

# The Scratching Post



**SABCCI Newsletter - Spring 2023**

[www.sabcci.com](http://www.sabcci.com)



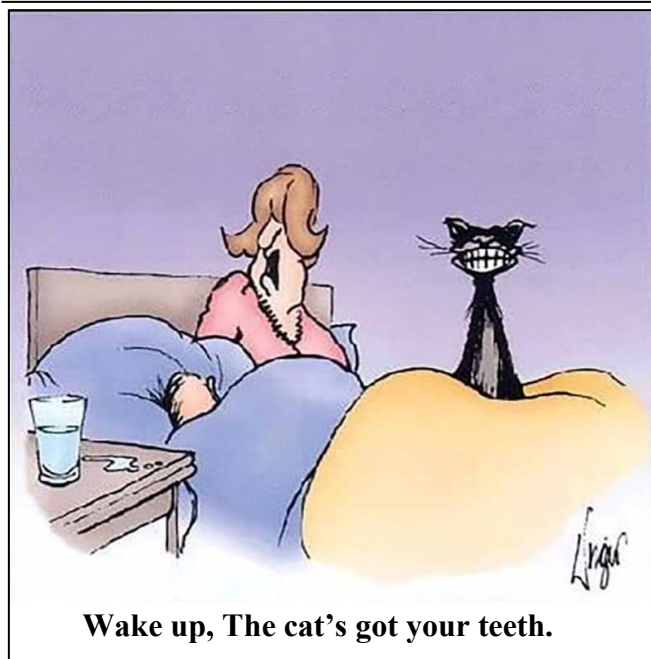
# The Scratching Post Spring 2023

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www.sabcci.com 

## SABCCI Committee

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



**A** kitten learns from its mother the  
 great secret that cats rule the world.

Pam Brown, poet



**Urgent Appeal from  
 UCD Veterinary Hospital**



Due to an unprecedented increase in numbers of sick cats, the UCD Veterinary Hospital are seeking healthy cats to donate blood to be transfused to sick patients in their ICU.

Contact: vetblooddonorclinic@ucd.ie or 01 7166137

## Editorial

Welcome to our Spring 2023 issue of The Scratching Post.  
Celebrating SABCCI's 70th Birthday!

We will be sharing with you some memories from over the years of SABCCI.  
So if you're ready, sit back with an Adult Hot Chocolate and enjoy the newsletter!

Karen and Gloria ^..^

Do you have any photos or articles for the newsletter? Please send them to [karen@sabcci.com](mailto:karen@sabcci.com) or [gloria@sabcci.com](mailto:gloria@sabcci.com)



### ***Notice: Change in show dates going forward***



#### **The Dublin Championship Cat Show**

16th April 2023

Ballinteer Community School

Broadford Road, Ballinteer, Dublin 16



You may say to yourself, 'I thought this show is in October!'

Yes, traditionally, but the dates for the Supreme and the Dublin show have been swapped.

The show year will now start with the Midlands Cat Club's show in February and  
will end on a highlight in October with The Supreme.

SABCCI and the GCCFI will hold a '2 in 1' Championship show, now on the 16th of April,  
2 shows running in the same hall at the same time.

Doors are open to the public at 12:00. Best In Show judging after 3:30.

### **The Irish Times - Photos Of The Year 2022**

The Irish Times Weekend Magazine issue at the end of December published the 2022 photos of the year. Nick Bradshaw's photo from the Supreme was among the photos. The caption was 'Ismisha Yes Virginia, a Singapura cat, with judge Perri Mansaray at the Supreme Cat Show on May 1st at Ballinteer Community School in Dublin. Singapuras are the smallest breed of cat, noted for their large ears and eyes.'

A bit of publicity for the cat world, cat shows and Ballinteer Community School. And for photographer Nick Bradshaw who is always at the Dublin shows to photograph the show. His photos usually go into the Irish Times newspaper the next day (have been known to be on the front page) or in the gallery of their website. Yes Virginia's owner, Amy French, bred by Stephen Long



### **Firefighters Save Kitten Stuck In An ATM – And His New Name Is Cash**

Cats are known for getting themselves stuck in all manner of places, but for the staff at Fort Smith Animal Haven, an ATM was a first. A grey tabby had to be withdrawn from an ATM by Fort Smith Fire Department in Arkansas, after someone probably heard a meow inside the machine.

After arriving at the shelter, 'Cash' surprised everyone with his story. 'Probably trying to find shade is why, but I can't tell you how,' Alexis Bloom, a cat and kennel tech at Fort Smith Animal Haven, told local news. 'This is actually my first experience with a cat getting stuck in an ATM,' added vet tech Ashley Deane. 'You know, I never thought that somebody would be able to go up and make a withdrawal and get a cat out instead of some cash, so now we have both.'

The tabby was hungry, cranky, in need of a bath, and a name. Cash was a pretty obvious choice for the little would-be cat-burglar. After a week or so, the kitten has made a full recovery, and is getting up to a healthy weight before he can receive his vaccinations and socialize with other kittens on his way to a foster home. No doubt Cash will be a popular withdrawal after his story made headlines, but the shelter said there are plenty of loving animals in need of a home.

