

The Scratching Post



SABCCI Newsletter - Spring 2024

www.sabcci.com



The Scratching Post

Spring 2024

Contents	Page
Editorial, New Prehistoric Cat Species Found	3
Rare Breeds - The Kurilian, Drogheda Cat Missing for 434 Days	4
Cat Survived Valencia Fire, NASA Beams Cat Video	5
Famous Cat Lovers - Catherine The Great	5
Rainbow Bridge, Remembered: Simon, Mr Biscuit's Man Cave	6
The Quiz & Fun Stuff	7
The Supreme Show 2023	8
Pub Crawl Peanuts, Confused Therapy Cat, Cat's 800 Mile Trip	9
The Catwalk	10/11
Bed Frame With Hidden Cat Maze, Retirement Village for Cats	12
The Cats Of Gokogu Shrine, Cat With Two Noses	13
Cat Found Wandering Cabin On Fight	13
Dementia In Cats, Cat Cuts Ribbon Of New Shop	15
Kit's Korner	16
The Final Miaow, Cat Makes History in Yacht Race	16

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SABCCI Committee

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



Did You Know?

Domestic Cats & Tigers - House cats share 95.6% of their genetic makeup with tigers. They also share a lot of the same behaviours such as scent and urine marking, prey stalking and pouncing. www.purina.co.uk



Where Did It Come From? - Cat's Paw



Cat's-paw comes from an old fable in which a monkey uses flattery to trick a cat into taking chestnuts out of the fire where they are roasting. The cat succeeds in removing the chestnuts but also burns his paw in the process. www.merriam-webster.com



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 2024 issue of The Scratching Post.

So if you're ready, sit back with an Americano (Campari) and enjoy the newsletter!

Karen and Gloria ^..^

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



The Dublin Championship Cat Show

14th April 2024

Ballinteer Community School

Broadford Road, Ballinteer, Dublin 16



Due to very late withdrawal of a judge the GCCFI Support show was cancelled.

SABCCI will be holding their show only.

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

See you there!

New SABCCI President Elected

SABCCI'S President, Rhona Sullivan, passed away last year. At the SABCCI AGM Tony Forshaw was elected as our new President. Tony is a past Chairman of our committee and is our webmaster for the SABCCI site.

New Prehistoric Cat Species Discovered in Spain

Scientists have discovered a new prehistoric cat species that lived in modern-day Spain about 15.5 million years ago, shedding more light on the diversity of felines during this period.

The cat species, named *Magerifelis peignei*, belonged to a subgroup of small cats with predatory behaviour similar to those of Iberian lynxes, suffocating 'medium-sized prey' after bites applied to the throat, researchers say.

The new species was identified based on fossil remains unearthed in 2007 at the Príncipe Pío-2 site near Madrid City in Spain. Researchers unearthed well-preserved remains of partial jaw bones as well as all the teeth – except the incisors – of the prehistoric cat.

'The specimen is very well preserved, showing the complete hemimandible, as well as all the teeth except the incisors,' scientists wrote in the study, published last week in the *Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology*. 'The specimen is in such an excellent state of preservation, with almost all the dentition and mandibular structures present, that it constitutes one of the most complete known fossils of early felines up to date,' researchers added.

The medium-sized feline lived in the Middle Miocene era around 15.5 million years ago and may have had a 'strong bite when hunting,' scientists say. Analysing parts of the prehistoric feline's lower jaw bones, researchers say *M. peignei* could have preyed upon 'relatively larger prey' than those of modern-day cats. 'These characters suggest that the Príncipe Pío-2 feline could have preyed upon relatively larger prey than those of extant, similarly sized felines,' researchers wrote. Scientists observed that some of the cat's special features compared to other felines of its time are a smaller second lower molar tooth (m2), and a relatively smaller lower canine.

Among modern-day felines, researchers say the presence of m2 has been only observed in the Eurasian lynx found across Northern, Central, and Eastern Europe to Siberia, Central Asia, the Tibetan Plateau, as well as the Himalayas. However, they say the presence of this tooth in currently existing cat species is generally a 'very infrequent feature.' The latest findings, researchers say, increase understanding of the diversity and evolution of cats during this period of prehistoric Europe.

Above photo - Reconstruction of the mandible, skull, masticatory and life appearance of *Magerifelis peignei*, Artwork by J. Gamarra/*Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology*. www.independent.co.uk, v. Sankaran, January 2024



Cats are better than any vice. They're not fattening, dangerous or expensive. However, they can be addictive.

Anonymous

Rare Breeds - The Kurilian Bobtail

The Kurilian Bobtail is native to the Kuril Islands, which give it its name. The breed is also native to Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula and Sakhalin Island, which are located in the same geographic region.

The Kurilian Bobtail is a natural cat breed, meaning that it was developed by natural selection over time rather than via any kind of human manipulation. It has been gaining popularity throughout Russia since the middle of the 20th century. Still, the breed is not well-known outside of Russia, Europe, and Japan.



So far, it has not been granted official recognition by the Cat Fanciers Association (CFA), International cat breed registries are taking notice, though: Fédération Internationale Féline (FIFe), The International Cat Association (TICA), and the World Cat Foundation (WCF) allow registration. Some clubs separate long and short haired Kurilian Bobtail cats into separate divisions while others allow them to be shown together.

