

## Fall Ferret Outings

**With proper precautions, you can take your ferret on a fall field trip!**

*By Bob Church*

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Ferret Slinky/© Courtesy Donna Jarrett

A field trip outside can provide lots of fun new items for ferrets to investigate!

Fall is my favorite time of year for taking ferrets on a field trip. The weather is nice and not too hot. There are lots of things to investigate, such as fallen leaves, low water creeks, and the last of the wildflowers. Summer is over and parks aren't as crowded, allowing your ferrets to explore without as many curious onlookers.

I have several favored places for field trips, including a small creek with waterfall, a stone ruin, and a local park with a small lake. My ferrets relish such areas and explore for hours. You can't buy this type of enrichment; it's free!

### Field Trip Locations Dogs and Bicycles

I like areas relatively free of dogs, or those with a leash law. I love dogs, but don't trust them around my ferrets. My ferrets are fearless and curious, two attributes that propels them to the barking end of a potential killing machine. I am not willing to chance that a dog won't think of my ferret as a ground squirrel. When a dog nears, I simply pick up my ferret and hold it out of harm's way.

I also think bikes are as dangerous as dogs. A cyclist could easily overlook a ferret, or a ferret might spook and run under a wheel. It's hard for a ferret to recover from such trauma.

### Emergencies

I want a location just a few minutes from parking. If my ferret is injured or suffers heat distress, taking an hour to walk back to the car is not acceptable. A location should meet a ferret's needs, not those of an owner. Simply put, the excursion is for the ferret's benefit, not mine.

### Open Area

I have several criteria in choosing outdoor areas for my ferrets to explore. The location must be open enough so I can walk next to my ferret. Small or cramped areas might be fun for ferrets, but if I can't be near them, the risk of losing them is too high — even if on a leash. I like open areas with water and plants, which allows them to splash, dig or just run through grass.

### Privacy

I like areas that are somewhat secluded. It is not that I dislike being an ambassador for ferrets, but the goal is to treat the little fuzzballs to a day in the sun. It is really hard to do that when crowds of people start poking fingers at my little guys. Being outside already excites the ferrets, so a scrawny, poking finger might be seen as an invitation for a nip. It is just better for all concerned to avoid such events.

### Temperature

The location needs an area for ferrets to chill. Even in the fall, it can be hot and a ferret can overheat. I like places with ponds, streams, muddy places, covering foliage and a source of potable water. I can drop my water requirement, but then I carry several bottles of water.

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