

A Ferret That's Twice As Nice

Meet Caff-Pow, a ferret that's twice as big as the other ferret in his home.

By Alexandra Sargent-Colburn

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Caff-Pow the ferret is twice the size as Todd, the other ferret in the house.

I have sort of an unusual situation with my ferret boys. They are both full adult size and perfectly healthy, but one of them is literally twice the size of the other! Todd is a Marshall Farms ferret, and weighs about two pounds. He was neutered early and stopped growing early. He would look perfectly normal to most ferret owners out there. In fact, he would look a little ... um ... wide in the bum to most ferret owners accustomed to Marshall ferrets! That just makes me love him more. Todd is built for comfort, not speed. I can relate to that on a personal level.

Caff-Pow The Ferret Arrives

His companion, Caff-Pow, is a different story. Caff-Pow (named for a highly caffeinated beverage on the weekly crime drama NCIS) came from a professional ferret breeder who raises just a few ferret litters a year. The kits come to the new owners fully intact — unneutered and able to “poof.” When Caff-Pow came to me he was just 3 months old. Todd was quite a bit older then, and had already stopped growing. Caff-Pow though, at 3 months, was already considerably larger than the fully adult Todd!

It was kind of strange to have a giant ferret kit. Caff-Pow unquestionably behaved like a kit. His first night at my home he sobbed for his brothers and sisters, whom he had never been parted from. Kit sobbing is a terrible honking noise that just tears your heart out. Todd tried to comfort him, curling up against him and licking his head. What made him feel better was my exchanging clean cage bedding for the bedding he had last slept on with his family, the bedding that smelled of their bodies and fur. Still, it was clear that I was dealing with a baby. An enormous baby ferret, but a baby, nonetheless.

My enormous baby ferret had desperately sharp kit teeth, incredibly soft kit fur, a nonstop appetite, and the cutest habit of falling soundly asleep in the middle of a play session with Todd, just as if he had been suddenly “unplugged.” I would scoop him up and carry my limp baby back to the cage and snuggle him into a ferret hammock. He'd wake up later with a look on his face that seemed to say “How did I get here?” He'd think really hard about it for three or four seconds, then seemingly decide, “Oh, well, nevermind. What's for lunch?”

Games Caff-Pow The Ferret Plays

Caff-Pow grew so fast he practically creaked, like a stalk of corn in a sunny field in July. Soon, he was twice Todd's weight. And still a kit. What do ferret kits do? Play. Todd and Caff-Pow played all sorts of games, such as “Let's Drag Todd Across The Hardwood Living Room Floor By His Scruff.” Caff-Pow dearly loved that one. Todd didn't even bother struggling. He just let himself be pinned and scruffed (as if he could have stopped it), and dragged around the whole house, then stashed. Sometimes Todd would give me a look while he was being dragged as if to say “If I were a wolverine for a day, Lady, you'd know how this felt.” Mostly he just closed his eyes and waited for it to be over.

Then there was the game “You Be The Horse.” This is a deeply beloved ferret game. One ferret is the horse, the other rides him. Guess who was the horse in my house? Sometimes I'd look over, and I'd see Caff-Pow lying down full-length on top on Todd, just Todd's front legs and clawed paws visible in front, the rest of him completely buried beneath Caff-Pow. And ferrets are so very, very strong that Todd would be dragging the two of them along at turtle-speed, very, veeery sloooooowly across the hardwood floor. Caff-Pow would be on top with the most delighted look you can possibly imagine, the look every child gets on his or her face when he or she can say “Look! I'm riding a pony, Ma! Giddyup!”

Caff-Pow sat on Todd, slept on Todd, rolled on Todd, dragged Todd, chased Todd, hogged the food, hogged the toys, chewed Todd, thumped Todd onto his side and forcibly groomed him (and not always very well, either.) Todd could only nap when the baby was napping, had to get up when the baby was up, and came to comfort him on the odd occasions when Caff-Pow was horrid, and I caged him for five minutes. Oh, Caff-Pow would cry his honking cries bitterly while Todd stood up against the cage bars from the outside and tried to give comfort. Todd was an excellent caregiver.