a pretty jill...and a breeder who knows about animal husbandry, emergency medicine, mustelid genetics, and what makes a good pet.



A hob and jill in season will generally be placed together for a few hours and then separated. This ensures that the breeder will know the expected delivery date. Within a few hours of parturition, the jill becomes restless and may show nesting behavior. Sava, above, grows more uncomfortable and fidgets as her delivery time nears.

After delivering kits, a jill becomes very protective of her "nest." Sometimes, however, a jill is so exhausted by delivery that for a few hours, her maternal instincts flag. Here, Sweet as Honey lets us have a precious look at her newly born litter. Even inexperienced jills can make excellent mothers once the confusion of delivery is over.





Kits grow quickly, and their weight doubles in the first five days of life. Compare, for example, the newly born kits on the opposite page and the one-week-old kit at the top of this page. At about three weeks of age, kits can move in a more organized fashion and will seek each other, as does this litter from Just a Business of Ferrets. A kit's eyes will open at approximately 30 days, and then the fun begins. From four to nine weeks of age, kits continue to grow rapidly but their development then focuses on social behavior. Nine- to twelve-week-old kits are ready to explore the world, even an unsuspecting water bottle.

Unless otherwise noted, all ferrets shown on these pages are from Shady Hollow Ferretry.