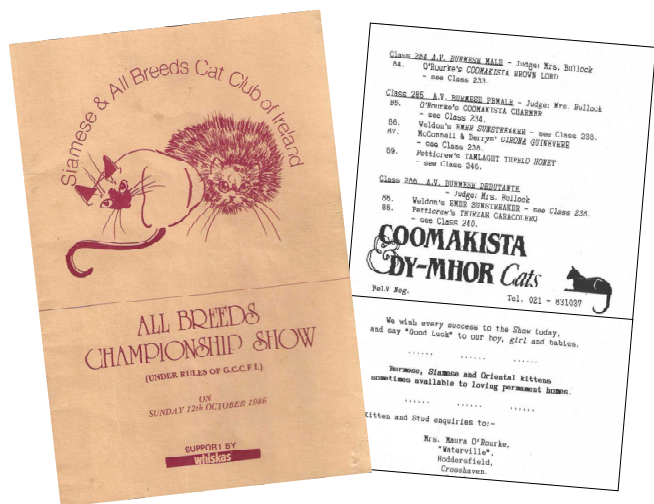
Recently GNN reported on a kitten (another grey tabby) stuck in a Pepsi Co. vending machine outside of a Walmart, proving that there is virtually no machinery too enclosed for a kitten to infiltrate.

[www.goodnewsnetwork.org](http://www.goodnewsnetwork.org). A Corbley, 2022, Photo Fort Smith FD









Left - 1986 catalogue cover and a page with class entry listings and an advert..

### SABCCI 50th



#### Best In Show

Gr.Ch Sanibel Mahogany, Burmese, Owned by Mr.S.Pratt & Ms.T.McAuley, bred by Tony & Alice Forshaw

### SABCCI 60th

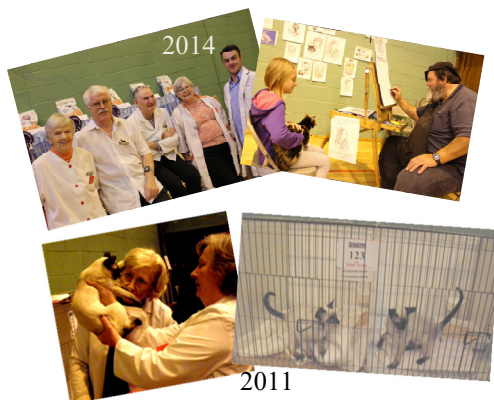


#### Best In Show

Jasmine Palmaris\*PL, Devon Rex, owned by Mrs E Lastauskiene Bred by E. Lastauskiene

### Other Years

In 2016 the GCCFI joined SABCCI for a '2 in 1' show renamed The Dublin Championship Cat Show





## 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.



### Amber - 2009 - 2022

Amber joined our family in 2009 when she was rescued from a shelter by my older sister Bett. We judged Amber to be about 9 months old at the time, not quite full grown so we picked February 9th 2009 as her birthday. We (my Mom and I) inherited Amber when my sister passed away suddenly in June of 2010 and we like to think of Amber as being the last gift my sister gave us. We were grateful to have Amber as a connection and reminder of Bett for the next 12 years. Amber came home to live with my Mom, myself and Gabby, my Thai cat (Applehead Siamese) kitten, who was 4 months old at the time. The two of them, Amber and Gabby, became partners in crime, they never fought but were more like best friends than bonded siblings. In photos Amber gives the impression of being a stern, serious, ladylike cat but in real life she was a funny mischievous little 'Fluffernutter' (a marshmallow fluff and peanut butter sandwich in North America, we're originally from Canada). At night Amber

chose to sleep in the bed beside my Mom and each night as soon as the lights went out, Amber would bring her favourite toy up to the bedroom, singing the song of her people at the top of her lungs. Amber loved vigorous pats (we called them big puppy pats), having her fluff ruffled and to have her tail gently tugged as she walked by but she absolutely hated to be brushed !

Amber crossed the Rainbow Bridge unexpectedly, but peacefully, in my arms while we told her how much we loved her, in UCD Emergency Hospital in the early morning hours of December 27 2022. We are still heartbroken but take comfort in knowing that Bett and Amber are together once again.

Teri, Ailish & Gabby

*Amber appeared in many times in The Catwalk .We would like to thank Teri, Ailish & Gabby for sharing her with us.*

## Cat Who Sneaks Into School Gets His Class Photo Taken & Portrait Packet Sent Home To Mom

A cat performed the most head-scratching stunt in Wales recently on class picture day, leaving a group of proud moms 'in floods of laughter.'

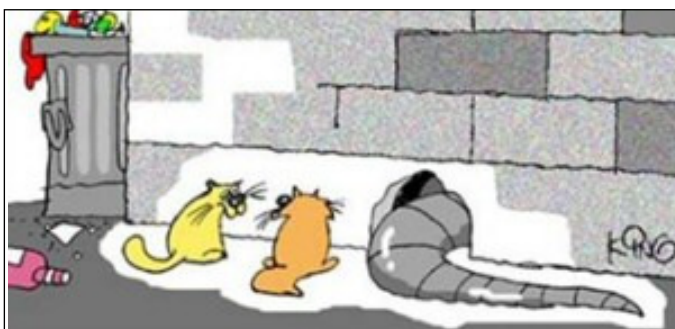
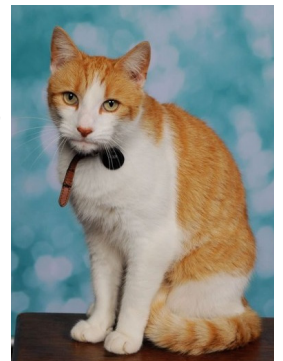
10 and 7-year-olds Meghan and Chloe Roberts were all dressed up and excited to have their picture taken at Drury Primary School, but their excitement couldn't compare with that of Ziggy, their orange and white cat who regularly visits the school. When Ziggy the 'honorary student,' felt it was his turn, the 4-year-old effortlessly jumped up on the photo chair, looked straight at the camera, got his snap, and promptly left.

