

ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

A Descriptive Survey of Visitor Experience and Adoption Interest Among Patrons of a Rabbit Café

Silvija Grava, Lexis H. Ly and Alexandra Protopopova*

Animal Welfare Program, Faculty of Land and Food Systems, The University of British Columbia, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

Abstract

Introduction: Rabbits often experience long wait times in shelters, which may negatively impact their welfare. Pet cafés, where public members can interact with animals in a café setting, often partner with animal shelters to offer an alternative way to showcase animals to potential adopters. The use of pet cafés to promote the adoption of rabbits has yet to be studied. This study aimed to describe the motivations, experiences, and takeaways of the visitors at a rabbit café in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. The secondary aim was to explore the impact of rabbit morphology, behavior, and sociability as reported by staff and volunteers on perceived adoptability and visitor preference.

Methods: This study collected 205 responses (quantitative and qualitative) in a post-visit survey for patrons of the rabbit café and 23 survey responses of staff and volunteers rating the sociability of the rabbits. Data were described through cross-tabulation and analyzed through inductive thematic analysis.

Results: The results indicate that most visitors did not intend to adopt rabbits, but mainly visited the café to spend time with animals, noting physical interaction as a meaningful experience. Highly social rabbits, as rated by staff and volunteers, were generally more preferred by visitors than shy rabbits.

Conclusion: Overall, our study suggests that the rabbit café was useful for visitors to interact with rabbits, but did not result in adoptions during the study period. Future studies could address methods to improve adoption rates and length of stay (LOS) based on visitor experiences.

Keywords: adoption; animal café; tourism; human–animal interaction; animal welfare

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Correspondence

*Alexandra Protopopova
Email: a.protopopova@ubc.ca

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Rabbits are the third most popular companion animal after dogs and cats and are likely the third most common animal in shelters.¹ In one animal shelter system, rabbits had a median length of stay (LOS) of 29 days, highlighting the need for more understanding of how to hasten adoption.¹ In 2021, the first pet café for rabbits in Canada (the Bunny Café) opened in Vancouver, British Columbia.^a The Bunny Café houses rabbits from a local rescue and allows members of the public to interact with and feed the rabbits. The rabbit rescue reported that partnership with the Bunny Café increased their adoption rates by 300% through improved visibility with the café.^b However, to the best of our knowledge, no research

has described or evaluated the use of pet cafés for rabbit adoption.

For other companion animals, namely cats, animal shelters have partnered with pet cafés to increase visibility of adoptable animals. Despite higher visibility, one study found that LOS was longer for cats housed in a cat café compared to foster homes.² However, within the cat café, LOS was longer for cats that received negative comments about behavior and health from employees, suggesting that longer time to adoption may have been a result of individual characteristics of cats rather than the adoption setting.

One additional benefit of pet cafés is the opportunity for positive human–animal interaction. In a study on visitor behavior in a cat café, the most common human–cat interaction was approaching and stroking cats.³ Multiple studies have shown that visitors experience psychological benefits when spending time at pet cafés, including relaxation, healing, thrill, and connectedness.⁴ Interactions with

a. Inside The Bunny Café: Western Canada's only bunny café | Food & Drink. Accessed September 29, 2025. <https://dailyhive.com/vancouver/bunny-cafe-vancouver>

b. Rabbitats Report: 2022. Rabbitats. Accessed September 29, 2025. <https://rabbitats.org/blog/rabbitats-report-2022/>

animals can offer stress relief, physical affection, and social interaction.⁵

Previous research has examined characteristics of rabbits that may affect adoption in shelters. Public members preferred brachycephalic rabbits, while longer-faced rabbits were least preferred. Participants also preferred short-furred rabbits with medium-light fur color.⁶ Whereas there has not been research on the effect of rabbit behavior on adoptability, research on other species has shown that behavior can play a role. For example, LOS of interactive cats was significantly shorter (37 days) than unapproachable cats (119 days).⁷

The primary aim of this study was to describe the reasons and motivations of visitors coming to the rabbit café and describe their experiences and takeaways. The secondary aim was to explore associations between rabbit morphology, behavior, and sociability on perceived adoptability and visitor preference of rabbits in a pet café setting. We hypothesized that rabbits rated as more social by rabbit café staff and volunteers, as well as rabbits with short, light fur would be perceived as more adoptable at the rabbit café.

