

The Scratching Post



SABCCI Newsletter - Spring 2022

www.sabcci.com





The Scratching Post Spring 2022



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SABCCI Committee

Ronnie Brooks, Dionne Dixon, Hugh Gibney, Gloria Hehir, Aedamair Kiely,
Norman O'Galligan, Karen Sluiters, Jim Stephens, Lorna Taylor, Aimee Weldon



*The real reason for Shubert's
'Unfinished Symphony'*

Dashing Support Cat Helps Kids With Eye Problems Feel Confident About Wearing Glasses

Meet Truffles the support cat. Not only does she purr and play and do all the things regular kitties do, she also supports her optician friend in a very special way.

How? By encouraging nervous children to see glasses and eye patches as fun, friendly - and not at all scary.



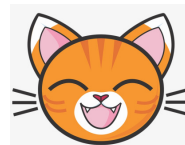
See, this former stray is more than happy to wear a pair of glasses herself.
www.goodnewsnetwork.org, July 2021

Where Did It Come From? (International Expressions)

My House/Apartment/Garden Is Like a Cat's Forehead

The Japanese expression “猫の額” (*neko no hitai*, literally ‘cat’s forehead’) is used to describe small spaces. The tiny-house movement would have far more appeal if people were describing their diminutive as cats’ foreheads, or - hear us out - designing them to look it cats’ foreheads.

www.mentalfloss.com



Editorial

Welcome to our Spring 2022 issue of The Scratching Post.
So if you're ready, sit back with an Aperol Spritz and enjoy the newsletter!

Stay Safe Karen and Gloria ^..^

Do you have any photos or articles for the newsletter? Please send them to karen@sabcci.com or gloria@sabcci.com



We're Back! The GCCFI Supreme Cat Show Sunday the 1st of May



Ballinteer Community School, Broadford Road, Ballinteer, Dublin 16

Open to the Public 12:30 to 5:00

Best In Show 4:00 onwards

See you there!

NB. Any Government Covid Policy prevailing on Show Day will apply

Georgina Goodison

It was with deep sadness to hear of the death of Georgina Goodison in Saint Vincent's Hospital, Dublin on the 3rd. March 2022.

Georgina was a lifetime staunch supporter and a member of SABBCI. She had been until recent years a unique and most successful breeder of Siamese cats in Ireland, with wonderful breed lines, which led to great successes in shows across the country and in the UK.

As the Treasurer of SABBCI for many years, Georgina, whose lifetime experience with financial matters gained from her career as Chief Accountant in Guinness's Brewery, had oversight of the club's finances. She saw to it that all our financial affairs were properly conducted and kept in good order, thereby ensuring that we always had funds in hands to enable us to put on our Cat Shows.

Georgina had slightly impaired eyesight which inhibited her from driving at night. Living nearby, my husband and I frequently picked her up over the years to travel to shows both North and South, - where after penning-in the three of us would treat ourselves to a hearty (rather than healthy!) breakfast - to see ourselves through the day.

Georgina was also an member of the GCCFI Council and served on the Executive. During her time on Council she held the position of Chair of the Governing Council of Cat Fancy Ireland and also served as Treasurer.

Georgina's other interests included the activities of the Fine Gael party in her local area of Dunlaoghaire and the British Legion. Her father had served in the RAF during the War and Georgina was a loyal supporter of the Legion's commemorative events.

On behalf of the Board of SABBCI, I would like to record that we will miss her insightful contributions to our meetings and her enthusiasm which was always inspiring. *Ar dheis Dé go raimh a anam dílis.* Karen Sluiters, SABCCI Chair



Dublin Airport Can No Longer Accept Live Animals Departing Through Its Baggage System

Update as of the 19th July 2021 - Dublin Airport was required to upgrade its baggage systems to facilitate EU Standard 3 HBS (Hold Baggage Screening) compliance and as a result, it can no longer accept animals departing through its baggage system. If your animal needs to travel in the aircraft hold, please contact your airline or travel agent to make arrangements.

It is important to note that this change only affects departing pets travelling in the aircraft hold. Pets departing from Dublin Airport in the aircraft cabin and pets arriving on flights into Dublin Airport, either in the aircraft cabin or the aircraft hold, will continue to be accommodated through the current screening processes.

For more information about travel requirements and the necessary documentation, please contact your airline or travel agent. www.dublinairport.com/at-the-airport/help-and-support/travelling-with-pets-and-animals Note: no further update since July 2021

The Pedigree - The Ocicat

The Ocicat is an all-domestic breed of cat which resembles a wild cat but has no wild DNA in its gene pool. The breed is unusual in that it is spotted like a wild cat but has the temperament of a domestic animal. The breed was established from Siamese and Abyssinian stock; later, American Shorthairs (silver tabbies) were added to the mix and gave the breed their silver colour, bone structure and distinct markings.

The first breeder of Ocicats was Virginia Daly, of Berkley, Michigan, who attempted to breed an Abyssinian-pointed Siamese in 1964. Mrs. Daly's daughter named the breed the Ocicat because of its resemblance to the ocelot.

Available in 12 colours, the ideal Ocicat is a large, active animal with an athletic appearance. It is very solid and well-muscled and has a short, tight coat with a satin sheen that shows off muscles and spots to their best advantage. Bred for spots, the Ocicat also comes in four other patterns: ticked, classic tabby, solid, and pointed. But regardless of colour or pattern the Ocicat's large pointed ears top their triangular faces and almond eyes.

Neither a demanding or clingy cat, the Ocicat loves to be with his humans as much as possible. They do well with children and other pets, but they don't like to be left alone for long periods of time. Ocicats have a distinctive and happy purr and are great talkers after the fashion of their Siamese ancestors. Their temperament is similar to that of a dog. Most can be trained to fetch, walk on a leash and harness, come when called, speak, sit, lie down on command and other dog-related tricks. Some even take readily to the water. Photo: www.petfinder.com



Well Travelled Cats -

Mystery Cat Found in Nashville With an Italian Microchip



A pretty orange cat in Nashville has turned into an international armchair detective race to solve the mystery of where she came from. How did this cat find herself lost in Nashville with a microchip implanted in Italy?

Metro Nashville Animal Care and Control (MACC) shared the case of the stray cat found at the Nashville International Airport on Facebook.

In the comments, the shelter says they found the chip as not registered with no available information. Further, they filed a report with the airport in case anyone inquired there. Possibly, the cat's owner didn't take steps to register the Microchip either by mail or online after it was implanted.