The Kurilian's body is large, muscular, and well formed, with a generally athletic, well-balanced appearance. The chest broad, and the back may be slightly arched. Their legs are of medium length, with hind legs being longer than the front. The paws are rounded with long hair Kurilians displaying tufts of hair between their toes. Kurilian Bobtail cat's tail is its most distinguishing feature with short to ultra-short bobtails. It may have one or more kinks and or turns, and may be stiff or flexible. The hair of the tail often disguises its shape and gives it the appearance of a pom-pom. No tail is identical to another. The head is large, with a modified wedge shape that features rounded contours. It is widest at the cheekbone level. The ears are large and alert. Tufts may be present on the tips. Their eyes are walnut shaped, rounder at the bottom, and more oval on top. They are set at a slight angle, between the base of the ear and the tip of the nose and are about one eye width apart. All eye colours are acceptable.

The coat may be short or of semi-long length. Long-haired Kurilian display a ruff at the neckline. The hair has a soft, silky feel. Long-haired varieties have a moderate undercoat. All colours and patterns are acceptable. White is permitted and may include blazes, medallions, snowshoes, and any other white markings in any amount.

The Kurilian Bobtail cat is renowned for having a sweet, gentle nature. Big, active, and intelligent, the Kurilian Bobtail cat has an intense play drive and a natural love for hunting. This breed is renowned for its fishing skill as well, so families with aquariums and tiny pets such as hamsters and guinea pigs will want to ensure that these vulnerable animals are kept far from the Kurilian Bobtail, which views all small creatures as prey to be captured.

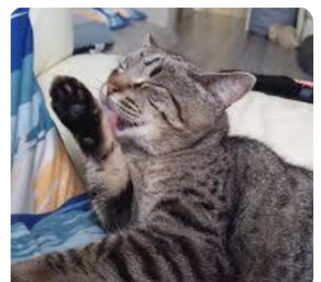
Kurilian Bobtail cats typically get along very well with other cats, dogs, and children. They love to play, and anyone who is willing to spend time engaged in rousing games will automatically get this cat's undivided attention. Despite its hunting prowess and high activity level, the Kurilian Bobtail cat loves to snuggle with its favourite person. These cats do have a tendency to choose a preferred companion, and they are also known to give other family members the cold shoulder when it's time to choose a lap for TV time or settle in at bedtime.

On average this breed weighs between 8 to 12 pounds with a life expectancy of 14 to 20 years.

Edited from www.cats.com/cat-breeds/kurilian-bobtail

Drogheda Cat 'Tigger' Missing For 434 Days, Feared Dead Found Alive & Well

A cat missing for 434 days and presumed dead has been found alive and well. Tigger the tabby vanished from the Drogheda Animal Rescue Centre (DARC) where he had been attending a cat rehoming day in November 2022. But he turned up this week a couple of hundred yards away from where he went missing after being taken in by Hazel Huber and her family who thought he was a stray.



Posters had been put up in the town about the missing Tabby but Hazel never saw them until she brought her dog to the local vet and realised the stray cat they had taken in and had been called Ben could be Tigger.

Luckily the cat was microchipped and it confirmed who Ben/Tigger really was. Drogheda Animal Rescue volunteer Liza Martinez said: 'We were so upset when Tigger went missing and we never stopped looking for him. 'He had been given to us by his owner who asked us to find him a new home. We put up posters and looked everywhere for him but to no avail. We thought he might be hit by a car and his little body would be lying out there somewhere.'

Hazel said she saw the poster of missing Tigger in the vet's and knew it might be her Ben. She immediately contacted the DARC which confirmed from the microchip that it was their cat Tigger. Luckily for Tigger alias, Ben can now stay where he is and won't be leaving his new adopted family the Hubers. Liza said: 'Hazel's five year-old Ryan named Tigger, Ben. There is a bond between them so Tigger will now be staying where he is. The moral of the story is, it is important to microchip cats as much as dogs. We would not have learned that Tigger is alive only for it. We can finally rest a little easier knowing that he is safe and being well cared for.'

www.irishmirror.ie, J Kierans, January 2024

How To Annoy Your Cat



Gently set small objects on top of your cat while they are sleeping.

100 Fun Ways to Annoy Your Cat by Jim Erskine



Cat Reunited With Owner After Surviving Valencia Fire

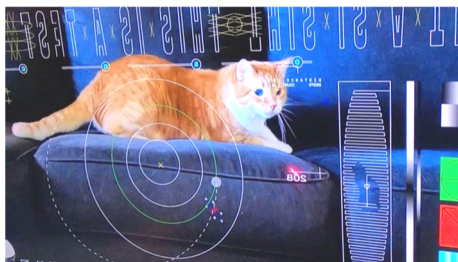
Firefighters in Valencia, Spain were surprised to find a live cat among the remains of an apartment block which was ravaged by fire eight days ago.

Coco reunited with her owner Andrea, who was in disbelief as she thought she wouldn't see her cat again. 'My poor little thing!' Andrea exclaimed in a video posted on X by local police as she embraced Coco. 'We found him through pure luck,' a firefighter can be heard saying in the same video.

