

Book Excerpt: Ferrets Underfoot

Read an excerpt from the book *Ferrets Underfoot* by Kate Woods.

By Kate Woods

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Courtesy Hedgerow Press

Ferrets Underfoot is a 208-page book in which author Kate Woods discusses what it's like to live with pet ferrets.

The following excerpt is from the book *Ferrets Underfoot* by Kate Woods, published by Hedgerow Press.

The Ferret Kits Move In

Out of the basement came the toys and the tubing; couch cushions heaved and scattered. Out from their shadowy breeding dens under the bed and behind the couch came the dust bunnies, clinging to sneezing ferret noses. One thing with ferrets, the floor may be a mess but the remoter corners of the room are far cleaner than they have any right to be, from daily dusting by small explorers.

From Tia's old hoard, Cicely claimed all the squeaky toys and packed them away in the freshly dusted corners. Teasel ignored most the toys and went for my socks with a "Hey, that's mine. Give it here!" cockiness. This became somewhat of a problem, as not only did he claim and latch onto the ones I was wearing, but he soon discovered the drawer I was hiding his socks in and was ready the moment I opened it. He had a hiss far bigger than his size suggested, even with a mouth full of sock. Finding something to keep my feet warm involved a long and usually futile search under the furniture, as anything I retrieved would be too full of holes to be of much use to anyone other than a large centipede searching for a body stocking. Socks waiting to be laundered ended up stored on top of the highest bookcases where I usually forgot them come laundry day. Fresh socks had to be snuck quietly from the drawer while he slept. He enjoyed the stuffed toys I bought in an attempt to wean him from footwear, but it did not diminish his passion for socks.

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Author Kate Woods also did illustrations for her book; this one shows her ferrets playing.

Once again visitors became scarce as soon as I mentioned that one of my ferrets considered all socks his by birthright and would attempt to retrieve them with little regard for the feet that might be in them, and that the other one climbed pant legs, the inside that is. Those who did brave entry into the ferrets' domain eyed whichever ferret appeared and nervously inquired which one this was, and whether they should tuck their pant legs in their socks, or their socks in their pant legs.

Cicely was the pant leg climber. I know only one person, other than myself, who ever allowed the full circuit.

"What's she doing?" M. was one of my more ferret-tolerant friends and Cicely had just disappeared up his pants.

"Well...uh..."

"She isn't going to bite is she?" His voice was rising as she passed his knees.

"Well, I don't..." I reached out to try to grab her but realized, as she reached mid-thigh, it would be both embarrassing and ineffective. "...know. Maybe."

Field Guide

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We both held our breath as the wiggling lump reached the top, hesitated for a moment, then slid down the other side. M. was giggling a little hysterically. "Never had that happen before."

"If you apply a kind of tourniquet with your hands above her, you can squeeze her back down. She tries it with me all the time."