

## How Gender Affects Ferret Behavior

**Ferret behavior is affected somewhat by whether the ferret is male or female.**

*By Mike and Arita Morrett*

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In our experience as ferret breeders and owners, we find that female ferrets tend to be more active and inquisitive than the male ferrets, especially after 1 year of age. Adolescent males (up to 1 year) are just as obnoxious as the females, but tend to mellow out as they age.

Another observation is that male ferrets become startled and scared of anything they have never seen or heard before, especially a new noise or new animals. Female ferrets, on the other hand, jump right in and check out new situations or individuals.

Our first two ferrets, Bonnie and Clyde (yes, we named them after the two hoodlums that robbed banks and terrorized the central United States in the 1930s), were 6 weeks old when we purchased them on Christmas Eve in 1993. They sure fit their names. As they got older, Bonnie's personality barely changed — she remained very active and persistent in getting into trouble. But Clyde developed a more laid-back personality. He played eagerly enough, but after a short time he lost interest. We always joked that if they were robbing a bank, Bonnie would be inside pulling off the heist and Clyde would be asleep behind the wheel of the getaway car.

Mike and Arita Morrett are co-owners of Savannah Lakes Ferretry in South Carolina, where they reside with their eight ferrets, and breed pet and show-quality ferrets.