Soon after posting, the story of the orange cat turned into a race to solve the mystery. So far, the story has been shared over 1.5K times. In the comments, over 175 would-be sleuths have weighed in. Of those who responded, many are from Italy, including an Italian veterinarian. Some suggest cross-posting on other Facebook groups to reach more people. One suggested posting on TikTok because 'They can find anything!' Some had a theory the cat may have arrived from a family in the military. So, they offered to contact the army vet clinic in Vicenza and Naples. Others wanted the microchip information, but the owner's contact information would not be publicly accessible due to privacy laws.

Meanwhile, contacts in Italy offered to search available databases and contact animal registries. Overall, it was amazing how many people offered to help get this cat back home. Therefore, we can be confident the cat will soon have a happy reunion. Even if not, many people offered to take care of the cat in Nashville. coleandmarmalade.com 2021

A Cat Reunited With US Family With Australian Microchip

Teenie was reunited with her family in Montana. Like the cat in Nashville, Tennie had a microchip from another country. This time, the chip came from South Wales, Australia.

After receiving a response from the Australian microchip company, rescuers in Missoula discovered the cat's real name was Sophie. Astonishingly, the cat's owners were living nearby, and the rescuer knew them. They had been looking for Sophie for almost a year. Thanks to the microchip information, Sophie had a happy reunion. coleandmarmalade.com 2021



Fluffy, Grouchy Cat Wins Happy Cats Contest In Istanbul



Istanbul hosted its first edition of the Happy Cats competition. Despite her grimacing expression, Lova, a 3-year-old feline, won in the adults' category of the contest. Prenses (Princess), a cat who boasts a huge following on her social media account, won the kitten/junior category. Lova has also been the winner of several other international cat competitions, according to her owner.

Some 147 cats from a wide array of breeds competed at the event held at Istanbul Fair Center. The event, part of a pet expo, attracted animal lovers and pet owners. Elmina Ikra Özbey, owner of Prenses, told Ihlas News Agency (IHA) that her Scottish Fold cat won the hearts of social media users when she set up an account for her, dressed up in different clothes, 'as a way to forget my other late cat.'

The Rainbow Bridge

Just this side of heaven is a place called Rainbow Bridge. When an animal dies that has been especially close to someone here, that pet goes to Rainbow Bridge. There are meadows and hills for all of our special friends so they can run and play together. There is plenty of food, water and sunshine, and our friends are warm and comfortable. All the animals who had been ill and old are restored to health and vigour; those who were hurt or maimed are made whole and strong again, just as we remember them. When our time comes they will be waiting for us and then we will cross the Rainbow Bridge together.



Red - 2022



Red joined our family in 2007. He was adopted from the Nashua, New Hampshire Humane Society at the age of three. He died in January 2022 after a long battle with kidney disease. He was friendly, playful, loved kids and dogs and was a good friend. His hobbies included drooling and sleeping in the sun, sometimes at the same time. We're glad he was here. The Rosse Family, USA

(Red has appeared on 'The Catwalk' pages over the years)

No Heaven will not ever Heaven be - Unless my cats are there to welcome me.

Anonymous



Meteor Falling From Sky Captured On Family's Door Bell Cam - Thanks To Their Cat

Incredible footage of a meteor shooting through the sky was captured by a doorbell camera after a family cat activated the recording function just in the nick of time.

The bright fireball shot through the sky as residents from across the north east reported seeing the meteor on Friday evening. Julie Richardson, from Darlington, said she 'didn't quite believe it' when her husband, Lee, showed her what their new doorbell camera had captured. Julie's family cat, Stanley, is filmed between two vehicles at the bottom of the footage and happened to be walking past at just the right time to set the camera rolling, reports Teesside Live. After walking the length of the car, Stanley sits down on the drive, where he stays put until the impressive display is over. He then turned around and scarpers back towards the house.



The fireball was spotted in Peterlee and the Northumberland coast, with residents also commenting that they saw the meteor after Julie shared the footage on social media. Julie said: 'I didn't quite believe it, my husband Lee was the one that spotted it. I just thought it was a firework but that didn't make sense as the 'firework' was going down not up.' She said she put it on Facebook 'just to see what other people thought about it' and came to the conclusion that it was 'definitely a meteor'

The UK Meteor Network also shared several images of a meteor spotted that same evening. People from Lincolnshire to Sunderland also commented on the phenomenon on social media, saying they too spotted the green fireball in the night's sky.

The meteor sightings come as sightings of peculiar-looking lights in Yorkshire are on the increase, prompting local UFO and paranormal specialists have theories as to why the mysterious objects like the area so much. According to Yorkshire Live, there have been hundreds of sightings reported in the past 20 years alone. A 'large orange glowing ball of light' was spotted in Otley, west Yorkshire, late this summer and it's the latest in a long line of reports that have been officially recorded. In just March and April 2020 alone there were 192 UFO sighting recorded in the UK - up 200 per cent from 2019. In September, a strange triangular light moves across the night sky over Kingston-upon-Hull in Humberside.

Paranormal investigator, Brian from Exploring The Unknown, thinks he knows why Yorkshire has many of the UK's reports are in the same area. He said: 'They're drawn to Yorkshire due to the peak we are at height-wise in comparison with other parts of the country. Plus, our wide-open spaces and old abandoned, disused military bases. There are 100s of abandoned bases, bunkers, RAF flight tracks and all sorts. A lot of these locations aren't fully known by people as they are well hidden. Primarily these locations are used by urban explorers or paranormal enthusiasts for videos, or those who celebrate the history and believe in UFOs. They're drawn to those places for those reasons..'

www.mirror.co.uk, P. Kennedy, October 2021

How To Get What You Want

Sleep - The most important rule is to find somewhere warm and cosy. A basket of freshly washed clothes is ideal. Just bury yourself under the clothes and the human will not know you are there. New clothes also make excellent sleeping materials. However it is important to roll on them first to get your hairs and smells on them. I find that the top of the rubbish bin makes a good snoozing place. The smell that seeps through the bin makes for a great sleeping potion. Catclub.net



The difference between a cat and a dog is a cat can bark but doesn't.

D.J.Dodd

No Olympian Could Ever Match The Athleticism Of Your Cat

The individuals chosen to compete in the Olympic Games are among the strongest, most talented athletes our species has to offer. Lucky for them they only allow humans to enter the events. Your cat's natural ability to run, jump and manoeuvre would send even the most skilled Olympians running from the stadium with their tails between their legs.