Methods and materials

All study procedures were approved by the Behavioral Research Ethics Board of The University of British Columbia (Ethics ID: H24-01607).

Study setting

This study took place in Canada's first rabbit café, the Bunny Café, which opened in 2021 in Vancouver, British Columbia.^a The café houses adoptable rabbits from a local rescue and splits their proceeds to support the rescue.^c Patrons could either book appointments of 30–55 min or walk-in to spend time with the rabbits. The rabbits were available to visit from 1 pm to 7 pm on weekdays and 10 am to 7 pm on weekends. The café capacity was 14 people per visit and guests had to be at least 5 years old. Prior to each visit, the staff discussed guidelines for how to interact with the rabbits to maintain positive welfare, which included not picking them up, restricting their movement, running or chasing the rabbits, or speaking loudly. Patrons were given educational pamphlets with diagrams of what body parts are appropriate to pet and more information about adoption and fostering. Each patron was given a cup of lettuce and herbs to feed the rabbits when interacting with them. In the rabbit area, five pens contained pairs of bonded rabbits, and one pen had a single rabbit. Each pen had a description of the rabbits, similar to a kennel card in an animal shelter. One trio of bonded rabbits was given access to the rest of the space outside of the gated pens. Volunteers in the rabbit area were available

to answer questions, but the visit was unstructured and patrons chose which gated pens to enter to interact with the rabbits. A separate area of the café sold pastries, drinks, and rabbit merchandise. The café also offered grooming services for owned rabbits including nail trimming, scent gland cleaning, and brushing.

Surveys

The primary survey contained 16 questions, including multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, select all, Likert-style, and short answer questions, which took participants approximately 5–10 min to complete (Appendix 1). The questions asked about the visitors (e.g. gender, age, their companion animals), their visit experience, their preferred rabbit at the café, and likelihood of future behaviors, such as visiting the café again or owning a rabbit. A question also asked about the likelihood of feeding rabbits in the wild, but these data were not analyzed for this study.

An additional survey for staff and volunteers asked participants to categorize each rabbit as highly social ("Rabbit readily approaches visitors and asks for food and allows petting"), mostly social ("Rabbit will receive food from a visitor but now allow/like petting. Rabbit needs some time to come around to new people"), or shy ("Rabbit will typically avoid visitors, not typically accept food, and/or typically hides") (Appendix 2). There was also an open-text field to provide any notable personality descriptors. This categorization of socialization was adapted from Brown and Stephan, where shelter staff were given similar definitions to categorize shelter cats as interactive, approachable, or unapproachable.⁷

Participants

A paper version of the survey was administered from June 26 to August 7, 2024. The primary researcher visited the café twice per week approximately midday on Wednesdays and Fridays and approached a convenience sample of visitors as they exited the café. The participant response rate of the visitors who were approached was around 65% (193/300). In addition, a poster with a QR code was displayed in the café to fill out the survey online, through Qualtrics (June 2024). Only 12 participants completed the survey online, whereas 193 participants completed the survey in person.

A secondary survey was completed by café staff and volunteers during the same timeframe. All staff and volunteers were notified by email and word of mouth, and a folder with blank surveys was placed in the staff workspace to be completed at any time during the study period. Participants were asked to self-identify if they felt knowledgeable enough about the rabbits' personalities before completing the survey. Twenty-three responses were recorded.

c. About. The Bunny Cafe. Accessed January 14, 2026. <https://www.bunnycafe.ca/about>

For both surveys, participants were allowed to skip any questions and stop at any point. No incentives or compensation were offered to complete the surveys.

Data analysis

Data from the paper surveys were entered manually into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and combined with the data from the online surveys. Answers to Likert-style questions were re-coded to numerical values ranging from 1 (very unlikely) to 7 (very likely).

Descriptive analysis was done through Microsoft Excel by cross-tabulation. For questions where participants could write in a response under “other,” the primary researcher re-coded the responses to fit under existing options and created new categories where needed. Three short answer questions were coded through descriptive qualitative analysis. The primary researcher used inductive thematic analysis methods, by deriving themes from the data and revising the codebook with the other authors throughout coding. All codebooks for these questions can be found in the Appendix. Select quotes were included in the results to demonstrate the themes, followed by the participant ID.

