

The Ohio Pet Sanctuary is an unincorporated nonprofit in Anderson Township, just outside of Cincinnati. Our mission is different from most other rescues. We believe that adoption is the best option for all species; not just dogs and cats. Our focus is on those who don't have many other rescues to help them. We concentrate on cats, pocket pets, birds, and reptiles. Roughly 41% of the animals we place in new homes are guinea pigs, followed by 29% being cats and 16% are rabbits. The remaining 14% is comprised of miscellaneous rodents (such as rats, hamsters, and gerbils), ferrets, birds, and reptiles.

Many of the animals we care for are victims of neglect. Rabbits and guinea pigs frequently arrived with urine burnt skin, respiratory disease, and pododermatitis from unsanitary conditions and untrimmed nails. Reptiles often have improperly shed skin or are grossly underweight and have metabolic disease from improper light, heat, and humidity. We also take in a fair number of unconventional strays. It is unfortunately not uncommon for people to release unwanted pets into the wild; rabbits and ferrets being the most common that we take in. These animals are typically malnourished and rife with parasites.

Our adult cats are most often from homes where their human has passed away, their home is being foreclosed on or eviction notice has been served, or older owners who cannot take them to nursing homes with them. Our kittens are most often from stray or feral mothers and require time and patience and nearly always treatment for respiratory and/or ocular disease. We are also one of the few rescues in the area that take in kittens that require bottle feeding because the mother is sick, injured, or dead. All cats, regardless of age, are tested for leukemia and AIDS, receive at least one feline viral rhinotracheitis, calici, and panleukopenia vaccine, and are treated for hookworm and roundworm, fleas, and lice. In addition to those base expenses, 66% of the cats we take in require spay/neuter surgeries.

All of this means that our veterinary expenses can be great. Averaging the last three years, we spend roughly \$2900 per year on base medical expenses and then additional surgeries such as eye removals and wound repairs, infection treatment, and other disease treatment is in addition to that, adding up to typically just under \$3400 per year. As a solution to mounting medical expenses, we developed the Cans for Critters program.

Cans for Critters is a scrap exchange program. We collect beverage cans from soda and alcohol and exchange them for cash at the scrap yard. This money is then used to help pay our medical expenses. In 2017 (our first year in our current location), 175 animals found their homes through us. That number exploded to 434 in 2019. A 248% increase in a few short years was not anticipated and we need to keep up with the ever-growing medical needs of the animals that come in.

We are reaching out to businesses in the Cincinnati area for help. We have several veterinary clinics that put out collection containers from the public and we currently work with two restaurants that save their cans for us to pick up. Any and all help is appreciated. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns about our program or how you can help, please contact Madison Schleibaum at 513.388.9998.

We are grateful for your time and consideration. We hope to work with you and build a mutually beneficial relationship.