Sure, some house cats aren't exactly the picture of athletic prowess with their saggy bellies and propensity for napping; but inside each feline lies the potential for speed any track star would envy. Most exceptional athletes clock in around 22 mph – and that's after a lifetime of rigorous conditioning. An average fit, healthy feline can easily top out at 30 mph with little more motivation than a fleeing rodent.

You may think that having four legs gives cats the advantage they need to smoke us in a foot race, but there's more to it than that. After all, the two legs we humans do have are exceptionally long compared to a kitty's. So why can't we keep up? It comes down to muscle force and flexibility.

Your cat makes this record seem pitiful by comparison. The average house cat can leap more than 5 feet into the air unaided and from a complete standstill. For an animal that stands less than 2 feet tall, that is pretty impressive! More powerful felines may be capable of reaching up to 7 times their own height in a single leap. I'd like to see an Olympian achieve that in Rio!

The limbs of a feline are extremely muscular and exert incredible force on the ground as they run. Their spines are capable of a wide range of arching and straightening allowing for a powerful, flexible gait. The feline body is quite literally built for speed.

How about jumping? Human high jumpers and acrobats seem to have the ability to fly, but they are often aided by poles, ropes or swings. The current world record for the high jump is 8.04 feet. The athlete who accomplished this feat stands 6'5" tall, meaning he leapt just over 19 inches beyond his own height.

When it comes to agility, any human who could duck, weave and manoeuvre as well as a cat could basically write their own contract to the NFL. If only cats had big enough paws to grasp a football! Athletes competing in sports like basketball and soccer also show some pretty impressive moves, but they could never match the grace and manoeuvrability of a feline.

The musculature of their limbs combined with their long, elegant shape and powerful tails make a scampering cat the very portrait of agility. Tiny muscle groups running along their flexible spines add to their grace. An astonishing video from BeyondSlowMotion showcases some average kitties performing jaw dropping manoeuvres just for the fun of it.

So when you snuggle up on the couch with your cat to watch the world's most impressive human athletes compete for the gold this summer, remember, that purring ball of fur by your side could easily top them all!

<https://iheartcats.com>, Dina Fantegrossi Photo: Imgur.com



Cats Can Be Allergic To People

If you love cats but can't have one of your own because you're allergic, the feeling may be mutual. It isn't common, but cats can be allergic to people. The condition is rare in part because we humans usually bathe regularly and thus don't shed as much dead skin or hair as other animals (and it is some what unclear how of much of a problem human dander may be to felines). That said, cats are fairly sensitive to chemicals and sometimes have a negative reaction to certain perfumes, laundry detergents and soaps. Cat allergic reactions look much the same as the ones humans get - they may manifest as sneezing, runny noses, rashes, hives or other uncomfortable symptoms. In rare cases cats can even be allergic to dogs. (maybe that is why they don't get along.)

Yet our feline friends are more likely to have seasonal allergies as us - especially grass and pollen - as well as year-round problems with dust mites and fleas. As much as 30% of the human population with allergies is allergic to either cats or dogs, with allergies to cats being twice as common as allergies their canine counterpart. While ailurophiles (cat lovers) may consider that a fate worse than death, the good news is there are a number of hypoallergenic breeds who are less likely to make you sneeze.

The Quiz -

- 1 - Cats have 21 pairs of chromosome.
- 2 - White cats are always deaf.
- 3 - The best way to take a cat to the vet is by carrying her in.
- 4 - Kittens are born deaf and blind.
- 5 - Most of your cat's diet should be fruit and veg.
- 6 - Should you give your cat a bath once a week.
- 7 - Cats sleep for 5 hours a day.
- 8 - Over the counter pain relief medication is dangerous for cats.
- 9 - Cats can stop eating for 10 days and stay healthy.
- 10 - Every colourpoint cat is either Siamese or Hymey.



thecatsite.com

Answers on page 16

You Know You Are A Cat Person When -

- You always receive cat-themed gifts
- You brush your teeth in the tub because the cat is drinking water from the drip in the sink.



Famous Cat Lovers - Mark Twain

Mark Twain's love of cats was said to have been with him since he was a child: never without a cat nearby. But, the author so enjoyed feline company that he would rent cats when he was away from home. That's right, rent. Twain was serious about needing to be around cats!

When his cat, Bambino, ran off Twain placed an ad in the New York American offering a reward for the 'intensely black' cat that his daughter had given him. Even after his cat was found, concerned members of the public brought him new cats because they wanted to meet the author. www.thegreatcat.org Mark Twain, c1900. Photograph: Topical Press Agency/Getty Images

Where Did It Come From?

There's more than one way to skin a cat -

The reference is to preparing a catfish (named as such because of its long whiskers) for cooking, which must be skinned because the skin is tough. xmission.com Photo: Wikipedia



How To Annoy Your Human

The Newspaper Game - This is the opposite of the calculated ignore, so feel free to mix up every so often. We all know that humans are fascinated by those deliciously crinkly toys they call newspapers. Just when your human is feeling a bit down, given him the attention he so sorely needs. The very best time to do so is when he has gone to his newspaper for comfort.

Pawnation.com



How To Annoy Your Cat



Make a Kitty Shot gun: Hold your cat's front legs together in one hand, back legs in the other. Aim cat like a shot gun. Make appropriate shooting and reloading noises. [100 Fun Ways to Annoy Your Cat](http://100FunWaysToAnnoyYourCat.com) by Jim Erskine

Toys Found In The Household

An average household is full of other toys, which seem to be much more suitable for the purposes of cat entertainment.

- The Shower - you may turn the tap with either hot or cold water.
- The Kitchen Bin - you may throw the cover down, pour the dinner out and choose something yummie for a snack.
- The Telephone - you may take the handset off the receiver hook.

Cats.alpha.pl

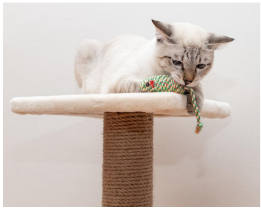


You may say a cat uses good grammar. Well, a cat does – but you let a cat get excited once; you let a cat get to pulling fur with another cat on a shed, nights, and you'll hear grammar that will give you the lockjaw. Ignorant people think it's the noise which fighting cats make that is so aggravating, but it ain't so; it's the sickening grammar they use.

Mark Twain



Deafness In Cats - Part 2 (Part 1 in Autumn 2021 Issue)



Treatment

Treatment of deafness in your cat will depend on the type of deafness they are suffering from and its cause. Congenital deafness and many causes of nerve deafness are untreatable, and the inability to hear will be permanent. The causes of many types of conductive deafness are treatable.