Results

Visitor information

Table 1 shows the gender, age, and pet owner status of the survey respondents. The majority of respondents were women (128/205; 62%) and 35 years old or younger (133/205; 65%). The respondents’ ages ranged from 18 to 72, with a median of 29. The majority of the respondents owned at least one companion animal (115/203; 57%) at the time of the visit. Of the pet owners, the number of companion animals ranged from one to eight, with a median of one pet. Of the pet owners, the most common species were cats (43/115; 37%) and dogs (34/115; 30%). As well, the majority of respondents (161/205; 79%) had never owned a rabbit before, while a minority (44/205; 22%) had owned a rabbit either in the past or at the time of visit.

Visit information

The majority of respondents (151/205; 74%) visited the Bunny Café for the first time. Spending time with animals was the most common reason for their visit (155/205; 76%; Table 2; Appendix 3). Very few respondents (3/205; 2%) were looking to adopt a rabbit. After their visit, only four respondents (4/205; 2%) planned to submit an adoption application, while two respondents (2/205; 1%) were unsure, and the remaining respondents (199/205; 97%) did not plan to submit an application or provided no response.

Table 1. Demographics and pet owner status of survey respondents

Category	Subcategory	Total	Percentage
Gender			n = 205
	Woman	128	62%
	Man	62	30%
	Nonbinary	12	6%
	A different gender that is not listed	1	1%
	Prefer not to answer	2	1%
Age			n = 205
	18-25	86	42%
	26-35	47	23%
	36-45	43	21%
	46-55	16	8%
	56-65	6	3%
	65+	2	1%
	Prefer not to answer	5	2%
Number of Companion Animals			n = 203
	0	88	43%
	1	69	34%
	2	30	15%
	3	5	3%
	4	5	3%
	5+	6	3%
Type of Companion Animal- Respondents with Pets			n = 115
	Cat	43	37%
	Dog	34	30%
	Rabbit	11	10%
	Rodent	3	3%
	Other	5	5%
	Did not specify	41	36%
Rabbit Owner			n = 205
	No	161	79%
	Yes (past and/or present)	44	22%

Table 2. Purpose of visit of the survey respondents (n = 205)

Category	Subcategory	Total	Percentage
Spend time with animals		155	76%
Social activity		91	44%
Tourist attraction		30	15%
Learn about rabbits		21	10%
Looking to adopt		3	2%
Other:		16	8%
	Family	6	3%
	Birthday	4	2%
	Pets	3	2%
	Volunteer	2	1%
	Café services	1	1%

Table 3. Qualitatively coded results of survey respondents' visit takeaways

Variable	Category	Subcategory	Total	Percentage
Meaningful experiences				n = 202
	Interactions:		160	79%
		Petting	113	56%
		Feeding	98	49%
		Rabbits approaching	20	10%
		Playing	7	4%
		Cuddling	6	3%
		Talking	4	2%
	Observations:		36	18%
		Family	6	3%
		Pictures	4	2%
		Rabbits interacting with each other	4	2%
	Reflections:		24	12%
		Benefit to rabbit	12	6%
		Benefit to visitor	5	3%
		Learn	5	3%
		Reminder of pet	3	2%
	No response		19	9%
Disappointments				n = 204
	Yes:		66	32%
		Wanted more intensive interaction	42	21%
		Café issues	11	5%
		Could not adopt	9	4%
		Rabbit low energy	7	3%
	No		108	53%
	No response		30	15%
Learnings				n = 204
	Yes:		101	50%
		Rabbit husbandry:	40	20%
		Husbandry: Petting	27	13%
		Husbandry: General Care	8	4%
		Husbandry: Nutrition/Feeding	6	3%
		Rabbit personality	21	10%
		Social interactions	18	9%
		Biological	17	8%
		Physical attributes	11	5%
	No:		63	31%
		Already knowledgeable	6	3%
	No response		40	20%

Respondents were asked three short answer questions about their experiences and interactions, which were qualitatively coded and displayed in Table 3 (Full codebook available in Appendix 4). Firstly, respondents were asked to reflect on their meaningful experiences while visiting the café. Physical interactions, especially petting and feeding, were the most common answer (160/202; 79%), such as “being able to pet them, feed them and share their space with them” [Participant 164].

Respondents were also asked if there was anything that they hoped to do but could not do during their visit. A third of the respondents (66/204; 32%) discussed something they were disappointed by, with the most common complaint being a lack of intensive interaction (42/204; 21%) (Full codebook available in Appendix 5). Examples of responses include “pick up and cuddle them” and “have them on our laps” [Participants 74 and 75].

