

**Update On New Rat Colors: D'Argent, Spotted Tabby, Siamese Sable, Sable, Harlequin, Marten**  
*Karen Robbins, Editor*

**D'Argent**

Breeders have been working on correcting the type and temperament issues with the D'Argent rats. They have reported better temperaments regarding biting but the rats are still skittish. They have also seen other color variations, one being Russian Blue.



A 12-week-old Black D'Argent Dumbo male rat in June 2016 owned and bred by Nikki Kimura, Pacific Coast Rattery. Photo ©2016 Karen Robbins.



A 12-week-old Russian Blue D'Argent male rat owned and bred by Nikki Kimura. Photo ©2016 Karen Robbins.



... and the undercoat of the Russian Blue D'Argent rat owned by Nikki Kimura. Photo ©2016 Karen Robbins.

The Russian Blue version isn't quite as distinctive as the black but you can still see the "mask" around the muzzle and eyes. Also, the undercolor doesn't have as much contrast with the base color to the white tips.

**Spotted Tabby**

There are many people breeding the Spotted Tabbies and getting them in many colors. One thing we have found to try and determine what the color is, is to look at the stripe and spots rather than the background as those seem to be the color; also, to look at the non-Tabby littermates. If the stripe/spots are black with the gray background, those are black Tabbies. Since heavy spotting in areas such as the shoulders just look like one big clump of color when they have fur, then breeding to have separated spots as babies is the way to select for a better pattern. Breeders are still



14-day-old Spotted Tabby litter of rats with 3 black Spotted Tabby (look gray with black stripe and spots), a light Spotted Tabby (top), a normal Russian Blue Berkshire (top right), along with a Mink (far right) and Pearl (center) that were foster kids from another litter. Rats owned and bred by Jozzette Hagemann, Jozzy's Rat Pack Rattery. Photo ©2016 Karen Robbins.



A nicely patterned Spotted Tabby Standard rat owned and bred by Nikki Kimura. Unfortunately, the photo doesn't show how nicely spotted he was. Photo ©2016 Karen Robbins.



A very nicely patterned 9-day-old Spotted Tabby kitten rat showing dorsal stripe and lots of distinct spots. Rat owned and bred by Nicole Housel, Black Wolf Rattery. Photo ©2016.

having white markings show up on them and ideally they should not be marked so you can see the full effect of the dorsal stripe and spotting on the sides. The spots do show up on the belly when there isn't white covering it up. This pattern is also hard to photograph as adults as the nice spotting doesn't always show up in the photos.



... and the BWR Spotted Tabby Standard kitten now at 11 weeks. Rat owned and bred by Nicole Housel. Photo ©2016 Karen Robbins.

### Siamese Sable

Nicole Housel is working on Siamese Sable here in Southern California and has been finding it is coming in different shades (light, medium, dark) depending on genetics and if they are heterozygous or homozygous. The light heterozygous version shows the best color when adult whereas the medium shade doesn't have enough contrast against the points and body color. The homozygous version looks just like Sable Burmese and the Agouti version with black eyes passes for Agouti Burmese [www.afрма.org/ratunstdnonrec.htm#SiameseSablerat](http://www.afрма.org/ratunstdnonrec.htm#SiameseSablerat). She has been working on getting the white bred off of them and is now getting them with just some white on the chest (English Irish) or solid with just white feet/toes.



Siamese Sable Standard male rat owned and bred by Nicole Housel. He had no white on his body, just some white toes. Photo ©2016 Karen Robbins.

### Sable

With the addition of the Siamese Sable rats that in homozygous form look just like Sable Burmese but can come with ruby or black eyes, we have decided to group Sable Burmese and homozygous Siamese Sable under one standard of "Sable" to include both eye colors.



Sable Burmese Standard rat owned by Nicole Peltier, bred by Hilloah Whealser, Ratz Realm. Photo ©2007 Karen Robbins.



6-week-old homozygous Siamese Sable Standard rat owned and bred by Nicole Housel. Photo ©2016 Karen Robbins.

### Harlequin In The Netherlands

January 2016 we were contacted by a breeder in the Netherlands about a rat she had gotten from a feeder breeder and needed help identifying. This looked just like the one in Argentina that we had seen the month before. This one however was a female where the one in Argentina was a male. If they were in closer proximity to each other, then breeding them together would be ideal to see if they produced more this way.



American Sable rabbit from [www.snow-berry.com](http://www.snow-berry.com). The Sable rats are very similar.

