



New Canaan Nature Center

144 Oenoke Ridge • New Canaan, CT 06840

Tel: 203-966-9577 • Fax: 203-966-6536

www.NewCanaanNature.org

Animal Acquisition Policy

The New Canaan Nature Center houses over 50 animals, all of which help us fulfill our environmental education mission. We acquire our animals from a variety of places such as other nature centers, wildlife rehabilitators, rescue groups, and sometimes private owners. Animals are added to our collection thoughtfully with the needs of both the animal and our programs in mind. It takes a very special animal to be able to handle the pressure of being on display, handled, and transported daily. Some animals do not have the disposition for this type of work and others simply have requirements that are more time consuming than we can offer.

While NCNC, like many nature centers, will sometimes accept pets into their animal care programs, we cannot take every animal who needs a new home. If you are considering a new pet or need to find a new home for one you are no longer able to care for, please read on for important information.

I'm considering getting a pet. What do I need to know?

Before you take a new pet into your home, be sure to do your research. Can you provide the appropriate diet, lighting, and housing for your pet? Can you provide this pet with enough exercise? Can you make a lifetime commitment to this animal (make sure you find out how long it can live)? Is this a pet for your child that you are willing to assume care for if your child no longer wants the pet? Do you have someone that is able to care for your pet while you are out of town? Will this pet fit into your family or your future family (consider other pets, children, planned children, and family allergies)?

My pet needs a new home. What are my options?

If you have an animal you need to find a new home for, first make sure you have no other options but to re-home your pet. Pets are a lifetime commitment and every effort should be made to honor that commitment. If you have decided to find a new place for your pet, consider the following:

- NEVER release an animal into the wild. Animals that have been in captivity for most of their lives usually do not survive for long in the wild. Additionally, they can spread disease to wild populations that might not have the same resistance as your domestic pet. In some cases, domestic animals can cause serious environmental problems.
- Some animals are difficult to place, such as rabbits, guinea pigs, and red-eared sliders. These animals are very common in the pet trade and fill exotic pet rescue groups. Be prepared to keep your pet for several months before you find a good home.
- Listing your pet as "free to good home" in newspapers or online forums can be dangerous for your pet. Your pet may end up with someone who does not know or cannot care for them properly, as food for another animal, or worse.

There are many people who can help you place your pet in a good home. Check out the following online resources that may assist you in re-homing your pet.

Petfinder.org: You can search for shelters that fit your pet's needs or place a classified ad for potential owners to see.

Turtlerescues.com: A Long Island-based organization with information on turtle care and pet turtle placement.

Hopalonghollow.org: A local organization that will assist you in the placement of your rabbit. They do not accept pets but are a good resource for rabbit care and placement. They have some contacts for other small pets such as guinea pigs and hamsters.

Local veterinarians: Your vet or other vets in the area may know someone who can help, someone who is looking for a pet like yours, or let you hang a flyer with information about your pet for their clients to see.

Can I donate my pet to the New Canaan Nature Center?

The New Canaan Nature Center, like other nature centers, will sometimes accept pets into their animal care programs. **Please contact the Director of Animal Care if you have an animal that might fit into our programs.*