- **Antibiotics:** Bacterial infections that cause deafness will be treated with an antibiotic. This type of drug will work to kill off the bacteria causing the infection. Without the bacteria causing issues, inflammation and other issues will go away and hearing may be fully or partially restored.
- **Ear Mite Treatments:** To treat ear mites that are causing hearing loss or deafness your veterinarian will thoroughly clean the ear, a task that requires a professional to prevent further damage. They will also treat the mites with a prescription drop.
- **Anti-inflammatories:** This treatment is designed to reduce the inflammation in the ear that is causing blockage of sound. Depending on your pet's condition and other medical factors, your veterinarian may choose.
- **Cancer Treatments:** If deafness is related to tumors in the ear, auditory nerve, or brain, cancer treatments like surgery or chemotherapy may be necessary.

Deaf cats rely on their remaining senses, especially vision and touch.

- Vibrations of all kinds take on new meaning for deaf cats. They may feel the floorboards vibrate as people walk by, the pulsing of the baseline from loud music, the flushing of the toilet, or the slamming of a door.
- The vibration of their own voice is another sensation they may notice and enjoy. Deaf cats may purr and meow louder than their hearing counterparts. They may walk into a bathroom or walk-in shower and shriek, enjoying the vibration of their voice reverberating from the tiled walls and floor.
- Deaf cats will often position themselves to minimize the risk of being startled. They may want to hang out in very high places, like the top of the refrigerator or a kitty condo facing out into the room. Lookout spots can be created in various areas of the home to help your cat feel more secure. A courtesy to a deaf cat is to walk with a heavier stride or to gently tap the surface on which they sleep to let them know you are near.

Where do I start with teaching and training my deaf cat?

As with any teaching and training process, the keys are patience, persistence, and creativity. If there are hearing cats in the household, your job may be easier because the deaf cat will learn the household routines from those cats.

Start with the basics, such as 'Come here!' Get the deaf cat's attention, and when she's looking at you, use your sign for come here and then pat the floor near you, the sofa next to you, or your lap if you are sitting in a chair. Reward your cat with a nice stroke along the torso. Some cats will respond to small tasty training treats, so explore your options to change it up with more interesting rewards.

The same principle applies to 'Time for dinner.' When it is the usual time for a meal, get your cat's attention and use your chosen signal as you move toward the feeding area. With consistency, it will not take long for your cat to beat you to the dish once you give the signal.

Are there any special training tips or aids I can use with my deaf cat?

Visual cues are an important mode of communication with a cat who can't hear. Cats easily learn to respond to hand signal or a flicking light or laser pointer.

Approach from the front so your cat can see you coming; deaf cats startle easily and feel vulnerable to predators, which increases anxiety. Such cats may appear aggressive and lash out but it is really a self-defense tactic.

- Be sure to use your voice and appropriate facial expressions when you are teaching a command. Smile for a happy command like 'Come here!' or 'Time for dinner!' Frown and give a thumbs-down when teaching 'No.'
- You can use a laser pointer or a flashlight to play or to direct your cat's attention to a specific place.
- You may want to consider a vibrating collar (*not* a shock or spray collar) that allows you to send a gentle vibration to the collar when you want to get your cat's attention or distract her from an undesirable behavior.

Can I teach and train my cat who became deaf because of age?

It is a myth that you can't teach an old cat new tricks. Any cat (including hearing cats) can learn hand signals. Older cats can learn new things, including how to watch for hand signals. The principles of training are the same as for a cat who is born deaf.

Can my deaf cat ever go outside?

A deaf cat should *never* be allowed outside on her own. She cannot hear danger approaching - dogs, other cats, or traffic - and can easily make a fatal error. That said, most cats can be trained to use a harness and leash. Be sure to choose a snug, custom-fit harness and start your training in the house, where it is safe.

Another option is to create an outdoor enclosure attached to the house that allows for safe outdoor time. This kind of environmental enrichment is good for any cat, deaf or hearing.

Ancient DNA Shows Cats Domesticated Themselves - Why Are We Not Surprised?

Domestication of animals was an amazing feat that changed human relationships with the natural world. But while a Pomeranian looks nothing like a wolf, a thoroughbred jump horse looks nothing like a wild pony, and a potbellied pig looks nothing like a black boar, 'domestic' house cats look pretty much exactly like wild cats.



That's because they domesticated themselves - not through form, but through function, and research reveals that wildcat ancestors share essentially the same genetics as house cats today. The two lineages of cats - the European forest cat (*Felis silvestris silvestris*) and Southwest Asia/North African wildcat (*Felis silvestris lybica*) - are solitary hunters that lack any strong social hierarchy, which would make them poor candidates for domestication by humans, to start with.

It was the cat, itself, who came to prize the territory around the homes of the ancient farmer, or the wharf of the ancient mariner. They were drawn to a plentiful supply of prey in the form of rodents - which brought their species and ours to be inseparably linked.

A study from 2017 looked at the genetics of over 200 cats, from all five wild subspecies, along with cat remains from stone age Romania, and even Egyptian cat mummies, and found that *Felis lybica* in the Near East in 4,400 BCE, and in North Africa around 1,500 BCE, gave rise to the domestic cat, likely because it was here where the earliest agricultural civilizations occurred.

Still, cats existed unchanged through thousands of years - essentially until the Middle Ages, before selective breeding, the typical activity of domestication, began to give rise to more unique types of cats. 'I think that there was no need to subject cats to such a selection process since it was not necessary to change them,' said evolutionary geneticist and study co-author Eva-Maria Geigl to National Geographic. 'They were perfect as they were.'

Rather than merging social hierarchies and breeding selectively like humans did with wolves - cats simply existed in close proximity to humans, without ever fully entering societal processes.

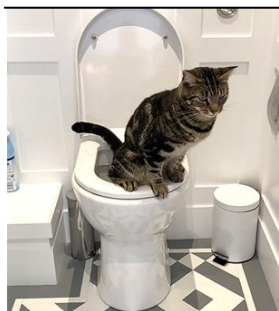
Rise Of The Tabby

The first domestic cat genes the scientists identified were the blotch pattern on the tabby cat - the first truly domesticated, if such a word can be used, house cat. Striped tabby cats were found in the European gene set of wildcats back before 6,500 BCE, and there they stayed for 3,000 years before emerging in the Near East genetic profile.