'Chloe handed the letter to me and I expected it to be her photos,' Chloe's mom Emma Roberts told local Welsh news, The Leader. 'But then when I looked I was just in floods of laughter and so were the other mums standing by me. I asked her what had gone on and she said he just jumped on the chair. He didn't need any encouragement, he just got up there for a photo. The school has just accepted him and he goes there at any opportunity. He's there every day.' Indeed the headmaster has described the cat's attendance record as 'an excellent example for other pupils.'

Emma has called him a 'complete menace,' because when Ziggy makes it onto school grounds, there's no removing him. He saunters around, sleeping on books, on the headmaster's desk, and walking in and out of classrooms while they're in session. However the school at this point has just accepted him.

Emma shared the incident on Facebook with an opener that read 'If a cat could be the village idiot, then that cat belongs to me. He is ridiculously embarrassing.' No doubt Ziggy will be incredibly proud of his photo, and Emma admits she bought a copy of it from Tempest Photography to place on the mantelpiece next to Chloe's and Meghan's.

www.goodnewsnetwork.org, A. Corbley, October 2022 Photo: Ziggy the Cat/SWNS



**I'm all for terrorizing mice, but just not this one.**

## Habits of Highly Effective Cats Sitting Pretty

Most humans have an innate love of neatness and order which a cat can quickly learn to exploit. Even when they themselves are untidy in their household habits, they are quick to admire neatness in others. Exploit this by sitting pretty. Sit to attention, that is sit up straight with all four paws in a line and close together (as far as is possible according to your body shape) and curl your tail around to lie over your front paws. Whether you are simply dozing or are concentrating, this posture is greatly admired by neat-minded humans. by Messybeast



## The Quiz -

1. Who wrote *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats*?
2. What deformity do blue-eyed, white cats often suffer from?
3. What is the name of the famous cat who currently lives at 10 Downing Street?
4. How many teeth does an adult cat have?
5. What is the name of Homer Simpson's cat?
6. Who almost always appears with a white Turkish Angora cat in the James Bond films?
7. Smudge, Socks and Cookie - what's the connection?
8. What happened to a French cat named Felicette in 1963?



[www.gingercathouse.co.uk](http://www.gingercathouse.co.uk) &  
[www.freepubquiz.co.uk](http://www.freepubquiz.co.uk)

Answers on page 13

### Pranks To Play On Your Cat

- \* Pick them up every time they sit down
- \* Whip out a cat mask
- \* Rearrange the furniture
- \* Show your cat a video of another cat

[www.romper.com](http://www.romper.com)



### Where Did I Come From?

#### A CAT IN GLOVES CATCHES NO MICE

Meaning, If one is too cautious and polite, she/he will not succeed. Some shrewdness or aggressiveness is required to get things done. Of course, if a cat protects his paws with gloves, he will not be able to nab even one mouse. This idiom was woven by Benjamin Franklin.

[imesofindia.indiatimes.com](http://imesofindia.indiatimes.com)



### Your Cat Owns You If -

- ◆ You buy more than 50 pounds of cat litter a month.
- ◆ You cook a special turkey for your cat on holidays.
- ◆ You watch bad TV because the cat is sleeping on the remote.
- ◆ Your cat sit at the table (or ON the table) when you eat.



### Famous Cat Lovers - Florence Nightingale

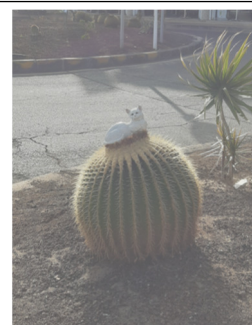


Her first patient (and inspiration to become a nurse) may have been a dog, but Florence Nightingale was a cat person through and through. It is estimated that over the course of her life she owned 60 cats and spent more time with them than with friends. Nightingale is quoted to have said, 'cats possess more sympathy and feeling than human beings.'

[dustyoldthing.com](http://dustyoldthing.com), photo: [lovecatsworld.com](http://lovecatsworld.com)

### Cat On A Hot Cactus

Ouch! but don't worry it is only a ceramic cat sitting on a cactus outside a restaurant on Gran Canaria. The restaurant leaves food and water out for the feral cats in the resort.



### How Many Cats Does it Take to Change a Light Bulb?

**Abyssinian:** 'Look Ma, I'm swinging from the ceiling fan. Wanna hand me a light bulb?', or on another day 'I'm too busy dashing around - Get someone else.'

**Bengal:** 'Get a Trapeze and I'll help the Abyssinian!'

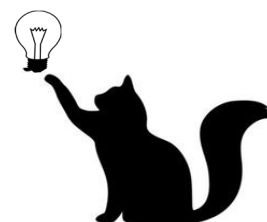
**Birman:** 'But I might get my paws dirty. Then I wouldn't be sacred!'

**British Shorthair:** 'Blimey, Chap...It's not my style!'

**Burmese:** 'While you're at it, would you mind turning off the sun? I'm trying to nap here.'

**Maine Coon:** 'Leave that light off, I'm napping!'

**Siamese:** 'Why? I can talk in the dark too!'



[www.petplace.com](http://www.petplace.com)





## 2022 Dublin Championship Cat Show

(SABCCI/GCCFI)

Ballinteer Community School, Ballinteer, Dublin 16

30th October 2022



Our first Dublin Championship Cat Show since 2019 due to the pandemic. It was held on October bank holiday weekend instead of the traditional date of mid October. It was thought a bank holiday might bring more public in. What was forgotten at the time that it was also the weekend of the Dublin Marathon. This gave us untold problems of traffic diversions and many of the roads closed off. Getting from the Northside to the show on the Southside was a problem if you were not close to the M50 to 'skirt' around the problems areas. Also, taxi fares were substantially increased in transporting the judges back to the airport after the show along with higher the hotel rates.

