### BEWITCHED RATTERY

# Basic

### PetRat

By: Jennifer Holt

## Owner's

Guide

# THE MOST ENCHANTING CREATURES



#### DEDICATION

With deepest gratitude and love to my mentor Diana Byrd, owner of Blue Stone Siamese Rattery Maryland USA, and my best friend and business partner, Taylor Davies, owner of Stellar Rattery in Ontario, Canada

You have both been integral in helping me create the articles used to write this book. Reading, offering feedback, and giving me support and encouragement in our mutual passion and love for the rat breeding hobby. Your friendship and love mean the world to me, and you're both irreplaceable. I'm so grateful for you both!

#### To my family,

for enduring my odd sleeping habits as I stay up nights reading, researching, and writing and spend days either doing the same or sleeping. For being patient with me when exhaustion and distraction make me scatterbrained and forgetful. For allowing me the space and time to follow my passion and immerse myself in it fully, and accepting our Ratty life. Hove you without measure.

### INTRODUCTION

This book will give you the foundational knowledge, not only to keep rats as pets, but to help them thrive in your care.

You will learn about finding an ethical breeder, some rat behaviour, cages, cleaning, and even common health issues.

#### BREEDING PRACTICES

The details outlined here are for educational purposes, to help you understand common practices employed by pet rat breeders, and are not an instruction for how to breed them yourself. Some aspects of breeding are left out here, to prevent from encouraging breeding. Rat genetics are a key component of breeding pet rats, and will not be outlined in this book. Many rat breeders put a great deal of time and effort into researching genetics and breeding before beginning, as breeding any animal should always be done though fully and responsibly.

#### RATTERY PREFIXES & SUFFIXES

In the breeding world, ratteries will use prefixes and suffixes as identifiers. You may have seen me doing this on many of my labelled pictures.

A prefix is usually a three or four letter combination, used to identify a rattery to other breeders. When I registered for membership with AFRMA (the American Fancy Rat and Mouse Association), I chose the prefix WTCH for Bewitched Rattery.

Any rat I have bred will have my prefix before their name as an indicator they were bred in my rattery. If my prefix is used as a suffix, following a rat's name, this means that I own the rat, but did not breed it.

For example: my rat Sausage is labelled WTCH Sausage. If she were to go to another rattery, say my partner Stellar Rattery (whose prefix is STL), her label would become WTCH Sausage STL.

If for example, I bring a rat into my rattery from another breeder like my mentor Blue Stone Siamese Rattery (whose prefix is BSS), the label would be BSS (rat name) WTCH.

Many breeders keep track of their rats using software, and also use the software to generate pedigrees for their rats. This tells you the heritage of the rat, and what genetics may be present when you are working with them. It is a way for breeders to share information so that they know what they are dealing with and may encounter while breeding specific rats.

Prefixes and Suffixes are usually used on pedigrees as opposed to full rattery names, because they are shorter, and a quick way of making identification.

In the event a rat comes from a store, or a breeder who doesn't use prefixes and suffixes, then they do not have one.