Tabby cats evolved their characteristic blotches in the Ottoman Empire in 1,300 CE, and it wasn't until the 18th century that the tabby pattern began to be associated, societally, with domestication. Not until the 19th century, thousands of years after dog diversification, did Europeans begin selecting certain characteristics to breed together in cats, resulting in the Russian Blue, perhaps around 1875, and the Maine Coon around the same time.

While not being truly domestic, cats are a celebrated part of our lives. Their lack of selective breeding means that for the most part, genetic susceptibility to disease, typical of hyper-specialized dog breeds, is mostly absent in cats, and it's not uncommon for them to live past 20 years old.

www.goodnewsnetwork.org, A Corbley, March, 2021 Photo: Afriican Wildcat, Wikipedia

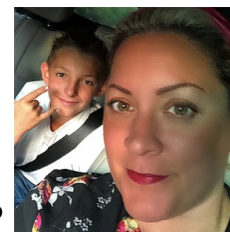


Mum Tells Off Son For Not Flushing The Loo - But Discovers The Family Cat Is To Blame

When Nathalie, 46, kept finding the toilet unflushed in the mornings, she jumped to the obvious conclusion. Assuming her son, Archie, 13, was the culprit, she gave him a lecture on why it was gross to leave a poo in the bowl.

But it turned out Archie had been framed. One night when the family returned from a trip out, they turned on the lights and discovered the true non-flushing criminal: their five-year-old tabby cat, Rocket, who they caught squatting on the toilet and letting loose.

Nathalie, 46, of Sudbury, Suffolk, said: 'In the morning I'd go in to use the loo and find it hadn't been flushed. I kept saying to Archie that he should flush the toilet when he went, but he kept saying: 'Mum I haven't used it.' Then one night we came back and we could see Rocket squatting on top of the loo in the light from the hallway. It was clear he was going to the toilet. I followed him one day and managed to get this photo - it's clear now that he uses the loo whenever he can.'



Nathalie and husband Colin have three cats, all of whom have their own litter trays - but Rocket prefers to use the family bathroom. 'What is crazy is I haven't trained him at all,' said Nathalie. 'He's always been obsessed with watching me go to the loo and being in the bathroom in general so maybe he's just copied me. 'Archie found it hilarious - he adores Rocket.'

The couple, who are property developers, now wish they could train their other cats to follow suit. Maybe they can teach Rocket to flush - and put the seat down - next.

metro.co.uk, Ellen Scott October 2021

The Catwalk



Nestor -

I am thinking while
I am waiting for my
food -where is it?

J. Rodriguez, Spain



Arya-

What do you mean
'Get out of there'?

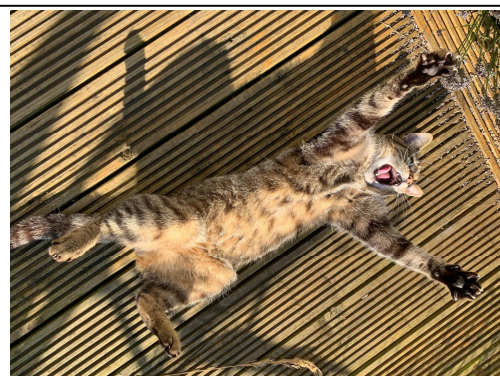
The Buckley Family, Cork



Tigerle -

Having the time of my
life, yahoo!

C. Wagner, Cork



Joshi -

What's that?
Can I eat it?

K. Sluifers, Dublin

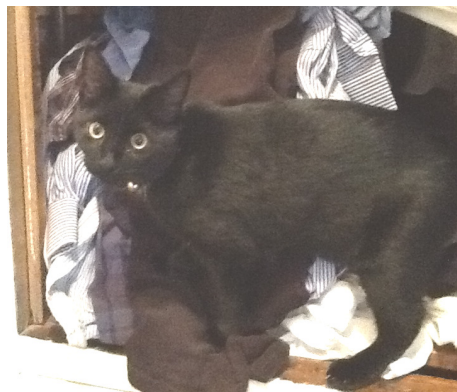


The Catwalk

Vincent -

Just looking, really
I am!

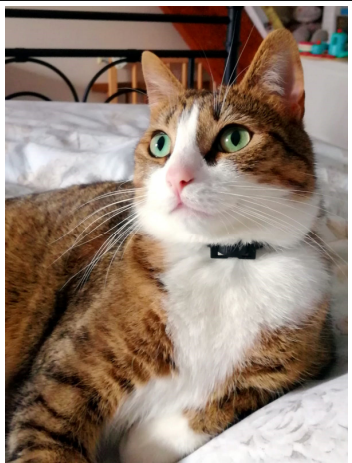
S. Mackey, Dublin



Ottie -

What do you mean get
off your clean bed?

M. Olson, France



Julius -

I'm so embarrassed.!

L.O'Brien, Dublin



Black Pepper -

The grass is wet,
that is why I am
here!

P. Doyle, Kerry



He Thought It Was A Kitten Lost In The Snow - But It Was One Of The Most Endangered Mammals In Europe

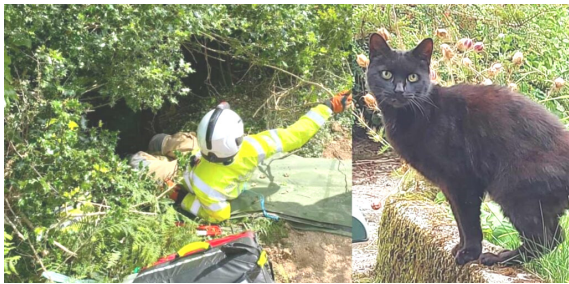
32-year-old chef Pete MacNab was out for a walk in Scotland's Cairngorms National Park with his baby son and a friend. They spotted a group of sheep circling something. As they drew closer, the animals scattered, revealing a tiny tabby kitten lying in the snow in rural Dava Way.

The feline was unable to get on its feet. It looked freezing and its coat was all matted with snow. Not wanting to leave the creature in difficulty, Pete's friend, Piotr, carried it the three miles back to town. He noted its claws were like 'miniature razors,' and the pair joked that the little creature must be a Scottish wildcat: a rare species known to live in the Highlands.

After it was left at the vets on Wednesday, Pete began posting on local Facebook groups but no owner came forward. Piotr and his partner began planning to get a cat bed and re-home the kitten - which they'd named Huntleigh. But, the following day, the vet confirmed a specialist had in fact identified the wee tabby as a Scottish wildcat. There are only around 100 to 300 of the species left. The only wild member of the cat family in the UK, it's also one of the most endangered mammals in Europe.