We had a great entry of 98 cats with very few 'no shows'. The show ran well despite a few hic cups during the day. Thank you Caroline Wren, Lyndon Steele and Rowena Murphy in helping to manage those sticky hic cups.

I would like to thank our sponsor Gain Nutrition who supplied us with bags of food for the Best of Variety and Best of Show. Also to thank all the people who helped at set up and during show day. Special thank you to Ronnie Brooks, Lorna Taylor and Carmel Byrne.

As you would have seen on page 3 of this newsletter we will be seeing you all soon on our new show date slot of April. Look forward in seeing you then. Gloria Hehir, Show Manager

### Best of Variety Results

#### Section 1

**Adult** - Miss Garcia's Sylvabow Burlington Bertie, (Persian) M

**Kitten** - Miss Garcia's Sylvabow Honeydew Jasper, (Persian) M

**Overall** - Miss Garcia's Sylvabow Burlington Bertie, (Persian) M

#### Section 2

**Adult** - Mrs McClelland's Int GrCh Noynarock Fionn Mac Cuill, (Norwegian Forest) M

**Kitten** - Ms Liczberska's Orocolato Haiti. (Ragdoll) M

**Neuter** - Dr Wagner's Sup GrPr Silverfern French Kiss (Maine Coon) MN

**Overall** - Dr Wagner's Sup GrPr Silverfern French Kiss (Maine Coon) MN

#### Section 3

**Adult** - Mr Dealey's Sup Int GrCh Alimurs Boomer (British Shorthair) M

**Kitten** - Miss Hill's Astralcharm Platinum Passion (British Shorthair) F

**Neuter** - Mr Kiely & Ms Walsh's Irenovbr Guffy (British Longhair) MN

**Overall** - Mr Dealey's Sup Int GrCh Alimurs Boomer (British Shorthair) M

#### Section 4

**Adult** - Mrs Howard's Coco Wave Cult (Cornish Rex) M

**Kitten** - Mr O'Conchobhair's Faerydae Robocop (Devon Rex) M

**Neuter** - Miss Mackenzie's Daddyo Talkie Toaster (Devon Rex) MN

**Overall** - Mrs Howard's Coco Wave Cult (Cornish Rex) M

#### Section 5

**Adult** - Mrs Taylor's Girona Cherie (Burmese) F

**Kitten** - Mr Steele's Rainsong Aurelia (Burmese) F

**Neuter** - Mr Redmond's Girona Artful Dodger (Burmese) MN

**Overall** - Mr Steele's Rainsong Aurelia (Burmese) F

#### Section 6

**Kitten** - Mrs O'Shea's Loyal-Luxurious Zappa (Siamese) M

**Overall** - Mrs O'Shea's Loyal-Luxurious Zappa (Siamese) M

#### Non-Pedigree

Mr Howard's Pearl FN

#### Pedigree Pet

Mrs Collin's Harry MN

#### Overall Best In Show

Dr Wagner's Sup GrPr Silverfern French Kiss (Maine Coon) MN

#### Reserve Best In Show

Mr Dealey's Sup Int GrCh Alimurs Boomer (British Shorthair) M

#### Best in Show Household Pet

Mrs Collin's Harry MN

## How the Army Corps of Engineers Made Us Love Their 2023 Calendar: They Added Giant Cats! (And it's Free)

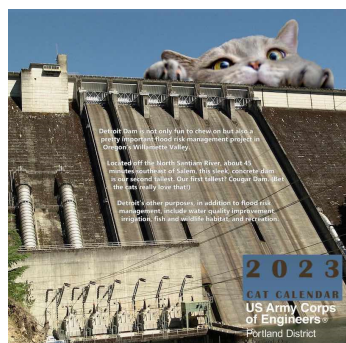
Engineering might be boring to over half the country, but this government agency got creative in imagining the purr-fect way to engage everyone.

The new 2023 calendar highlighting the achievements of the US Army Corps of Engineers features giant cats superimposed in photos of their engineering successes. The result is a collection of hilarious scenes. The pages showcase cats lying on dams, stretching on steel beams, and dominating huge construction vehicles. Further feline fun shows cats using cranes as dangle toys.

The District engineers operate locks and dams along the Columbia River, and provides flood risk management using dams in the Willamette Valley. It maintains Oregon's coastal rivers for navigation and leads the Nation in hydropower generation.

Because the Corps is a federal government agency, their calendar is in the public domain - and you can download their PDF file and print it yourself for free. The Portland District of the Corps needed an eye-catching way of showing off their civil works programs across Oregon and southwestern Washington.

Because their work ensures 'equal attention' to environmental protection, along with fish and wildlife, we're glad they added a picture of a giant litter box to keep their sites tidy. [www.goodnewsnetwork.org](http://www.goodnewsnetwork.org), Jan 2023, photos: Portland US Army Corps of Engineers



Wording Above - Detroit Dam is not only fun to chew on but also a pretty important flood risk management project.



Wording Above - When you have to go, you have to go - even if you're at Elk Creek Dam in the Rogue River Basin. Do your thing, cat. We'll just look over here.