Coco was found in what appears to be the place he took refuge in when the fire broke out - one of the building's dry columns. Coco was immediately taken to the vet for a complete check-up by his owner. The cat appeared to be in good health but smelled heavily of smoke. Further tests are being conducted to assess whether the cat has suffered any internal injuries.

The fire, which spread rapidly as the flames were fanned by strong winds, broke out on 22 February in the El Campanar district. Around 100 survivors, including Andrea, are being housed at a local hotel as they wait for a more permanent solution.

www.rte.ie/news, 1 March 2024

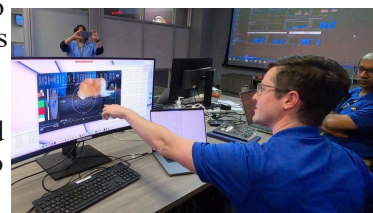


Nasa Beams Cat Video From Deep Space With Laser

The video was uploaded to a spacecraft launched with SpaceX's Falcon Heavy rocket from Florida's Kennedy Space Center on 13 October, and was streamed on 11 December. Taters, whose paws remained firmly on Earth, is owned by an employee of Nasa's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) in California. Nasa hopes the laser tech it was testing will eventually improve communications with more remote parts of the solar system.

Footage of the orange tabby travelled 19 million miles - some 80 times the distance from Earth to the Moon. The 15-second clip of Taters the cat was sent via laser - and fittingly shows it chasing a laser beam. 'JPL's DesignLab did an amazing job helping us showcase this technology. Everyone loves Taters,' he added.

Mr Rogalin said the connection over which the video was sent from the Palomar observatory to the JPL base was actually slower than the signal transmitting the clip from space. The video was received by the Hale telescope at the Palomar observatory, where it was downloaded. 'Despite transmitting from millions of miles away, it was able to send the video faster than most broadband internet connections,' said JPL electronics lead Ryan Rogalin. From there it was streamed to the JPL and played there in real-time. 'This accomplishment underscores our commitment to advancing optical communications as a key element to meeting our future data transmission needs,' said Nasa deputy administrator Pam Melroy.



The DSOC mission is exploring what kind of technologies can deliver higher bandwidth content from the very depths of space to Earth as radio frequencies struggle to handle the amount of data needed to transmit higher volumes of high-quality images and video over great distances. Nasa's test formed part of the Deep Space Optical Communications (DSOC) mission - the space agency's first to look at communications reaching further than between the Earth and the Moon.

Bill Klipstein, the demonstration project manager at JPL, said the video - overlaid with graphics showing technical mission information as well as Taters' breed, heart rate and age - was designed to 'make this significant event more memorable. Increasing our bandwidth is essential to achieving our future exploration and science goals, and we look forward to the continued advancement of this technology and the transformation of how we communicate during future interplanetary missions.' L. McMahon, www.bbc.com, December 2023 Photos: NASA/JPL-Caltech

Famous Cat Lovers - Catherine The Great

Catherine the Great of Russia (r.1762-1796) had two fully-fledged cat colonies in the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg. Her personal pets were elegant Russian Blues, a breed she favoured above all, giving them to ambassadors as gifts for other sovereigns, reputedly including the British royal family. Catherine's Blues had the run of the upper floors of the palace. The basement, on the other hand, was populated with unpedigreed working cats. Their mission, which they chose to accept with alacrity, was to keep the rodent population at bay. Catherine officially promoted the working cats to guard status, complete with salaries and additional food rations.



She loved cats so much that Prince Grigory Potemkin (military commander, statesman, and the Empress's onetime lover) gave her one to thank her for her gift of the Sèvres Cameo Service. The service cost 62,324 rubles, about \$70,000 then and about \$40 million today. It was so expensive that Catherine spent the next 13 years attempting to renegotiate the price down. Poor Potemkin could never come close to matching this gift, so his response was to give her an Angora cat. She adored the present, calling her new cat 'the cat of all cats' and 'he of the velvety paws.' www.mentalfloss.com



Basic Rules For A Cat Who Has A House To Run

For book readers, get in close under the chin, between the human's eyes and the book, unless you can lie across the book itself. Also works well for other devices used for reading and viewing including phones, tablets, and Kindles.

www.marlbtorovets.com

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.



Lola - Aged 12

When tomorrow starts without me,
Don't think we're far apart,
For every time you think of me,
I'm right inside your heart.

The Condon Family, Cork

Remembered: Simon The Rat-catching Hero Navy Cat

To this day, Simon is the only cat in history to have received the esteemed Dickin Medal. The animal equivalent of the Victoria Cross, the honour was founded 80 years ago, with formidable feline Simon posthumously awarded it six years later.

Simon joined the crew of Plymouth's HMS Amethyst when it was in Hong Kong in 1948 during the Chinese Civil War. Despite suffering serious injuries during shelling, the courageous cat returned to his Royal Navy post, protecting vital supplies from rats, 'saving the crew' and raising morale, said the People's Dispensary for Sick Animals (PDSA).



Simon returned to port in Plymouth to a hero's welcome in 1949

It was during the Yangtze Incident in 1949, that a shell blast killed and wounded a number of crew members, said Nina Downing, PDSA veterinary nurse. HMS Amethyst had been ordered up the Yangtze River to act as a guardship for the British Embassy in Nanjing and came under fire from Communist artillery. In attempting to avoid the shelling it ran aground. Sustaining serious injury himself, Simon managed to rally enough to return to duty.