She thought perhaps Dalmatian since the rat is white with black patches but has red eyes, where Black Dalmatians have black eyes. The rat has

"spotting" on the belly as well as the tail. The one eye with the black patch of fur has black "striping" in half of the eye making it darker than the side with no color, similar to an Odd-Eye. She was guessing a combination of Red-eyed Devil (Marten), Roan, and something else. It seems to be a mutation rather than a combining of genes though.

One thought we had was perhaps this was like a Splashed mouse since they have red/ruby eyes with patches/splashes of darker color on a lighter background. But these rats have bars/bands of black with most extending from the dorsal and ventral midline rather than round splashes, so they match more to Harlequin rabbits.



**Bloated Rats**

*Robin Brown-Tim, Charming Kritter Cottage Rattery (CKCR), CA, Facebook*

**Q** What could cause bloating or how to try and relieve it? I believe it is food related. Three different rats from different lines. They are not bloated now since being home (they had been at the show). I did have one at home that was also bloated. Could have been because they gorged? They don't have a communicable virus, right? I'm just trying to learn how to identify the cause and prevent it.

**A** Depends on if it is genetic or environmental (what they are eating). If the bloat is genetic, then euthanasia is recommended. If from diet, then change the diet. One time I saw a bloated rat and it was because it had been out of food, then when it got food, gorged itself and had a bloated/full belly. The other times I've seen bloated rats were from genetics (bloat).

Diarrhea can be from bloat, diet, or illness. Too much fresh food can cause diarrhea or things like too much peanut butter mixed with applesauce (was done to try and put on weight on babies) or too much rich food like cat food.

If the rats are all different, not related, and you changed the food/gave them something different, then it could be that. Stop giving any new food/treats and if the rats clear up, then it is definitely food issues. This would definitely *not* be contagious.

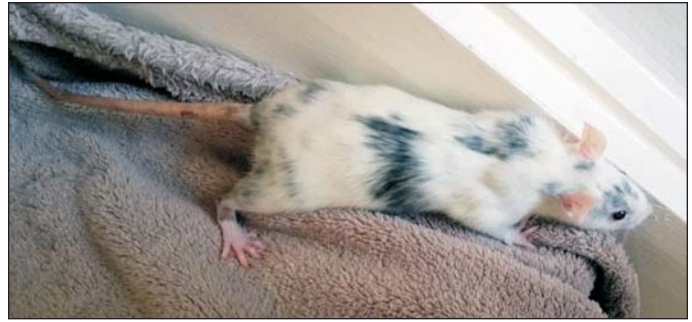
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## Keeping Young Male Mice from Fighting

*By Karen Robbins*

**I**'ve read different ideas on keeping young male mice from fighting that are housed together—putting in an item from their old cage without washing it, placing some soiled bedding in the new cage, only cleaning part of the cage, giving tubes and houses, cleaning everything and giving new houses/toys so they are busy checking everything out, etc. What I found works best for me is to only clean the pee corners and to sprinkle old bedding on top of the new. Same when I need to clean most/all of the cage. I don't take the cagemates out or their houses when cleaning, and if I don't put a little dirty bedding on top, they will start fighting.

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Harlequin female rat Jan. 2016, from Lucie in the Netherlands.



Harlequin female rat showing the half-red half-dark eye. Photo from Lucie in the Netherlands.

**Marten**

Marten, a.k.a. "Red-Eyed Devil, or RED" in the Netherlands, has been around since 2008 in Holland and 2010 in England, but has only recently made its way out here to the West Coast in 2015. This new color is being worked on here by a few fanciers



Black Marten rat owned by Martin Braak, Netherlands. Photo from Martin Braak.



Siamese Marten Dumbo male rat owned by Erika Holbrook, bred by Bobbi Jo Zammit, Rambling Rats Rattery. Photo ©2015 Karen Robbins.

some of the other "newer" ones.

This has been bred in many colors with the normal "red-eye" eye color or with black eyes. Since the distinctive feature of this color is the red eyes, we are going to stay with the red eyes. Black is the best color to see the contrast with the eye color. See more in the article "New Rat Color Known As 'Red' In Holland" [www.afirma.org/c-c\\_snowflake-red.htm#marten](http://www.afirma.org/c-c_snowflake-red.htm#marten), the Non-Recognized page "Marten" [www.afirma.org/ratunstdnonrec.htm#martenrat](http://www.afirma.org/ratunstdnonrec.htm#martenrat), or in the WSSF 2015 newsletter.

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