## 'Conjoined' Cats Take Home Top Prize At Comedy Pet Photo Awards

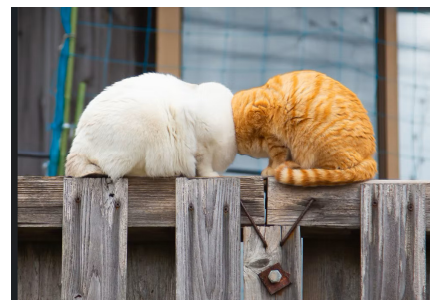
A photograph of two seemingly conjoined cats has been awarded first prize at this year's Comedy Pet Photo Awards. The winning picture was captured by Japanese photographer Kenichi Morinaga.

Morinaga spends his time travelling around Japan's islands to photograph street cats. The photograph of the 'conjoined' pets shows two cats, one with a snowy white coat and one with marmalade fur, sitting side-by-side on a fence. The cats are pressing their necks together to give the appearance of being conjoined.

Awarded Comedy Pet Photographer of the year, Morinaga has won a cash prize of £2,000, plus a £5,000 donation to an animal charity of his choice. The winner said his passion for cat photography began after he became a cat owner himself and visited Europe as a backpacker. 'Suddenly, I became fascinated by the antics of cats out in the streets and had to photograph them,' Morinaga said. 'When I returned to Japan, I continued to seek them out, they really cheer me up, especially after the last two years of the pandemic.'

Tom Sullam, a co-founder of the Comedy Pet Photo Awards commented: 'The joy pets bring to our lives is evident in all the entries we receive, making our job as judges very enjoyable but also very tricky.'

[www.independent.co.uk](http://www.independent.co.uk), S. Javed, September 2022, photo: Kenichi Morinaga



## How to Annoy Your Cat

- ◇ When your cat isn't looking, clap once, then pretend you didn't do it.
- ◇ Tie a string to their food bowl and pull it slowly away while they try to eat.
- ◇ Stick a small piece of tape on your cat's paw.

From: 100 Fun Ways to Annoy Your Cat by Jim Erskine



# The Catwalk

**India -**

I Thought I had 3 of them!

I Smidta, Kildare



**Dolly -**

Gotta quit, cough,  
cough.

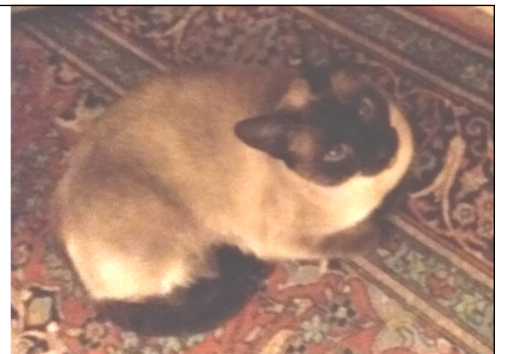
M. Hehir, Dublin



**Pretty Lady -**

You want, me  
to do What!

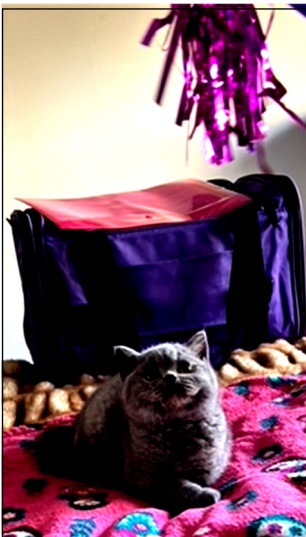
P. Meenehan, Cork



**Zelda -**

I can't reach that!

K.O'Neill, Holywood





# The Catwalk

**Yuri & Joshi -**

They will never find us here.

K. Sluiters, Dublin



**Zoldi & Geronimo -**

We hope you disturbed us for a good reason?

R. Healy, Kerry



**Lily -**

You think I am going to change that light bulb on page 7?

U. Nagel Cork



**Coco Channel, Luna Lovegood & Julius Caesar -**

Shhhh, you'll wake JC!

L. O'Brien, Dublin



## Larry Is Back Again! Cat v Fox: What Made Downing Street's Larry So Brave?



Larry, the 10 Downing Street cat, stepped up from mouser duties this week to chase an urban fox off his patch. The burly tabby was caught on camera intently stalking the fox before launching into a fully fledged pursuit when the trespasser tried to take cover in a flowerbed.

Larry emerges the victor, but the encounter has led some to wonder what gives cats the brazen confidence to take on larger animals such as foxes or dogs. Experts say cat behaviour is strongly shaped by instincts that date back to their wild ancestors.

Domestic cats are far more similar, genetically and in behaviour, to wild relatives than dogs are to wolves. As solitary hunters, establishing and maintaining control of territory in which to hunt and mate is central to the cat lifestyle. 'Cats will confront most other animals if threatened, even dogs,' said Nicky Trevorrow, a behaviour manager at the charity Cats Protection. 'This is because they're naturally territorial, it's an ingrained instinct, so will often challenge any other animals on their territory.'

Cats typically have favoured areas to sleep and eat and mark out their 'home range' by spraying, rubbing their facial scent markers on objects and scratching around the area to warn off other cats. Cats patrol their territory along a network of paths, often on a regular schedule, allowing neighbouring cats to avoid encounters that could result in a standoff. A cat's sex (unneutered males tend to be more confrontational), life experience and disposition play a role in how it will react to any encroachment on their territory.

'There is a lot of individual variation in how strongly they will react to perceived intruders, and whether they will take on animals, such as foxes, that are larger than themselves,' said Prof James Serpell, an animal welfare expert at the University of Pennsylvania. 'If a cat's first encounter with a fox causes that fox to run away, it will likely embolden the cat in any subsequent encounters with foxes.'