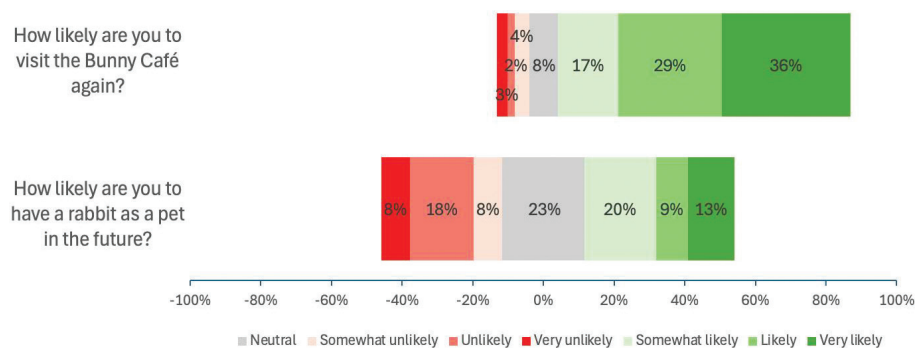


Fig. 1. Likert 7-point scale data of likelihood to visit the café again ($n = 204$) and likelihood to have a rabbit as a pet ($n = 202$).

Respondents were asked if they learned anything new about rabbits during their visit, and half the respondents (101/204; 50%) expressed a new fact or observation (Full codebook available in Appendix 6). The most common response was about rabbit care, such as “I learned how to properly pet and act around them” [Participant 33]. Six respondents (6/204; 3%) who stated they learned nothing new explained it was because they were already familiar with rabbits as owners.

Respondents were also asked Likert scale questions about their interests in owning a rabbit in the future and returning to the café, shown in Figure 1.

Rabbit preference

Across the study, 14 rabbits resided in the Bunny Café: eight males and six females, ranging from 2 to 4 years old, with a median of 3 years. Figure 2 depicts the rabbits present during the study.

Respondents were asked to list their preferred or most memorable rabbit after the visit and select which traits made them preferable (Full codebook available in Appendix 7). The results showed that personality (138/199; 69%) and behavior (106/199; 53%) were the most common answers (Table 4).

Based on the responses from the staff and volunteer survey, each rabbit was assigned an average sociability score between zero and two, with zero representing shy rabbits, one representing mostly social rabbits, and two representing highly social rabbits. Figure 3 shows the relationship between staff/volunteer reported sociability, breed, color, and visitor preference for each rabbit. Generally, more social rabbits seemed to be more preferred.

Discussion

Visitor experience

Our results indicated that the main purpose of visits to the rabbit café was to spend time with animals, rather than to adopt a rabbit. The lack of intention to adopt was much higher in this study compared to studies of animal

shelter visitors in which 18 to 47% of visitors were simply browsing and not looking to adopt.^{8,9} This suggests that the primary purpose of the rabbit café from the perspective of visitors was human–animal interaction. Further efforts to promote rabbit adoption may be needed for rabbits in animal shelters and cafés.

The visitors reported that physical interactions with the rabbits were more meaningful than observations. This finding supports previous literature in which shelter dogs that engaged in play and lay near the adopter were more likely to be adopted, indicating the importance of human–pet interactions in promoting adoptions.⁸ For undersocialized or anxious cats in animal shelters, studies have shown that gentling (gentle stroking and vocalizations) as opposed to normal handling can increase positive affect, reduce anxiety, and encourage cats to spend less time at the back of the cage, which may contribute to higher adoption rates.^{10,11} Thus, in both shelters and pet cafés, direct interactions with rabbits could be encouraged to promote adoption and meaningful experiences. However, future research is needed to better understand whether increased human interaction would negatively impact rabbit welfare, as past research found that rabbits which were placed in children’s laps without space to retreat experienced negative emotional responses, such as pressed back ears, closed eyes, and freezing.¹² Future research could investigate the impact of direct interactions on rabbit welfare at the rabbit café, and the potential trade-offs between methods of handling and promotion of adoption of rabbits.

