



Let's hop into the world of the Desert Cottontail Rabbit, a small but lively creature found in the sandy lands. This fluffy bunny is different from your average rabbit, with its soft grey and brown fur that helps it blend into the desert background. Cottontails have big eyes that are always on the lookout, and long ears to hear any danger approaching. But, the most interesting thing about them is their white, cotton-like tail that gives them their name.

Speaking of their fluffy tails, did you know that these tails have a purpose beyond just looking cute? When a predator comes near, the Desert Cottontail Rabbit will flash its white tail as a warning to other rabbits. These bunnies are quite the fast runners and can hop away quickly to escape danger, using their tail as a distracting target. Their main predators are coyotes, hawks, and snakes, but don't worry, these clever rabbits know just how to stay safe!



Staying safe isn't their only skill, though, as these bunnies are also expert foragers. Their diet consists mostly of grasses, but they also munch on cacti, tree bark, and even their own droppings to get all the nutrients they need! They are most active during the cooler parts of the day, in the early morning and late afternoon, when they come out to eat and explore. They're not big fans of the hot midday sun, so they hide in burrows or under bushes to keep cool.



Now that we know how they spend their day, let's discover more about their life cycle and relationship with us humans. Desert Cottontail Rabbits have a short life span of about two years, and they start having babies when they're just a few months old. They don't build nests, but dig shallow holes where the mother can hide her babies for safety. While these bunnies can sometimes be a nuisance to farmers by nibbling on crops, they're also important for the desert ecosystem and are a charming part of our natural world.



Solve each problem.

Use the article to answer the question.

- 1) What color is the fur of a Desert Cottontail Rabbit?
 - A. Pale yellow and orange
 - B. Deep blue and green
 - C. Bright white and black
 - D. Soft grey and brown

- 2) What kind of animals are the main predators of the Desert Cottontail Rabbit?
 - A. Dogs, eagles, and lizards
 - B. Wolves, falcons, and alligators
 - C. Bears, lions, and tigers
 - D. Coyotes, hawks, and snakes

- 3) What do the Cottontail Rabbits eat?
 - A. Grasses, cacti, and tree bark
 - B. Leaves, stems, and flowers
 - C. Fruits, vegetables, and insects
 - D. Nuts, seeds, and grains

- 4) Why can Desert Cottontail Rabbits sometimes be a nuisance to farmers?
 - A. Because they chew on farm equipment
 - B. Because they scare away other animals
 - C. Because they drink all the water
 - D. Because they nibble on crops

- 5) Where do mother Desert Cottontail Rabbits hide their babies?
 - A. In burrows underground
 - B. In shallow holes
 - C. In nests on tree tops
 - D. In the middle of grass fields

- 6) Why is the Desert Cottontail Rabbit named so?
 - A. Because it sleeps in cotton beds
 - B. Because of its white, cotton-like tail
 - C. Because it makes nests from cotton
 - D. Because it eats cotton plants

- 7) What time of the day are the Desert Cottontail Rabbits most active?
 - A. Nights and weekends
 - B. Midday and midnight
 - C. Evenings and early mornings
 - D. Early morning and late afternoon

- 8) How long do Desert Cottontail Rabbits usually live?
 - A. About twenty days
 - B. About two years
 - C. About two months
 - D. About twenty years

- 9) How do Desert Cottontail Rabbits keep cool?
 - A. Sprinkle water on their fur
 - B. Cover themselves with sand
 - C. Hide in burrows or under bushes
 - D. Take a swim

- 10) When do Desert Cottontail Rabbits start having babies?
 - A. When they're one year old
 - B. When they're two years old
 - C. When they're just a few months old
 - D. Right after they're born

Determine if the statements is something the animal would say (W) or it is not something the animal would say (N).

- 11) "Did you know I eat my own droppings? It sounds yucky, but it helps me get all the nutrients I need."



- 12) "Unlike regular rabbits, I have soft grey and brown fur which helps me blend in with the desert."
- 13) "Did you notice my tail? It's white and looks like cotton, that's why people call us Cottontail Rabbits!"
- 14) "We Cottontail Rabbits live for about ten years in the wild."
- 15) "Guess what? I can start having my own babies when I'm just a few months old."
- 16) "I love eating meat, especially mice and other small animals."
- 17) "When I see something scary, I flash my white tail to warn other rabbits."
- 18) "Did I mention that I'm a night owl? I spend my days sleeping and come out to play only at night!"
- 19) "My fur color is bright yellow. It makes me stand out among the sandy landscapes!"
- 20) "I frequently roam around the arctic tundras."

Determine if the statement is a fact or opinion based on the information in the article.

- 21) The life span of Desert Cottontail Rabbits is usually around two years.
- 22) It is extraordinary that Desert Cottontails can survive in the hot desert with their furry bodies.
- 23) During the hottest part of the day, Desert Cottontail Rabbits stay under bushes or in burrows to stay cool.
- 24) The way Desert Cottontails can survive on just a few drops of water in the desert is amazing.
- 25) Desert Cottontail Rabbits use their tails to alert other rabbits when a predator approaches.
- 26) It is disgusting that Desert Cottontail Rabbits eat their own droppings.
- 27) Young Desert Cottontail Rabbits begin having their own babies when they are only a few months old.
- 28) Desert Cottontail Rabbits sometimes eat cacti and tree bark.
- 29) It is amazing how quickly Desert Cottontail Rabbits can escape from predators by hopping away.
- 30) It's super cute how Desert Cottontail Rabbits use their tails to warn other rabbits of danger.

Determine if the statement is true or false.

- 31) Desert Cottontail Rabbits dig shallow holes to hide their babies.
- 32) Desert cottontail rabbits build nests in tree.
- 33) Desert Cottontail Rabbits can be a nuisance to farmers by nibbling on crops.
- 34) The Desert Cottontail Rabbit has black and white fur.
- 35) Desert Cottontail Rabbits get their name from their white tail.
- 36) Desert Cottontail Rabbits can live in the wild for up to 10 years.
- 37) Coyotes, foxes and Desert Cotton Tail Rabbits often hunt for food together.
- 38) These bunnies are only active at night.
- 39) Desert Cottontail Rabbits are most active during the cool parts of the day.



40) Desert Cottontail Rabbits sometimes eat cactuses.

Determine if the sentence is a declarative(d), exclamatory(e), interrogative(i) or imperative(m).

41) Desert Cotton Tail Rabbits have a diet that includes plants and vegetables.

42) Can Desert Cotton Tail Rabbits swim?

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44) Desert Cotton Tail Rabbits live in the desert.

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| 7. <u> D </u> | 32. <u> false </u> |
| 8. <u> B </u> | 33. <u> true </u> |
| 9. <u> C </u> | 34. <u> false </u> |
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| 17. <u> true </u> | 42. <u> interrogative </u> |
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| 23. <u> fact </u> | |
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C. _____
D. _____
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- 11) "Did you know I eat my own droppings? It sounds yucky, but it helps me get all the nutrients I need." (paragraph 3)



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