'Among his subsequent daring exploits, he pounced upon an 'extremely ferocious rat' which threatened the very survival of his human shipmates,' Ms Downing said. She added: 'Simon was really badly injured but despite that he kept on top of the vermin and protected the really important food supplies for 10 weeks for that crew, who were stranded. And in turn, he basically saved their lives.'

Describing Simon as their 'true saviour', the crew bestowed upon him the title of 'able seaman' - a sign of their respect and pride, said the PDSA. Simon received a hero's welcome when the ship returned to dock in Plymouth on 1 November 1949.



The PDSA, a charity which cares for pets whose owners cannot afford the full cost of their veterinary treatment, said his behaviour throughout his tour of duty had been 'of the highest order'. He was buried at the PDSA Animal Cemetery at Illford in Essex.

Regarded as the animal equivalent to the Victoria Cross, the Dickin Medal was established by PDSA founder Maria Dickin. The first honour was awarded in 1943 and since then 75 animals have received the medal. Among them are 38 dogs, 32 pigeons, 4 horses - and 1 cat.

Cat Owner's Ingenious Idea To Make Three-Legged Sports Fan Feel At Home

Cats are becoming increasingly spoiled as more and more owners consider them part of their family rather than just pets that they own. A three-legged cat called Mr. Biscuit is no exception. The adorable cat has gone viral online after his owner shared a clip of his new 'man cave,' where he can finally watch television in peace.

In the hilarious clip shared on Instagram earlier this month by @mrbiscuitsthetripod, the ginger cat can be seen chilling in his new favourite spot, an empty box, with an iPad fixed on the top so he can watch sports. 'We made Mr Biscuits a man cave to watch his sports programs,' the caption on the video reads. 'Just men being men.' www.newsweek.com, M A Volpe, February 2024



The cat was created when the lion sneezed

Arabian proverb



The Quiz - True or False

1. A cat has the largest eyes relative to their head size than any other mammal.
2. Cats have less neurons in their cerebral cortex as dogs do.
3. A cat can drink sea water in order to survive.
4. Your cat's taste buds can detect sweetness.
5. Cats can see directly under their noses.
6. Cats can hear five times more than humans.
7. Cats only have whiskers on their faces.
8. Cats are more vocal than dogs, making up to 100 different sounds; dogs can make only about 10.
9. A cat will starve rather than eat a food they consider unpalatable.
10. Not all of the cats in the world respond to the scent of catnip.



www.icebreakerideas.com Answers on page 16

Rules For Cats

Bathrooms

Always sit just around the corner of the door so they narrowly miss stepping on you. Smile as they trip, bang into a wall and curse. Hide under the table until they calm down and want to pet you and calm you down.



Scratching Posts

The arms of their easy chairs are great places to scratch and claw the fabric. You need to leave your mark on the world. This always gets their attention. It is advised that cats use any scratching post the humans may provide. They are very protective of what they think is their property and will object strongly if they catch you sharpening your claws on it.

Paper Bags

Within paper bags dwell the Bag Mice. They are small and camouflaged to be the same color as the bag, so they are hard to see. But you can easily hear the crinkling noises they make as they scurry around the bag. Anything, up to and including shredding the bag, can be done to kill them.

Cats.alpha.pl

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

Devon Rex: 'You talk & I'll do the Magic Trick.'

Ragdoll: 'Shut up and pet me!'

Tonkinese: 'Hey! Watch me stick my paw in this! It makes my hair stand on end'

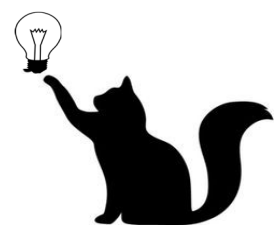
Spynx: 'After I'm done. I'll oil wax the floor and couch!'

Norwegian: 'It's a snap with my strong claws!'

Balinese: 'I decline - Static electricity!'

American Curl: 'I'm busy having my fur done.'

American Wirehair: 'I'm with the Curl Girl.'

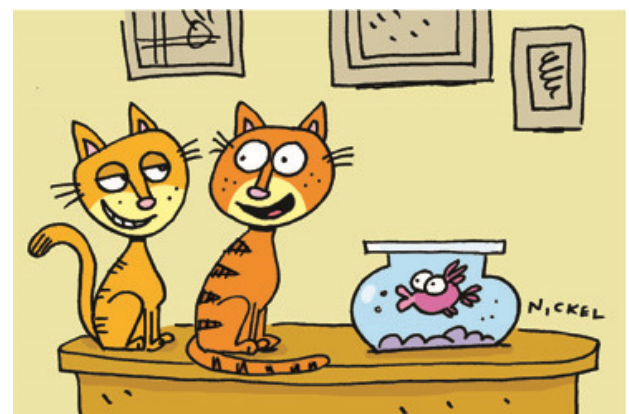


www.petplace.com

Where Did It Come From? -

As Nervous As A Cat In A Room Full Of Rocking Chairs

Origin: In 1953, this phrase was used in a newspaper column as part of the phrase, 'Next to living on the side of a volcano, the most hazardous existence we can think of is that of a long-tailed cat in a house full of rocking chairs.' In 1956, Tennessee Ernie Ford, an American singer and television host, used the phrase, which popularized it in the American South. www.caster.com



"Wanna play 'Go Fish'?"