Our study also showed that rabbit cafés can be used as an educational tool, as half of the visitors learned something new about rabbits, despite only a fifth of visitors listing learning as a purpose of their visit. This finding supports previous literature on animal shelter visitors, which discussed the importance of educating visitors about animal welfare and pet care even when they were not interested in adoption at the time.⁹

Rabbit preference

Our study suggested that rabbits rated as more social by staff and volunteers were preferred by visitors.

Pair 1	<p>Charlie</p> 	<p>Lola</p> 	Pair 2	<p>Jojo</p> 	<p>Roger</p> 
Pair 3	<p>Cecil</p> 	<p>Carlos</p> 	Pair 4	<p>Lucy</p> 	<p>Angie</p> 
Pair 5	<p>Felix</p> 	<p>Oscar</p> 	Solo	<p>Tootsie</p> 	
Trio	<p>Bo Dolly Parton Joni Mitchell</p> 				

Fig. 2. Physical characteristics and housing groupings of rabbits in the café.

This finding is supported by research on shelter cats in which more social cats had shorter LOS.⁷ However, every rabbit, even the ones rated most shy, had at least one visitor who preferred them, indicating that none were undesirable. The five rabbits with black fur were among the least preferred, perhaps because of their color or the lack of uniqueness. Both reasons are supported by previous research, as some studies

have found longer LOS and lower adoption rates in black coated dogs¹³ and cats.^{14,15} Additionally, past research shows that people prefer unique breeds of dogs.¹⁶ Since five out of the 14 rabbits were similarly colored, they might have been perceived as less distinct. Future research could examine the impact of different color/breed combinations of rabbits on visitor preference.

Table 4. Reasons for why respondents preferred specific rabbits (n = 199)

Variable	Category	Subcategory	Total	Percentage
Personality			138	69%
Behavior:			106	53%
	Descriptor:		85	43%
		Social	55	28%
		Low energy	18	9%
		High energy	10	5%
		Curious	6	3%
		Humorous	6	3%
		Food motivated	3	2%
	Specific behavior:		32	16%
		Accepts pets from visitor	11	6%
		Accepts food from visitor	7	4%
		Approaches visitor	6	3%
		Flops	4	2%
		Grooms	3	2%
		Climbs	2	1%
		Eats carpet	2	1%
		Plays	2	1%
		Interacts with other rabbits	2	1%
		Explores	2	1%
		Hops	1	1%
		Chitters	1	1%
Colour			37	19%
Breed			27	14%
Other:			25	13%
	Physical attributes		20	10%
	Solo rabbit		2	1%
	Relationship to other rabbit		2	1%
	Rabbit name		1	1%
	Mild preference		1	1%
Size			12	6%
Ear position			10	5%
Staff/volunteer description			6	3%
Sex			2	1%
Age			1	1%
No response			16	8%

Rabbits named Bo, Joni Mitchell, and Dolly Parton deviated from the sociability trend, as they were highly/moderately social yet received low counts of visitors who

preferred them. All other rabbits were enclosed in pens in pairs of two, and visitors could enter the pens and directly engage with the rabbits. However, these three rabbits were allowed full access to the area and were not confined to a pen. Due to their increased mobility, visitors were likely less able to directly interact with them, potentially explaining why they were less preferred. Additionally, Bo was the only fully white colored rabbit, while Joni Mitchell and Dolly Parton looked very similar to each other, which could explain why Bo was the most preferred of the trio, as he was more unique.

Two of the most preferred rabbits, Charlie and Lola, were brachycephalic, a unique breed, and long-furred. Visitor interest for these rabbits is supported by other findings in which people preferred brachycephalic rabbits^{1,6} and unique breeds,¹⁶ yet this contradicts findings that people preferred short-furred rabbits.⁶ Charlie and Lola were the only two long-furred rabbits in the café, and some visitors specifically mentioned their fluffiness and fur as a reason for their preference.

When asked directly about why visitors preferred specific rabbits, respondents most often discussed personality and behavior. Future research could examine if methods of training rabbits to be more interactive could lead to higher adoption rates through increased visitor interest.

Limitations

One constraint of the study was the small number of rabbits present at the café during data collection (n = 14), which limited the sample size to analyze differences among rabbits. Furthermore, no rabbits were adopted during the study time frame of six weeks, thus there was no analysis of visitor preference leading to adoption. As well, social desirability bias potentially affected some respondents' answers, since the survey was mainly administered in person with a researcher. Lastly, there was no opportunity to conduct both a pre- and post-survey for visitors. Due to café constraints, only post-visit surveys were conducted. Therefore, there is potential for hindsight bias when answering about the purpose of the visit. This study also did not collect data on rabbit behaviors or their welfare in a café setting, such as any behaviors that indicate a negative affective state due to interactions. The study also asked café staff and volunteers for their subjective assessments of rabbit sociability, and future research could conduct objective tests to measure rabbit sociability, which was not possible in this study.

