

Poisonous Plants for Rabbits

Many people allow their rabbits free run on the garden during the summer months believing that they will instinctively avoid eating poisonous plants. However, this is not always the case and a rabbit must be confined to its run until all poisonous plants are removed.

The most poisonous species are:

Anemone	Azalea	Bittersweet	Bryony
Caladium	Cyclamen	Columbine	Dog Mercury
Figwort	Deadly Nightshade	Woody Nightshade	Poppies
Ragwort	Buttercups	Daffodils	Bluebells
Foxglove	Hemlock	Spurges	Kingcup
Marsh Marigold	Monkshood	Meadow Saffron	Mistletoe
St. John's Wort	Leyland Cypress	Fool's Parsley	Hellebore

However, there are several cultivated plants which are poisonous to rabbits. These include:

Dahlias	Morning Glory	Privet	Azalea
Lupins	Antirrhinum	Yew	Wisteria
Chrysanthemums	Lobelia	Laburnum	Clematis
Delphinium	Fig	Lords and Ladies	Holly
Lily of the Valley	Jerusalem Cherry	Ivy Berries	Rhododendron
Tulips	Juniper	Philodendron	Hyacinth
Iris	And most evergreen leaves		

If your rabbit has free run of the garden, it is ideal to remove any poisonous plants. Alternatively place a piece of chicken wire around the plant to prevent access to the rabbit. If the rabbit has a run, ensure that the plant is not in contact with the wire as he may nibble it through the wire.

Garden pesticides and herbicides may contain chemicals which are toxic to rabbits. Therefore avoid spraying weeds in areas where your rabbit may graze.

Plants collected from the roadside may be covered in dirt and exhaust fumes which contain lead and may be lethal to rabbits. Farmers routinely use chemical sprays to control pests and weeds and plants which are collected may have spray residues on them.

However, there are a number of plants, apart from grass, which provide nutritional benefit to your rabbit. These include:

Dandelion	Plantain	Sunflower	Nettles
Coltsfoot	Clover	Rose	Corn Marigold
Meadow Horsetail	Vetch	Knotted Persicaria	Corn Spurry
Chickweed	Shepherd's Purse	Lad's Thumb	Young Oak Leaves
Yarrow	Sow Thistle	Hazel	Alfalfa (Lucerne)
Comfrey	Cow Parsley	Willow	Oxeye Daisy
Hogweed	Groundsel	Fruit Trees	Acorn
Beechnuts	Hawthorn Berries	Privet Berries	Thistle
Wheat	Barley		

It is essential to remember that you must be able to correctly identify the plant that you wish to feed to your rabbit to ensure that it is not toxic – some harmful plants can look similar to beneficial ones.

For further information about the care of your rabbit, contact your local Scarsdale Vets surgery.

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