



DO YOU KNOW.....?

.....that the Eastern Cottontail Rabbit, (the kind around here), does not live in burrows or "warrens?" They prefer "disturbed" environments, like old fields, or areas with dense patches of under-growth where they can hide.

The nest is generally no more than a small dip in the ground, often in the middle of your front yard. It is lined with fur from the mother's belly and covered with the plant material in the area (grass, leaves, etc.). The nest is often discovered during gardening or lawn mowing. If the babies are uninjured, it is best to simply recover the nest and leave it alone. Mom normally returns to the nest to nurse her babies only twice a day, at dawn and dusk. She just sort of sits on the nest, tanks up her babies and is gone within a few minutes. Her babies' survival depend on the nest not being detected. To actually witness Mom feeding her young is very rare.

The babies grow very rapidly, opening their eyes at about one week of age. They leave the nest when two weeks old and, by three weeks or so, are quite independent and Mom is starting a new batch. Mom might act as an early warning signal to her young for awhile, stamping her feet when danger threatens.

The babies freeze in their tracks and Mom takes off at a run which may attract a predator and lead it away from the young.

Rabbits are very low on the food chain. They are taken by foxes, owls, hawks, domestic cats and dogs and even large snakes, not to mention humans. However, they can produce as many as 7 litters a year with an average of 3 to 5 per litter. That's alot of bunnies.

NOW YOU KNOW!!!!!!!!!!!!

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