The Supreme Show 2023



Supreme was held on the 15th October 2023, swapping the usual show dates in spring with SABCCI show date. We would like to thank all our exhibitors (and their cats of course), those who worked behind the scenes, helped in setting up the show, to those who helped on the day and the support from our friends in the North.

Gloria Hehir & Carmel Byrne, Joint Show Managers

Supreme Show 2022 Results

Best of Variety

Section 1

Adult – Caughey's HINCHKITZ CINNAMON NSPYCE, (PER f)

Kitten – Caughey's Hinchkitz Middlemist Red, (PER d 33)

Section 2

Adult – Swiacha's Ch Gattacamoon Volturion, (MCO ds 11)

Kitten – Swiacka's Blackjaguar Hope, (MCO gs 03 22)

Neuter - Wagner's Pr Silverfern French Kiss (Maine Coon) MN

Section 3

Adult - Dealey's Sup HibGrCh&Int GrCh Alimurs Boomer, (BSH)

Neuter – Kehoe's Minnie of Last Hope, (BSH p)

Section 4

Adult - Healy's Danakil's Geronimo, (ABY n)

Kitten – Ervine's Moasmau's Greta Garbo, (MAU ns 24)

Neuter – Mackenzie's Pr Daddyo Talkie Toaster, (DRX b)

Section 5

Adult - Blackmore's GrCh Girona Cherie, (BUR a)

Section 6

Adult - Smidta's Meori India, (OSH n)

Kitten - O'Shea's Loyle-Luxurious Azula, (SIA n)

Non- Pedigree - Carrol's Taiga

Pedigree Pet - Miskiniene's Riana

Overall Best In Show

Supreme Adult

Meori India, (OSH n)

Supreme Kitten

Moasmau's Greta Garbo (MAU ns 24)

Supreme Neuter

Pr Ishcus Quevaga (MCO f 03 22)

Supreme Non-Pedigree

Taiga

Supreme Pedigree Pet

Riana



Peanut The Cat On Pub Crawl In Chatteris

For the past six months the ginger tom has been a regular at several hostelrys in Chatteris, Cambridgeshire.

The George Hotel in the town has installed a bed for him, and supplied him with a Christmas stocking. Helen Wilson, the cat's owner said: 'He loves a fuss; I am so pleased he is so contented. He would not go there if he was not happy.' She got Peanut when he was seven weeks old. 'I had reports of him frequenting the George Hotel. I retrieved him, but he kept nipping off up there. After keeping him inside for a while, he started to venture out and would disappear,' she said.

Diane Maher, landlady of the George Hotel, on the town's High Street, first saw Peanut at the Bramley House Hotel about six months ago. Ms Maher said the cat started to visit her pub about three months ago. 'He would turn up in any weather, sometimes a bit bedraggled and looking. He is becoming Facebook famous. Everyone loves to fuss him. When I take a tray of drinks out, he is always on someone's lap being pampered,' she said.

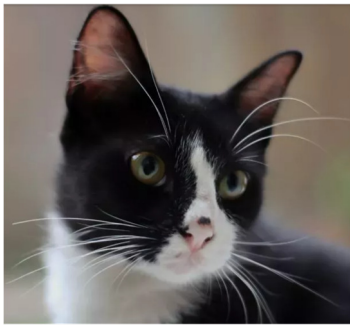
As an animal lover, I soon grew to love him. I installed a bed for him in our back lobby, and bought him a Christmas stocking,' she added. 'Just recently he has also started to hang around the smoking area of the Chatteris Working Men's Club. He has gained quite a following - my regulars always look out for him. There is nothing he likes more than going on a pub crawl.' www.bbc.news, J Devine, January 2024 Photo: Diane Maher



Hearts Melt At Confused School Therapy Cat Wondering Where Kids Are

A therapy cat has melted hearts on social media after her owner shared a video of her looking confused by a lack of students.

Mochi, who works as a school therapy cat in a Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area, is seen sitting outside a classroom door in a clip her owner, under the username @sundaeandmochi, shared to TikTok in January. The post says, 'POV: You're the school therapy cat, but all the kids that normally come see you after school have sports practice today.'



According to Pet Keen, a pet wellness website, patients in pet therapy meet their rehabilitation goals faster than those who aren't. And a 2018 study on people with brain injuries found that they were more alert during pet therapy. Pet therapy has also proved to offer comfort and support to children suffering from PTSD, research at Dominican University of California found.

While pet therapy animals are most often dogs, cats are becoming more popular, and pets of all kinds can take on this role. Horses, dolphins, lizards and guinea pigs are some other examples.