Because of their bond with the kitty, Peter and Piotr have since begun a fundraiser to raise money for a charity helping other wildcats - which has raised more than £5,000 so far. Peter's now been contacted by the Royal Zoological Society, which is part of the breeding program, to say the campaign has happily boosted their fundraising, too.

www.goodnewsnetwork.org, Photo: SWNS



Black Cat's Meows Led Rescuers To 83-Year-old Owner After She Fell Into Ravine

Black cats may have the reputation for being bad luck, but don't tell that to the owner of one ebony feline who helped save her life.

Piran the kitty lives with his cat mom in a rural area of Cornwall, England. When the 83-year-old Bodmin woman went missing, neighbours launched a search party, scouring the nearby countryside, but she was nowhere to be found - until searchers caught sight of an agitated Piran, mewing loudly by a cornfield gate. 'The cat is very attached to her, and he was going back and forth in the gateway and meowing, so I decided to go and search the maize field,' searcher Tamar Longmuir told Sk News.

With the crop standing seven feet tall, the going was difficult. Keeping to the perimeter, Longmuir skirted the field, calling out her neighbour's name. She'd reached the bottom of the field when she finally heard a faint response.

To Longmuir's dismay, she realized the elderly woman had taken a tumble down a steep, 70-foot ravine, and after passing through some barbed wire, had finally come to rest in a stream.

Although Longmuir was able to make her way down to assess the situation, and thankfully, learned her neighbour lady had sustained no major injuries, it's believed the octogenarian had been stuck there for several hours

Longmuir had to climb back up the ravine to get cell phone service, but she was able to contact emergency crews who soon arrived to extricate the stranded senior from the ravine. After a concerted two-hour effort by almost 25 emergency personnel from the police, fire department, and air and water rescue services, the woman was airlifted to a nearby hospital for treatment.

www.goodnewsnetwork, Judy Cole, August 2021, Photo: Bodmin Police/Facebook

Looking After The Feral Cats On Gran Canaria



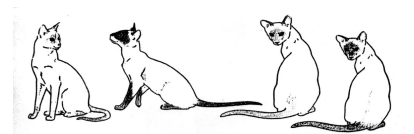
People (tourist & locals) have always left out small bowls or tins with food and water for the feral cats. Now they have gone one step further. An opening was cut on the side of large plastic water bottles for food or water to be put in. This provides a covered container to keep the food and water protected. left: bottles secured to a tree; right: another station being used by one of the many cats.



Cat Conflict

My cat violates a vital code
when she sleeps on the lid of my commode.
It is all right for her to choose it--
except, of course, when I have to use it.
It seems to me a cat should know
when you gotta go, you gotta go.
I'm sure she also would be bitter
if I slept in her box of litter

John D. Engle, Jr



Five Reason To Talk To Your Cat



Do you ever catch yourself telling your cat all about your day? You prattle on about your boss at work and the sandwich you had for lunch. You think that if anyone heard you talk to your cat, they'd call you crazy.

But I have good news, cat people. Talking to your cat doesn't make you crazy, it makes you a good cat owner. Our cats might not talk back (besides the occasional meow), but animal behaviourists say there are real benefits associated with talking to our pets. If you already talk to your cat, keep it up! And if you don't, here a few good reasons to start.

- 1. Talking gives you the opportunity to connect with your cat on a daily basis.** Between work, family, friends, and all your other responsibilities, life gets busy. As much as you love your cat, it's no surprise that you can't always spend as much quality time with them as you like. You don't always get the chance to play with the feather toy or spend an hour cuddling together on the couch. It's a lot easier, however, to talk to your cat while you're doing other things. When you're making dinner, you can involve your cat by talking about what's on your mind. You might not be engaging in super fun playtime, but you're still making a connection. The sound of your voice directed toward them will likely keep your cat at least mildly interested, and it gives you a chance to spend time together you otherwise wouldn't have had.
- 2. It shows your cat they're an important part of your life.** Most cats don't crave human attention as much as dogs do, but they still enjoy spending time with their favourite humans. And if you work during the day or spend long hours away from home, you better believe your cat misses you. They need to feel like they're an important part of your life. When you talk to your cat on a regular basis, it lets them know you think about them and care about them. Your feline is a major part of your family, and they're not ignored or overlooked. When your cat feels like part of the family, they're more likely to interact with confidence.
- 3. Talking to your cat will strengthen your bond.** Dr. Danielle Forshee, a doctor of psychology, talked to Elite Daily about how you can talk to your cat and strengthen your bond. While human relationships are based on a give and take of emotions, the same is true for the relationship you share with your cat. If you want your cat to love you as much as you love them, you need to give love as much as you take. You can do that through pets and playtime, but talking during calm moments is a great way to strengthen an ongoing bond. Cats are surprisingly perceptive, and the more you talk, the better your cat will understand you. They will learn to recognize your moods, and that will bring you closer together.
- 4. You can help your cat learn and understand human words.** While your cat won't understand every word you say, it is possible for pets to recognize and understand certain words. For example, does your cat instantly run to their dish when you say the word 'dinner?' What about 'treat?' Cats learn what these words mean through associations and repetition. You can't expect your cat to have an expansive vocabulary, but talking can help them pick up on certain words. This is especially helpful if you're interested in teaching your cat tricks and cues. You can teach your cat to come when called, sit on command, or even roll over. The more you talk to them, the better they'll understand you.
- 5. Talking Out loud is good for your mental health.** Your cat can't hold up their side of the conversation, but cats are great listeners. When you talk to your cat, treat them like any other good friend or family member. Your cat honestly doesn't care what you have to say. There's absolutely no judgement or worry. You're free to rant about whatever you want, and that kind of catharsis can be great for your mental health.

Talking to your cat can also relieve feelings of loneliness and depression. You have a friend that loves you unconditionally even when you confess your most embarrassing secrets. When you talk to your cat, you have a supportive best friend and a trustworthy confidant all rolled into one adorable package. www.cattitudedaily.com, Amber

Guidelines For Cats

Toys

Any small item is a potential toy. If a human tries to confiscate it, this means that it is a good toy. Run with it under the bed. Look suitably outraged when the human grabs you and takes it away. Always watch where it is put so you can steal it later. Two reliable sources of toys are dresser tops and wastebaskets. There are several types of cat toys.