Conclusion

This study provided novel findings into motivations and experiences of rabbit café visitors. We found that rabbits that were rated as more social by staff and volunteers were preferred by visitors; however, the primary

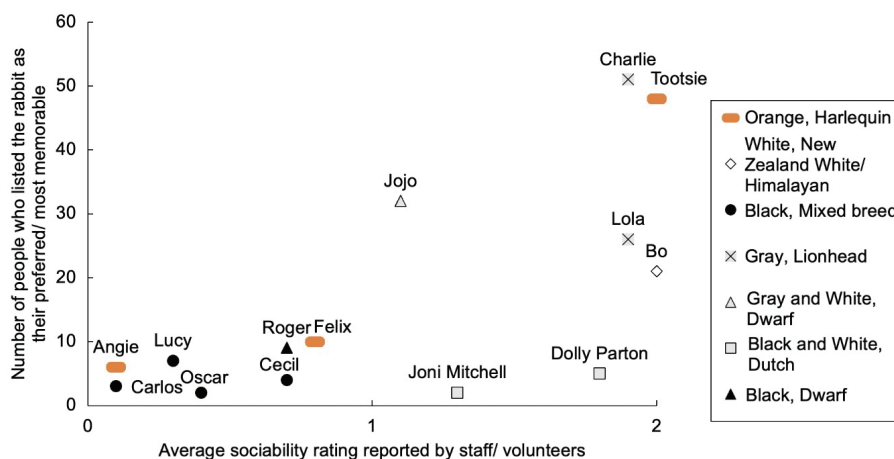


Fig. 3. Relationship between staff/volunteer-reported sociability, breed (indicated by marker shape), and color (indicated by marker color) with the number of people who listed the rabbit as their preferred/most memorable ($n = 199$).

purpose of the vast majority of visits was to spend time and interact with rabbits rather than adopt. The findings on visitor preferences and experiences may provide useful information for pet cafés and animal shelters to cater to the needs of visitors. Future research can investigate whether encouraging rabbit–visitor interaction can increase adoption rates. We conclude that pet cafés are an effective medium to learn and interact with rabbits, although more efforts may be needed to promote adoption.

Authors' contributions

SG: Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal analysis, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Visualization, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing. LL: Conceptualization, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Supervision, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing. AP: Conceptualization, Formal analysis, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Resources, Supervision, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing.

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Appendices

Appendix I. Café visitor survey

Your gender:

- Woman
- Man
- Nonbinary
- A different gender that is not listed
- Prefer not to answer

Your age (specify):

- or Prefer not to answer

Number and type of pets in your household:

Have you ever owned or currently own a rabbit:

- Yes
- No

Purpose of your visit today (circle all that apply):

- Looking to adopt
- Spend time with animals
- Social activity
- Tourist attraction
- Learn about rabbits
- Other (specify):

Have you visited the Bunny Cafe before:

- Yes
- No

How did you find out about the Bunny Cafe (circle all that apply):

- Search engine (e.g., Google)
- Recommended by other person
- Social media
- News report
- Café
- Other (specify):

How likely are you to visit the Bunny Cafe again:

- Very unlikely
- Unlikely
- Somewhat unlikely
- Neutral
- Somewhat likely
- Likely
- Very likely

Do you plan to submit an adoption application:

- No
- Yes (list rabbit's name):

Which rabbit did you prefer or was most memorable (list rabbit's name):

Why did you prefer this rabbit (circle all that apply):

- Age
- Sex
- Breed
- Colour
- Ear position
- Size
- Personality
- Staff/volunteer description
- Behaviour (specify what behaviours):
- Other (specify):

In what ways did you interact with the rabbits that were meaningful to you:

Was there something you hoped to do with the rabbits that you did not get to do:

Did you learn something new about rabbits today? If so, what did you learn:

How likely are you to feed rabbits in the wild in the future:

- Very unlikely
- Unlikely
- Somewhat unlikely
- Neutral
- Somewhat likely
- Likely
- Very likely

How likely are you to have a rabbit as a pet in the future:

- Very unlikely
 - Unlikely
 - Somewhat unlikely
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat likely
 - Likely
 - Very likely
-

Appendix I continues

Appendix 2. Café staff/volunteer survey

Using the definitions below, please categorize each rabbit as highly social, mostly social, or shy and assign personality descriptors of your choice.