The video of Mochi quickly went viral, so far receiving over 437,300 views and 90,100 likes on TikTok. Many commenters expressed their sympathy for Mochi and their desire for a similar pet at their school.

www.newsweek.com, MA Volpe, February 2024 Photo: Getty Images

Cat Takes 800 Mile Trip Across South West England In Engine Of A Van

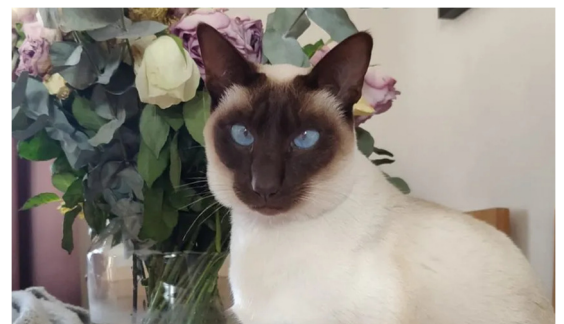
Jasmine went missing from Weston-super-Mare on Tuesday and travelled all over south-west England and into Wales.

She was found when the van driver made a stop to top-up windscreen wiper fluid on Thursday, with Jasmine curled up next to the battery peering up at him. Van driver Jeff Boorer said that he had been travelling around making deliveries over the three days Jasmine was in the engine. 'She is such a beautiful cat. She didn't seem to be scared, she was pretty chill,' added Mr Boorer. 'I just find it incredible, he said.

Ms Teale said that she started to get worried on Tuesday evening, when her eight-year-old Siamese cat did not come home for dinner. She had started to put up missing posters and leaflets around her neighbourhood when she received a call from a vet who had scanned Jasmine's microchip. 'I have had her since she was a kitten, before I met my partner. She is my fur baby. I was very relieved,' she said. 'She is quite shy, so it was unusual for her to go so far, I don't think she can have many lives left now.'

Jasmine's adventure took her to various towns and cities and across the Welsh border to Llanelli, eventually ending up in Devon. Fortunately, Mr Boorer discovered her when he needed to open the bonnet. Jasmine was dehydrated but otherwise fine.

Ms Teale said Jasmine had now gone back to her more regular activity of napping in the conservatory and her three-year-old son was very happy to have her back. www.bbc.com, C. Bullock, January 2024 Photo: L Teale



The Catwalk



Blue -

Computer work is so tiring.

J Rosse, USA



I agree Blue. You need to take breaks.

T MacDonagh, USA



Titan -

Like a bat out of hell!

Anderson Family, Dublin



Pharoah -

I am heads above all.

C Byrne, Clare



The Catwalk

Jasper -

The bouncer is guarding his patch.

Buckley Family, Cork



Boo -

What do you mean I can't have this box?

J Rosse, USA



J Rosse, USA



Burmese Yoga - Yuri & Coco Chanel -

Yoga with another is always more fun.



K. Sluiter, Dublin



L. O'Brien, Dublin

Company Creates Bed frame With Hidden Cat Maze That's Absolutely Purrfect

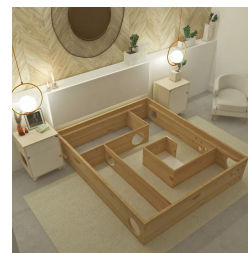


If you ever owned a cat you know just how particular they can be. Am I right? I mean, they're cats. Ha, ha! They're kind of known for being picky about everything. The same can be said about where they sleep.

That's why this company came up with the perfect bed that's both comfy for humans and cozy for their feline friends. Catlife is a company that specializes in making feline-friendly furniture.

Does he sleep on the floor, on a special cat bed, or on your bed with you? Well, now you can share the same space with your feline buddy, only a lot more comfortably.

Well, as you can see it's been made in a way that cats can hide inside of the frame. There are lots of tunnels just like in a labyrinth where cats can be free to roam around. This bed has been designed with not only the comfort of humans in mind but also as a safety feature for the kitties. www.diply.com Photos: Instagram/@catlife.co



The Retirement Cat Village Where Elderly Strays Live Out Their Days In Mini Cottages



Some West Midlands cat lovers are planting roots of good merit through a beautiful and unique rescue operation. Shropshire Cat Rescue in Shrewsbury takes in homeless, stray, abandoned, and unwanted cats and kittens and organizes veterinary care for feral felines in the area. But particular to this charity is that it has 17 cats, all of which have been given up or found stray in what should be their golden years, who are now safe and comfortable in Moggies Retirement Village. The cats enjoy the cushy life with volunteers taking time to look after them and even getting local kids to read to them once a month.

A video of the gated community shows a series of mini cottages surrounded by well-kept gardens where the cats are housed. Each cottage contains a bed, a litter tray, food and drink

bowls, and various toys for up to two cats. The clip also shows Moggie's Mansion, a larger house with bigger toys and beds where the cats can hang out together. 'The shelter was intended to create an area for cats who were too elderly or had ongoing health conditions that needed regular treatment and monitoring to live out their days in comfort,' explains volunteer vet Susie.

The charity has been rescuing and rehoming cats in the Shropshire area since 1989. Cats in the sanctuary are usually in their later years, but there are others as young as three. 'It also opened the door for people who had elderly cats and were going into a nursing home and couldn't take them with them. It gives a different option and eases a stressful upsetting time by finding somewhere the cats could live out their final days.'

