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## **Fun Ferret Facts**

History – The domestic ferret (*Mustela putorius furo*) is the pet ferret that is becoming increasingly popular in the United States. It is often confused with its wild counterpart, the North American black footed ferret (*Mustel nigripes*). Ferrets have been domesticated for at least 2,000 years. There is evidence that Egyptians used them to keep granaries free of mice around 1500 B.C.

Ferrets were recognized and used by such notable people as Aristotle, Caesar Augustus, Ghengis Khan, and Queen Victoria. Ferrets arrived in the U.S. in 1875. Siamese cats did not come to the U.S. until 1895. Ferrets only in the recent past became legal in Georgia (April 12, 1991 Senate Bill 374).

Ferrets in Georgia must be spayed or neutered by seven months of age and inoculated against rabies with an approved vaccine. Ferrets commonly have a reaction to vaccines, so additional preventative medications must be given prior administering the vaccine.

<b>Life Span</b>	5-8 years (US Average)
<b>Sexual Maturity</b>	4-8 months (usually first spring after birth)
<b>Gestation Period</b>	41-42 days
<b>Litter Size</b>	1-18 kits
<b>Normal Birth Weight</b>	8-10 grams
<b>Eyes – Ears Open</b>	21-37 weeks
<b>Weaning Age</b>	6-8 weeks
<b>Normal Temperature</b>	100 – 104 degrees Fahrenheit
<b>Heart Rate</b>	180-250 beats/minute
<b>Females</b>	called Jills
<b>Males</b>	called Hobbs