Foxes may be bigger with more powerful jaws, but evidence suggests other cats often prove more formidable adversaries. A 2013 analysis of VetCompass, a clinical database of vet visits, identified five confirmed and nine suspected fox fight injuries for each 10,000 vet visits by cats (there was no data to indicate how foxes fared in these scuffles). This compared with 541 in 10,000 for cats presented with cat bite injuries and 196 in 10,000 cats being presented after a road traffic accident. 'So to put fox attacks into context, other cats (40 times greater risk) and cars (14 times) appear to present much greater dangers to cats than foxes,' concluded Pete Wedderburn, a vet and broadcaster, who carried out the fox risk assessment. 'Cats and foxes usually pose no threat to one another and it's unusual for any harm to be caused to either of them when in close proximity,' told Trevorrow.

www.theguardian.com. H. Devil, October 2022 Video Clip: Sky News

## Poland's Hottest Tourist Attraction Is A Fat Black & White Cat Named Gacek

The 'King of Kaszubska Street' has beaten a 12th-century castle in the tourist popularity stakes A fat black and white cat has become a major tourist attraction in the Polish city of Szczecin.

Gacek, a free-roaming feline who lives in a box on Kaszubska Street in Poland's seventh largest city, has captured the attention of cat enthusiasts around the world. The rotund animal had a five-star rating on Google Maps, clocking up more than 2,500 reviews, according to local reports, before it was removed. A new listing for Gacek attracted almost 500 reviews and an average five-star rating in its first 48 hours, according to Insider, beating other attractions in the sea port city, including the 12th-century Pomeranian Dukes' Castle.



The cat, whose name means 'long-eared bat' in Polish and is pronounced 'gats-ek', has been a resident of the city for many years, earning the affections of locals and visitors alike, but his international reputation exploded after a 2020 video by local news outlet wSzczecinie went viral. Now, ailurophiles from around the world are being drawn to the city in a bid to meet the 'King of Kaszubska Street' in the fur.

'I flew from Oslo with transit in Gdańsk to see Gacek,' wrote one five-star review from August 2021. 'As expected, he didn't pay any attention to me which made the experience fully wholesome. If I could have dinner with anyone in the world, I would fly again in an instant to feed him,' it continued. 'It was worth travelling three hours to feel ignored by him,' wrote another. A third reviewer commented: 'I am very fortunate to meet this distinguished gentle creature.'

Visitors offering Gacek snacks led to concern about his increasingly plump appearance, prompting a local animal shelter to ask people not to feed the famous cat. A sign beside his box house asks admirers to only leave treats in closed packets which his owner can open for him. 'I happily pose for pictures, but please don't stroke me while I'm having a nap,' the sign adds.

'Cat tourism' is a concept not confined to Szczecin, however. Lovers of our furry friends are also drawn to the Ernest Hemingway Home and Museum in Key West, Florida. As well as being the former abode of the great American novelist, it's also home to around 50 free-roaming cats, all of whom are descended from Hemingway's original Maine coon, Snowball.

www.independent.co.uk, J. Whitehead February 2023

**Wherever the mice laugh at the cat, there you will find a hole.**

Portuguese proverb

## Southend Lotto Winners Credit Their Good Luck To Stray Black Cat

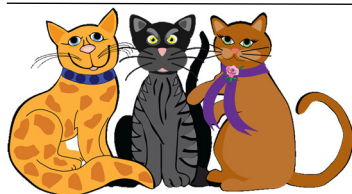
Tony Pearce, 71, and his wife Deb Pearce, 63, from Southend, started to feed a stray cat they named Billy when they were in financial difficulty. 'When Billy appeared we were close to selling our beloved home and becoming strays ourselves. Tony had stopped working due to ill health and we were in serious debt. It looked like our only option was to go into rented accommodation then, six months after Billy arrived, lady luck struck and our lives changed for good. Billy, who is thought to be about eight years old.



Six months later, they won £1m on the National Lottery in 2017 and put the change in their fortunes down to Billy. 'People say black cats are unlucky, I'd say nothing could be further from the truth' Mrs Pearce said. They made sure the former stray has shared in their wealth ever since. 'To top it off, we finally said 'I do' at our dream wedding. We were able to stay in our home and renovate it into our own perfect slice of heaven. We've enjoyed holidays away and, closer to home, bought a place in Norfolk, somewhere we have always loved spending time and somewhere the whole family can enjoy. I find myself rooting through his food, picking out the peas and wondering who is the National Lottery millionaire around here?'

Billy is firmly part of the family and the couple have spared no expense in looking after him, paying for twice-daily insulin injections after he was diagnosed with diabetes, and placing him on a tailored hypoallergenic diet. 'Aside from having us on call for his twice-daily injections, we also jump through hoops for his catering whims,' said Mrs Pearce

'If he has more than three days on the same flavour he turns up his nose and while he enjoys the chicken and vegetable meal, Billy doesn't like the peas. Mr Pearce said: 'When I find myself paying the bill for vet care or Billy's specialist diet - that comes in at more than our annual trip to The Savoy - I can't help thinking that it might be Billy who is also lucky. It's not a bad life for a Southend stray who clearly turned up on the right doorstep, at the right time, and proved to us that black cats are in fact lucky' he added. [www.bbc.com](http://www.bbc.com), December 2022



## Cats Who Live Together Know Each Other By Name, Japanese Study Finds

Cats who live with other feline companions can identify and learn each other's names, a new study in Japan has shown. The discovery by scientists at Kyoto University was made after studying 48 cats that cohabitated with at least two other pets – either in a home or at a cat cafe.

The study did so by decoding the cognitive abilities of the cats; all cats in the study were shown a picture of one of the other cats they lived with and over the course of the study, the responses from the cats were monitored whenever a name of the cat or a completely unrelated name was called.