- ✦ Bright shiny things like keys, brooches, or coins should be hidden so that the other cat(s) or humans can't play with them. They are generally good for playing hockey with on uncarpeted floors.
- ✦ Dangly and/or string-like things such as shoelaces, cords, gold chains, and dental floss (& Q-tips) also make excellent toys. They are favourites of humans who like to drag them across the floor for us to pounce on.
- ✦ When a string is dragged under a newspaper or throw rug, it magically becomes the Paper/Rug Mouse and should be killed at all costs. Take care, though. Humans are sneaky and will try to make you lose your dignity.



Kitten Blossoms Into Fluffy, Happy Cat After His Life was Turned Around by Kindness

A Good Samaritan from Montreal, Canada came across a listing about a kitten being given away. The young tabby was in poor shape and desperately needed rescue. The kind person reached out to her local rescue, Chatons Orphelins Montréal, for help. 'We had to get the kitten right away because he was not doing well. We wanted to make sure that he would receive the medical care he needed, and would not fall into the wrong hands,' Chatons Orphelins Montréal shared with Love Meow.



With help from volunteers, they were able to get the kitten to safety. The tabby cried throughout the car ride to the rescue. He was a bit rough around the edges but showed a strong will to live. As soon as he arrived, he calmed down and just wanted to be petted.



The kitten was just skin and bones, covered in fleas and had a host of health issues to sort out. Despite it all, he purred nonstop while being cared for at the vet. He was so hungry that he leapt over his food bowl and scarfed down every morsel. 'We named him Spencer. After having his first treatments, he went to his foster home with our volunteer Marielyne,' the rescue added.

Little Spencer quickly adjusted to the new environment and immediately sought attention and affection from his foster mom. He would curl up next to her for comfort while turning his purr motor on high. The tabby boy discovered Cat TV one day and just kept going back for more feline entertainment. He likes to sleep in the sun on the window sill, is curious and likes to watch all the moving things from the outside.'

Over the next several days, his eyes cleared up, his tummy felt much better, and he really filled out by eating to his heart's content at every meal. Spencer blossomed into the happy, fluffy kitty that he was meant to be. Not only did he relish finding new toys to play with, but also he was excited to meet other cats. When he was introduced to the resident kitties, he immediately took a liking to them and followed them everywhere around the house. They eat together and often nap as a clowder. The sweet tabby likes to emulate the bigger kitties and tries to learn to be a proper cat.

Spencer is sweet, gentle and very friendly. He loves other cats and constantly wants to play with them,' the rescue shared with Love Meow. 'He enjoys being around people and will come running when he hears their footsteps, and then try to pounce on their feet. After playing, he likes to cuddle with his people and purr himself to sleep.

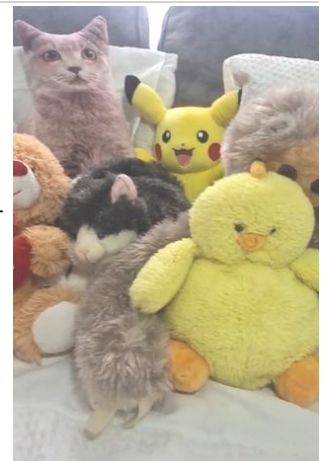
www.lovemeow.com. Amy Bojo. August 2020. Photos: Chatons Orphelins Montréal

Cat Owner Disguises Her Cat Well In Video For 'Landlord'

A pet owner's video of her cat disguised in a pile of toys as she claimed to be preparing for her landlord to come round has gone viral.

Gosia filmed what appeared to be a pile of fluffy toys and it was thanks to the skills of Larry the cat who was able to sit perfectly still. She is the owner of five white cats called Foxy, Bacon, Harry, Larry and Szymon but she needed to be able to camouflage them as the landlord doesn't allow pets, she claimed.

She captioned her TikTok video: 'When your landlord is coming for an inspection and doesn't allow pets.' Gosia showed a clip of her bed filed with the toys from ducks, to monkeys and cats. But hidden in the midst is also a real live cat. On the screen it pops up: 'Can you see Larry???' Then she wrote: 'Did I hide my cat well???' The video has gone viral on TikTok with more than 10 million views and people questioning if there really is a cat in the footage.



One person wrote: 'You're telling me there's a living animal in this video?' Another added: 'Right. Seventh time now watching this it's not there right. It's a prank I swear.' Others agreed it couldn't be true: 'I do not believe that there's a real animal anywhere in that.' And Gosia was forced to reply that there is indeed a cat. 'I promise you he's there. Staring at you,' she said.

Then eventually an eagle-eyed viewer found him. 'I think I just see him peeking out over the bear's leg and under the black cat's head?' Confirming she had found Larry, whose eyes are all that's visible, Gosia replied: 'Yaaaaaass.' And later she also admitted that she wasn't trying to hide the cat from a landlord but just playing a game to see if people could find her pet. She clarified: 'It's just a TikTok trend love, it's my house. Where are you from?'