Behavioural category	Definitions
Highly social	Rabbit readily approaches visitors and asks for food and allows petting.
Mostly social	Rabbit will receive food from a visitor but not allow/like petting. Rabbit needs some time to come around to new people.
Shy	Rabbit will typically avoid visitors, not typically accept food, and/or typically hides.

Rabbit name	Sociability category (select one)	Other notable personality descriptors (open response)
Joni Mitchell	Highly social Mostly social Shy	
Dolly Parton	Highly social Mostly social Shy	
Bo	Highly social Mostly social Shy	
Cecil	Highly social Mostly social Shy	
Carlos	Highly social Mostly social Shy	
Oscar	Highly social Mostly social Shy	
Felix	Highly social Mostly social Shy	
Tootsie	Highly social Mostly social Shy	
Jojo	Highly social Mostly social Shy	
Roger	Highly social Mostly social Shy	
Charlie	Highly social Mostly social Shy	
Lola	Highly social Mostly social Shy	
Angie	Highly social Mostly social Shy	
Lucy	Highly social Mostly social Shy	

Appendix 3. Other purpose of visit fill-in response qualitative codebook.

Code	Definition
Birthday	Respondent discusses a birthday as the purpose of the visit
Family	Respondent discusses family members as the purpose of the visit
Volunteer	Respondent discusses volunteering or knowing a volunteer at the café as the purpose of the visit
Café Services	Respondent discusses rabbit grooming services of the café as the purpose of the visit
Pets	Respondent discusses considering rabbits as pets, enjoying rabbits, or missing their own rabbit as the purpose of the visit

Appendix 4. Meaningful experience qualitative codebook.

Parent Code	Child Code	Definition
No Response		Respondent does not write an entry
Interactions:		Respondent discusses a specific interaction with the rabbits as meaningful
	Petting	Respondent discusses petting or touching the rabbits as meaningful
	Cuddling	Respondent discusses cuddling or having the rabbits in their lap as meaningful
	Feeding	Respondent discusses feeding treats or lettuce to the rabbits as meaningful
	Talking	Respondent discusses talking to the rabbits as meaningful
	Playing	Respondent discusses playing with the rabbits as meaningful, ex. playing, encouraging them to climb, having them stand on hindlegs
	Rabbits approach	Respondent discusses the rabbits approaching/interacting with them as meaningful, ex. approached, climbed/jumped/came up to lap, socialized, came out from hiding, tapped, sniffed, bit, responded actively, booped, groomed visitor

Appendix 4 continues

Appendix 4. Meaningful experience qualitative codebook.

Parent Code	Child Code	Definition
Observations:		Respondent discusses simply watching, observing, or spending time with the rabbits as meaningful
	Family	Respondent discusses observing their family members enjoying the experience as meaningful
	Pictures	Respondent discusses taking photos of the rabbits or their group as meaningful
	Rabbits interacting with each other	Respondent discusses observing the rabbits' interactions with each other as meaningful, ex. sharing, playing, grooming, chasing each other
Reflections:		Respondent discusses internal reflections about the rabbits as meaningful
	Benefit to rabbit	Respondent discusses acting in a way that benefits the rabbit as meaningful, ex. making them happy, trustful, relaxed, comfortable, calm, purring, giving them space
	Learning	Respondent discusses learning about the rabbits and their personalities as meaningful
	Reminder of pet	Respondent discusses the rabbits reminding them of their past or current pets
	Benefit to visitor	Respondent discusses the experience being beneficial to themselves, ex. therapeutic, calm, relaxing, bonding with rabbit

Appendix 5. Disappointment qualitative codebook.