The felines were tested individually in a familiar room, the study said. According to the scientists, if the cat stared at a photo long enough, it was a definite sign that the cat knew the pictured animal's real name. In the case of domestic felines, the cats spent a longer period of time staring at the photo when the name of the cat did not match the pictured animal, which researchers said indicated an 'expectancy violation effect'. One cat, according to the study, 'completed only the first trial before escaping from the room and climbing out of reach'.

The study concluded that the number of household members also affected the cats' responses: 'with more family members, cats attended for longer to the monitor in the incongruent condition,' it said. It also found that cats that had lived with their family for longer showed the most amount of attention when the name-face relationship was incompatible.

The results from the study suggest that cats may be able to learn names from observing human interactions. In the case of domestic cats, the feline matched 'at least their companion cats' names and faces, and possibly their human family members' names'.

This is the first such evidence showing that domestic cats can connect human utterances and their names through their lived everyday experiences. However, scientists are still unclear on what motives the cats have behind remembering names. 'One possible explanation has to do with competition. For example, a cat might receive food when the owner calls her name but not when she calls another cat's name,' the study said. [www.independent.co.uk](http://www.independent.co.uk), May 2022

Always  
kiss your  
CAT GOODNIGHT

Quiz Answers: page 7

- 1 TS Elliot
- 2 Deafness
- 3 Larry
- 4 30
- 5 Snowball
- 6 Ernst Blofeld
- 7 Blue Peter cats
- 8 1st cat sent in space

## Cat Vs. Monk: Who Will Break First?

A Thai Buddhist monk was just trying to say the (five-hour-long) prayer for New Year's when one of the temple cats decided it needed attention right then. The orange kitty crawled all over the monk as he tried desperately not to lose concentration, delighting viewers all over the world watching this interaction stream on Facebook.

The cat would not be ignored and climbed up the monk's robe, kneaded his shoulder, and then blocked his scripture book so he would have no choice. Finally, the monk relented and gave it some pets and scratches. Respect for all living beings is a key tenet of Buddhism, and the monk later said he has a soft spot for the 'fat and pampered' temple cats.

Via the Straits Times/YouTube.com





## Cat Steals So Many Items From UK Neighbour's She Set-Up a Klepto-Cat Box So They Can be Reclaimed

Meet Britain's most prolific cat burglar - a cheeky feline who brings home stolen items including toys, cutlery, glasses, and even toy skateboards. Charlie, dubbed 'Klepto Cat', pinches a random array of swag such as rubber ducks and plastic dinosaurs.

Owner, 41-year-old Alice Bigge, spends her time trying to reunite her one-year-old pet's victims with his stolen loot. She has even set up a shelf on her outside wall where she leaves the bizarre items he brings home. A sign says, 'Our cat Charlie likes taking things, do any of these things belong to you? If they do please help yourself!' Alice, of Bristol, first realized her cat was a thief when she woke up one morning and came face-to-face with a toy diplodocus on her pillow. Alice, who teaches A-Level film at St Brendan's sixth form college in Brislington, said, 'He's well into clothes pegs at the moment. He brought back a rubber duck recently, which was quite large and I have no idea how he managed that, and got it through the cat flap. He went through a phase of coming back with those little mini-skateboards too.'



Charlie brings all of his 'finds' back to the Bigges, who took him and his sister Smudge in as rescue cats after were abandoned as kittens. Alice admitted, 'He wasn't allowed out for three months or so. But it was almost as soon as he was allowed out that he began bringing things back. Over the course of a week or so, loads of toy dinosaurs kept appearing in the house which was really weird. I saw a green stegosaurus one day and wondered if one of my mate's kids might have dropped it here. The following day, I saw a red stegosaurus, and they just kept coming! I woke up with a diplodocus right next to my head on my pillow which made me think of that moment from The Godfather. Charlie just sat there looking proud of himself.'

Alice says she has discovered Charlie was nabbing the toy dinosaurs from a kid's nursery at the end of her road. She said, 'It turned out he'd been going there and picking them all up and bringing them back here one by one. He has never caught a bird or a mouse or anything like other cats do... he just goes off and finds whatever he can.'

Her 11-year-old daughter Martha has now made a sign for their wall headlined 'Klepto-Cat'. Alice said 'I think there's something about the quest that he enjoys. Whether it is discovering something new or just wanting to please me and bring his family a present. It's so funny now that people are loving his story because we've been laughing about him for over a year. Whatever it is, we still love him to bits!' [www.goodnewsnetwork.org](http://www.goodnewsnetwork.org), 2022 . Photo: SWIS



### Health - Why Cat Hiccups Happen - And What To Do About Them

Have you ever caught your cat hiccupping? You're not alone. Here's what causes cat hiccups, when to worry about them and when to just laugh.

#### The Science Behind Cat Hiccups

From a veterinarian point of view, a cat hiccups when her diaphragm decides to contract at exactly the same time as the part of her larynx that houses the vocal chords closes. Sometimes this happens due to nerve irritation issues, and other times it's a consequence of chowing down too quickly on food and ingesting air at the same time. (Fun factoid: In humans, this can also cause acid reflux.)

Hang On, What About Hairballs? - Oh, I should add that the scourge of the feline that is a hairball can also actually cause a cat to hiccup. This takes place when the cat's throat tries in vain to expel or move the fur that's accumulated, but instead irritates things and prompts a hiccup.

