



Agility Expert Articles

Kennel Notes - Is the Bitch in Whelp? by Keith Erlandson

It can be helpful if you are able to find out as soon as possible if your bitch has conceived after mating. If you have paunched a good number of rabbits in the early months of the year, this can be valuable experience for helping you to find out if your bitch is in whelp.

When you open up a doe rabbit which is in kindle, the position and appearance of the embryonic sacs will vary according to how far advanced is the pregnancy. When the doe is nine or ten days in young, the embryos are carried low down in the abdomen, just above the bladder and are complete spheres.

As the pregnancy advances the embryonic sacs become more oval in form and are carried higher in the abdomen. Shortly before birth the formed foetuses are in elongated form.

The soonest I was ever able to confirm in whelp was 17 days after mating but three weeks often is the earliest pregnancy can be confirmed by palpating the lower abdomen with finger and thumb in exactly the same spot as a doe rabbit shows at 9 - 10 days.

The embryonic sacs are spherical with a 'silky' feel about them. I only try to find one, then leave it at that.

(posted 28/07/2003)