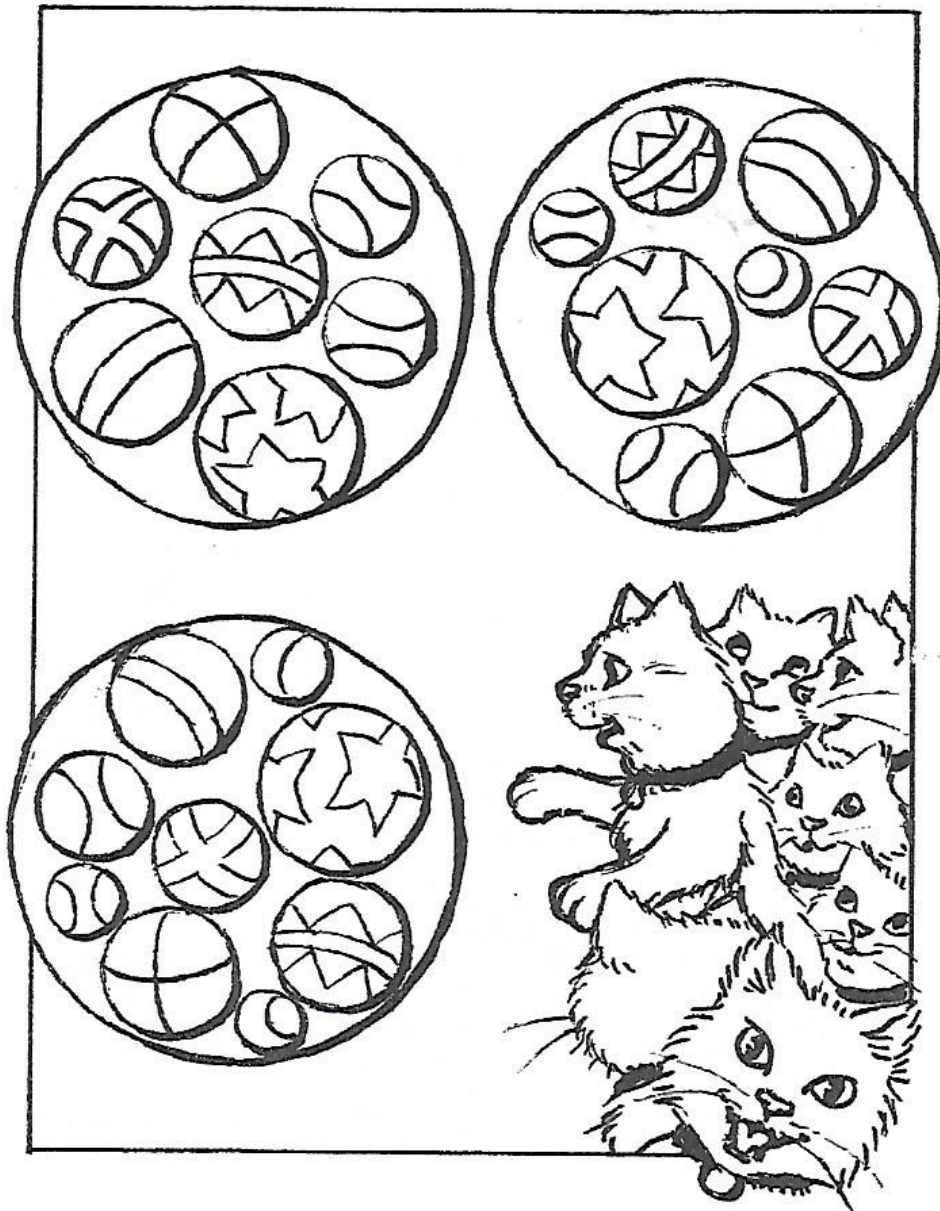
It comes as life should become easier for pet owners looking to rent property as new UK government legislation means that a blanket ban will no longer be possible. In the future landlords will have to give a good reason why pets are not allowed with 'well behaved animals' allowed. www.mirror.co.uk, T. Hanlon, December 2021 Image: [tiktok.com/@5scarycats](https://www.tiktok.com/@5scarycats)



Law of Cat Furniture Replacement: A cat's desire to scratch furniture is directly proportional to the cost of the furniture.



KIT'S KORNER



These cats can't wait to play with the balls.
Colour in the circle that has the right number of balls.

The Final Miaow

As you can see we have come to the last page of our newsletter and we hope you found it interesting and enjoyable. Many thanks to everyone who sent us material and photos for the **CATWALK**. We can always do with more photographs and stories, so please keep sending them in. *Stay Safe.* Karen & Gloria ^..^

Are Cats Smarter Than Dogs?



Are Cats Smarter Than Dogs?

The ultimate answer to this is complex, as it is difficult to compare the intelligence of the two animals. Brian Hare, the founder and director of Duke University's Canine Cognition Center, put it like this in an interview with PBS: 'Asking which species is smarter is like asking if a hammer is a better tool than a screwdriver. Each tool is designed for a specific problem, so of course it depends on the problem we are trying to solve.' However, various studies have concluded that, overall, cats are not smarter than dogs.

One study often cited is that of neurologist Suzana Herculano-Houzel, who has spent nearly 15 years analyzing cognitive function in humans and animals. One such experiment she performed involved counting the neurons in the cortexes of a cat, golden retriever and a mixed-breed small dog.

The cerebral cortex of the brain is involved in many higher level processes, including thought, association and memory. The cortexes of dead animals were liquefied in order to measure the number of suspended nuclei from neuron cells. This meant researchers could estimate the number of neurons present.

An estimate of the number of neurons in the average human cortex is 16 billion, according to Herculano-Houzel's findings. Her research found the dogs had 429 million and 623 million neurons for the mixed breed and golden retriever respectively, while the cat had 250 million neurons in their cerebral cortexes. She told PBS: 'Neurons are the basic information processing units. The more units you find in the brain, the more cognitively capable the animal is. We definitely need more research on this topic before we can definitively state how meaningful brain size is as a measure of intelligence across different animal groups. It's not a larger body that explains the number of neurons you have. You can have animals with similar-sized brains, and they have completely different numbers of neurons.'

Adding to this evidence of dogs' superior brainpower, a study in 2008 showed cats are not as good at counting or identifying quantities compared to dogs and fish. It may be the case that dogs are more cognitively capable than cats, however there are explanations as to why this might be, and other measures which could suggest cats have the edge.

Another study, this time in 2006 at the Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest, Hungary, showed cats are able to follow puzzles, and stick at it until they get it right, unlike dogs who will seek help from their owners.

A study at Oxford University in the U.K. suggested dogs are more intelligent due to their sociability, pet food company Purina suggested this may be due to cats having been domesticated for a shorter length of time than dogs.

According to the New York Times, the Belgian Society to the Elevation of the Domestic Cat even attempted an experiment to see if cats could be used to send messages between towns in the late 19th century. The fastest cat got to their destination in five hours, and all of the 37 cats made it back within 24 hours, showing cats are clearly not too far behind in the intelligence game.

The Final Verdict - Ultimately, it is impossible to settle on one side or another, as there are extenuating factors to intelligence.

As dogs have been domesticated for longer, they have been able to adapt to the ways of humans and thus, if we measure their intelligence by sociability or ability to follow rules, they are far ahead of cats. However, cats have fewer neurons in their cortexes, regardless of size, meaning they will naturally be less cognitively capable.

If looking at the data, dogs have the upper hand, but there are clearly some tests where cats could be said to win the day, despite dogs having a domestic advantage.

www.newsweek.com, J. Desborough, June 2021

Quiz Answers: page 7

1. T 6. F
2. F 7. F
3. F 8. T
4. T 9. F
5. F 10. F

Kits Korner
Answer: page 15
Colour in balls in
the top left circle

Convenient

I am inventing a transparent cat.
When he sits on your newspaper,
Or stands pointedly between you and your book
You can still read,
When he spends the night on your navy wool dress

There are drawbacks
Your breakfast bacon may pick
up and vanish.

Ann Kilmer



Always
kiss your
CAT GOODNIGHT