How Concerned Should I Be About Cat Hiccupping? - If your cat suffers from sporadic, small bouts of hiccups, you've probably got nothing to be overly concerned about. In fact, she's probably just feasting on her food too quickly. But if your cat seems to be hiccupping for longer than a day at a time, it's probably time to consult a vet as there could be larger ailments and issues at play. Feline asthma is one such concern, as is heart disease or icky parasites. Oh, and there could even be a food allergy at work. Yes, with cats it's so often always about the food.

What Can I Do About Cat Hiccups? - First up, don't stress your cat out if she's hiccupping. Keep things calm and give her some space.

Next, do a quick survey of your cat's food. Does she scarf it down way too quickly? If so, try serving smaller portions throughout the day. Also, ensure that she always has access to water - and is actually drinking it. If you're cohabiting with one of those kitties who refuse to drink settled water out of her bowl, look into picking up a cheap water fountain, sometimes our finicky friends prefer cascading water. Because, you know, it obviously tastes *so* different.

Also, if hairballs do seem to be tied to any hiccupping action, ask a vet for recommendations to control the condition. Finally, let the record show that the age-old remedies to cure human hiccupping should probably not be used on cats. That includes scaring your feline witless, attempting to get her to hold her breath (good luck with that one) and the bartender's trick of biting into a lemon doused in Angostura bitters. Seriously, the last one genuinely works - for humans. [www.catster.com](http://www.catster.com)





## KIT'S KORNER



**A picture to colour in**

## 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 ^..^

Jim Stephens, Companion Behaviour Counsellor, will be back for the next issue of The Scratching Post

### Some Scientific Benefits Of Being A Cat Owner

#### Owning a cat is better for the environment

If you're worried about your carbon footprint, it's better to own a cat than a dog. A 2009 study found that the resources needed to feed a dog over the course of its life create the same eco-footprint as that of a Land Cruiser. Meanwhile, cats - which eat less in general and are more likely to eat fish than corn or beef flavoured products - only have the approximate carbon footprint of a small hatchback.

#### ... And find a significant other

If you're a single guy and you can't seem to get a date, get a cat! A British poll found that 82 percent of women agreed they are more attracted to men who like animals. And while having a dog will do wonders for your dating life, a whopping 90 percent of single women said that men who own a cat are 'nicer' than other guys. Listing that you own a cat on your dating profile could do wonders for the number of responses you get - but remember, a cat is for life, not just until you find a partner.

#### Cat ownership means fewer allergies

Sadly, it's too late for you, but if you have a child on the way, it might be time to get a cat. In 2002, the National Institutes of Health released a study that found children under a year old who were exposed to a cat were less likely to develop allergies and not just pet allergies. According to Marshall Plaut, M.D., chief of the allergic mechanisms section at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, 'high pet exposure early in life appears to protect against not only pet allergy but also other types of common allergies, such as allergy to dust mites, ragweed, and grass.' And while the cat parasite *Toxoplasma gondii* is a threat to young children, experts say that by changing your cat's litter box every day and keeping the animal indoors, you should be safe and allergy free!

#### You'll have a healthier heart

Owning any pet is good for your heart. Cats in particular lower your stress level - possibly since they don't require as much effort as dogs - and lower the amount of anxiety in your life. Petting a cat has a positive calming effect. One study found that over a 10-year period cat owners were 30 percent less likely to die of a heart attack or stroke than non-cat owners (although this might just be because cat owners are more relaxed and have lower stress in general).

#### They fulfil your need for companionship

The stereotype that dogs are more affectionate than cats is just that: a stereotype. In fact, it turns out that cats can be just as good of companions as dogs, especially for women. An Austrian study conducted in 2003 found that having a cat in the house is the emotional equivalent of having a romantic partner. As well as initiating contact much of the time, studies have shown cats will remember kindness shown to them and return the favour later. But cats really do have the upper hand in these relationships. After thousands of years of domestication, cats have learned how to make a half purr/half howl noise that sounds remarkably like a human baby's cry. And since our brains are programmed to respond to our children's distress, it is almost impossible to ignore what a cat wants when it demands it like that.

[www.mentalfloss.com](http://www.mentalfloss.com)

### Charity Seeks Home For Kitten That Is Neither Male Nor Female

A homeless kitten has stunned vets at a UK animal charity, being the first cat they have seen that is neither male nor female. Hope, a 15-week-old tabby and white cat, was originally thought to be female when it was admitted to the Cats Protection rescue centre in Warrington, but vets found no external sex organs.



Cats Protection's senior field veterinary officer, Fiona Brockbank, said it appeared to be a case of agenesis, the failure of an organ to develop, which she and her colleagues had never seen before. Vets said they had seen hermaphrodite cats, with male and female sex organs, though they were rare. However, after an investigation, they found Hope had no sex organs, externally or internally. Brockbank said: 'There's an outside possibility of some ectopic ovarian tissue hiding away internally but we think this is extremely unlikely ... This is so rare that there isn't really a commonly used term for this condition, but it is effectively sexual organ agenesis. While this means we don't have any previous cases, on which, to base our knowledge of how this will affect Hope in the future, we spent time monitoring this cat to ensure they can urinate and defecate appropriately before they were considered ready for rehoming'.

Hope, who is described as a playful kitten, has endeared itself to staff and volunteers at Cats Protection's Warrington adoption centre, where it was first admitted and underwent investigations, and the Tyneside adoption centre in Gateshead. The Tyneside centre manager, Beni Benstead, said: 'Discovering Hope's special status has been an exciting time, as none of us has seen this before or is likely to again'.

[www.theguardian.com](http://www.theguardian.com), Jane Clinton, November 2022

### Law of Cat Landing

*A cat will always land in the softest place possible; often the mid-section of an unsuspecting, reclining human.*