Parent Code	Child Code	Definition
No Response No Yes:		Respondent does not write an entry
		Respondent states that nothing disappointed them
		Respondent discusses something they were disappointed by
	Rabbit low energy	Respondent discusses the rabbits as too low energy and that they couldn't interact much, ex. sleepy, napping, hiding, wanting them to run/play more
	Intensive interaction	Respondent discusses wishes to interact more physically with rabbits, ex. rabbits sit/climb in lap, pick them up, hug them, hold them
	Adoption	Respondent discusses wishes to adopt a rabbit
	Café issues	Respondent discusses issues with the café, ex. too busy, café style/setup, too little food for rabbits, lack of baby bunnies, and few food options for visitors

Appendix 6. Learnings qualitative codebook.

Parent Code	Child Code	Definition
No Response No:		Respondent does not write an entry
		Respondent states that they did not learn
Yes:	Already knowledgeable	Respondent discusses not learning anything new as they are previously educated, ex. previous/current rabbit owners
	Rabbit Personalities	Respondent discusses learning about the rabbits' personalities, ex. shy, timid, social, anxious, chill, what toys they like
	Physical Attributes	Respondent discusses learning about rabbit physical characteristics and/or gives physical descriptors, ex. cute, soft, so big, fluffy, big/warm ears, long tail, eye colour
	Social interactions	Respondent discusses learning about how rabbits interact or socialize with each other or other species, ex. enjoy being in pairs, sexual partnerships, territorial, groom each other, social needs, don't like cats
	Biological	Respondent discusses learning about biological functions ex. lifespan, sleep, birthing, life in the wild, breeds, grinding/biting
	Rabbit Husbandry	Respondent discusses learning about rabbit husbandry
	Husbandry Subcodes:	
	Nutrition/Feeding	Respondent discusses learning about rabbit nutrition and diet or how rabbits act when eating, ex. what they do and do not eat
	Petting	Respondent discusses learning about what body parts are/aren't acceptable to pet or how rabbits act when pet, ex. sensitive areas
	General Care	Respondent discusses learning about rabbit care as pets, ex. grooming requirements, training, environment

Appendix 7. Reason for preference fill-in response qualitative codebook.

Grandparent Code	Parent Code	Child Code	Definition
Behaviour:			Respondent circles the behaviour option.
	Descriptor:		Respondent lists a descriptor (personality trait) of the rabbit
		Social	Respondent lists one of the following descriptors about the rabbit's high sociability level toward the visitor: friendly, not shy, loving, affectionate, sweet, cuddly, engaging, assertive, outgoing, social, interactive, happy, snuggly, kind, warmed up after a while, fun
		Curious	Respondent lists one of the following descriptors about the rabbit's curiosity or exploration: curious, inquisitive
		High energy	Respondent lists one of the following descriptors about the rabbit's high energy level: playful, active, energetic
		Low energy	Respondent lists one of the following descriptors about the rabbit's low energy level: calm, chill, sleepy, gentle, shy, relaxed
		Humorous	Respondent lists one of the following descriptors about the rabbit as humorous: silly, funny, quirky, cheeky
		Food motivated	Respondent lists one of the following descriptors about the rabbit's food motivation: gluttonous, food-motivated, likes food
	Specific behaviour:		Respondent lists a behaviour of the rabbit
		Accepts pets	Respondent lists that the rabbit accepts pets from the visitor
		Accepts food	Respondent lists that the rabbit accepts food from the visitor
		Flops	Respondent lists that the rabbit flops or 'sploots'
		Climbs	Respondent lists that the rabbit climbs
		Hops	Respondent lists that the rabbit hops
		Chitters	Respondent lists that the rabbit chitters
		Grooms	Respondent lists that the rabbit grooms itself
		Eats carpet	Respondent lists that the rabbit eats the carpet
		Plays	Respondent lists that the rabbit plays with toys
		Explores	Respondent lists that the rabbit explores
		Approaches visitor	Respondent lists that the rabbit approaches/interacts with them, ex. follows, says hi, socializes, enjoys attention, hangs out, interacts
		Interacts with other rabbits	Respondent lists that the rabbit interacts with another rabbit, ex. interacting or affectionate towards each other
Other:			Respondent circles the other option.
	Physical attributes		Respondent discusses the physical attributes of the fluff/fur of the rabbit, or physical descriptors ex. handsome, cute, adorable
	Solo rabbit		Respondent discusses the rabbit being alone/needing a partner
	Name		Respondent discusses the rabbit's name
	Mild preference		Respondent discusses that their preference wasn't strong towards the rabbit
	Relationship to other rabbits		Respondent discusses the rabbit's relationship with another rabbit ex. bonded with mom, polyamorous