Being that old cats, much like old humans, tend to be set in their ways, their arrival at the retirement community is often a little stressful, and so they're locked in a cottage for about two weeks to become accustomed to the new environment. 'The retirement village cats are weighed weekly and monitored for weight changes or indications something isn't right and they are highlighted for a vet check,' Susie said. 'If there are any cats who are a concern beforehand, they get taken straight down or booked in asap.' The volunteers work around the clock, 365 days a year to make sure that these cats are able to live their best life. 'Our volunteers are amazing coming up regardless of whether snow and torrential rain won't stop them.'

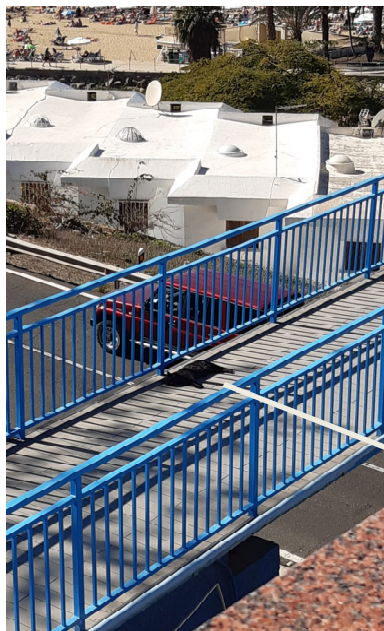
The retirement village sometimes is able to rehome the elderly cats but otherwise, they live out the rest of their lives there. Volunteers have even created memorial stones for all of the cats that have passed away.

www.goodnewsnetwork.org, A. Corbley, April 2023, Photo: Moggies Retirement Village – SWNS

Basic Rules For Cats Who Have The Run of The House

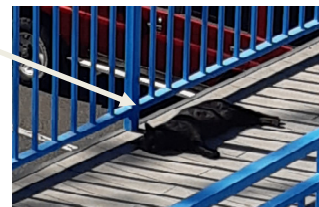
Tag - This game requires two or more cats and may include a dog. One cat is 'it.' The other(s) chase him around the house until they catch it. Then follows the 'Scrimmage,' after which the cat who caught the other becomes 'it' and is chased around.

Great fun but has the greatest potential for loss of Dignity from manoeuvres such as the Non-Carpeted Floor Skid and the Throw Rug Wipeout. Whenever such a situation occurs, all felines must immediately wash themselves. Dogs are generally too stupid to do this and may continue to play. In this case, the dog automatically becomes 'it' and should be subjected to the 'Pile up'. www.pawspetouspets.com



Sunning On A Bridge

The busy pedestrian bridge over the main road into Puerto Rico, Gran Canaria has become a favourite spot for one cat to take a nap in the sun. Sometimes he stretches across the bridge and pedestrians have to move around him. But he does get rubs by most.



Asian Shadows Boards Berlin Title 'The Cats Of Gokogu Shrine'



Hong Kong-based Asian Shadows has taken international sales rights to Japanese documentary *The Cats Of Gokogu Shrine*, ahead of its world premiere in Berlin's Forum section.

It is directed by acclaimed Japanese filmmaker Kazuhiro Soda who has screened several works in Forum including *Zero*, *Inland Sea*, *Mental* and *Campaign*. His latest follows the stray cats that live in an ancient Shinto shrine in the seaside resort town of Ushimado, Japan.

The Gokogu Shrine, also known as the Cat Shrine, is home to dozens of felines. Some residents take care of them while others complain about the mess they leave in the neighbourhood, which becomes an issue that divides the local community.

The film is a Japan-US production produced by Laboratory X, Inc, with Soda and Kiyoko Kashiwagi as producers. Asian Shadows previously handled sales of Soda's *Zero*, which won the Ecumenical jury prize at the Berlinale in 2020, and *Mental*, which won awards in Busan, Dubai, Miami, Hong Kong and Visions du Reel in 2009.

Like all his previous observational films, Soda followed his own Ten Commandments when making the feature, including no research, no meetings with subjects, no scripts, no pre-set theme or goal, no narration, and paying for his own production. He imposes these rules on himself to minimise pre-conceptions and make ways for unexpected discoveries.

'The Cats Of Gokogu Shrine allows us to enter the life of a traditional, pre-modern, disappearing community, and somehow to mirror ourselves,' said Maria Ruggieri, head of sales and acquisitions at Asian Shadows. 'Even in the smallest peaceful community there is an inconvenient truth to deal with, like the stray cats. They don't follow the rules, as if nature had to adapt to our civilized mess. What we see in Soda's film is a deep and compassionate snapshot of our actual struggle, if not our inability, to deal with our realities.'

The 74th Berlinale will run from February 15-25. www.screendaily.com, S Wong, January 2024 Photo Laboratory x, inc.

'One-of-a-Kind' Cat With Two Noses Is Put Up For Adoption

Cats are famously said to have nine lives. But one cat has become famous for another numerical reason - its two noses. The 'one-of-a-kind' double-snouted moggy has been taken in by Cats Protection's Warrington Adoption Centre.

Staff at the centre, in Cheshire, have named her Nanny McPhee - after the fictional film character with a distinctively shaped nose. Staff initially believed the four-year-old feline had one large nose. However, a check-up from veterinary staff revealed it to be two.



'A cat with two noses is a first for us in the field vet team,' says Fiona Brockbank, a senior field veterinary officer at Cats Protection. 'This is a real rarity and, thankfully, it isn't causing her any problems at all.'

Ms Brockbank says Nanny McPhee has what doctors call a 'congenital malformation'. These conditions are commonly referred to as 'birth defects' because they develop inside the womb. www.news.sky.com. October 2023



Cat Found Wandering The Cabin Aisles On Flight

A grey and white cat was found wandering the cabin aisles on a recent JetBlue flight, to the surprise of passengers onboard. Author and columnist Yi Shun Lai shared a photograph on Twitter of the cat being held aloft by a flight attendant on her recent flight in an effort to reunite the creature with its owner. 'On last night's @JetBlue flight, ONT-JFK: 'Is anyone missing a CAT. A grey-and-white CAT.' Yes I woke up for this' Lai wrote alongside the image.

It quickly transpired that the cat, named Brian, had escaped his carrier during the flight and elected to explore the cabin.

While many North American airlines permit passengers to travel with a cat or small dog in the cabin for an additional fee, they must remain in containers approved by the International Air Transport Association (IATA) during the flight. Updating invested followers, Ms Lai then tweeted: 'The cat's owner was found!! It had escaped from its carrier and was roaming the plane.'

The image of the chonky cat quickly went viral, attracting over 133,000 likes on the social media platform – including from Brian's owners, who shared their own update. 'He's doing great! My partner and I travel with him in a cat-backpack and the bottom flap isn't very secure. So Brian (pictured) must've nudged it open while we were asleep,' owner Alexis said. 'Thank you for all the love, he's safe and sound but definitely not sorry,' she added in another post. 'Attendant's not-amused-but-a-little-amused face is everything', wrote one commenter, while another said: 'Retired flight attendant here, my dream flight would have been one full of cats and dogs, no humans.'

It's not the first time a feline has been found free-roaming on a flight. In January, a cat was discovered exploring the cabin on a flight between Dallas and San Francisco, before being reunited with its owner.

www.independent.co.uk, J. Whitehead, March 2023 13



Health - How to Recognize the Signs of Dementia in Senior Cats

Dementia is an ailment that can effect older cats. Learn how to recognize it and what you can do to help your senior cat continue living a quality life.

With good care, many cats now live into their late teens and even twenties. Though with advanced age can come the problem of cat dementia or cognitive dysfunction. While some people have questioned if cats can get dementia in the past, it is now a recognized syndrome similar to 'sundowners syndrome' in an elderly human.

Dementia in cats is a slowly progressive disease related to aging in your cat's brain. At first, you may not notice some of the common symptoms of dementia, but over time, it suddenly becomes apparent that your cat is struggling.

Signs of cat dementia may include:

- Pacing
- Extensive vocalization
- Excessive grooming
- Eating less
- Getting 'stuck' in a corner or not knowing how to turn around
- More frequent accidents outside the litter box

Your first step in diagnosing cat dementia is to rule out any physical ailments. For example, if your cat is arthritic, she may not be comfortable going down the stairs to her litter box location. There is no specific test for dementia, but together with your vet, a thorough look at your cat's history, her current behavior, and any physical problems she might have will indicate the diagnosis of dementia.

Once physical problems are identified and treated, you need to look at how to change your cat's environment and care to help her with the changes associated with aging.

Some supplements to your cat's diet may be helpful. The ideal additions are vitamins and other antioxidants including Vitamin B12, Vitamin E, beta carotene, and Vitamin C. Carnitine has been recommended as a possible help and Omega 3 fatty acids are a great addition to a senior cat's diet for multiple reasons. Before adding any of these 'extras', check with your veterinarian to be sure you won't upset the balance of your cat's normal diet. Too much of a 'good thing' could be a problem for some of these.

Think about mental stimulation, too. Your cat can't do crossword puzzles, but a food puzzle toy might intrigue her. Take time to entice her with a feather toy or toss favorite fetch item for her. At the same time, keep her mental challenges for daily life simple - add an extra litter box, provide extra sunny sleeping spots, and feed her on a set routine with meals so you know if she ate or not.

If your cat is becoming more active at night, put some night lights around the house to help her see. You may need to start brushing her more often as she isn't grooming herself normally. Try to maintain normal routines as much as possible.

Perhaps the biggest recommendation is to be patient and understanding with your senior cat. She is doing the best she can to figure out her way in a changing world, and it's our job as cat parents to make sure our cats have the most comfortable, fulfilling life possible for as long as they can! www.dailypaws.com, Deb M. Eldredge, DVM, October 2020

Beloved Didcot Cat Cuts The Ribbon Of New Shop

A cat that became famous among a town's residents after being frequently spotted in shops, has officially opened a new local store. Two-year-old tabby Willow attended the ribbon cutting of Dunelm in Didcot, Oxfordshire, on 19 December. Staff members shared videos thanking the cat and his family 'for coming down to cut the ribbon'.

The cat has a big social media following and his own Facebook fan page called The Adventures of Willow. The homeware store is the latest addition to The Orchard Centre where Willow meet the locals. His online popularity grew after pictures and videos of him in various places around the town centre started circulating on social media.

Steph Newman-Johnston shared a picture of Willow at the opening: 'My partner sent me these today on her visit, it was the first time she met Willow and was amazed at how confident he is and how loving. He seemed to be enjoying his new toy and checking out the artificial plants,' she added Didcot resident



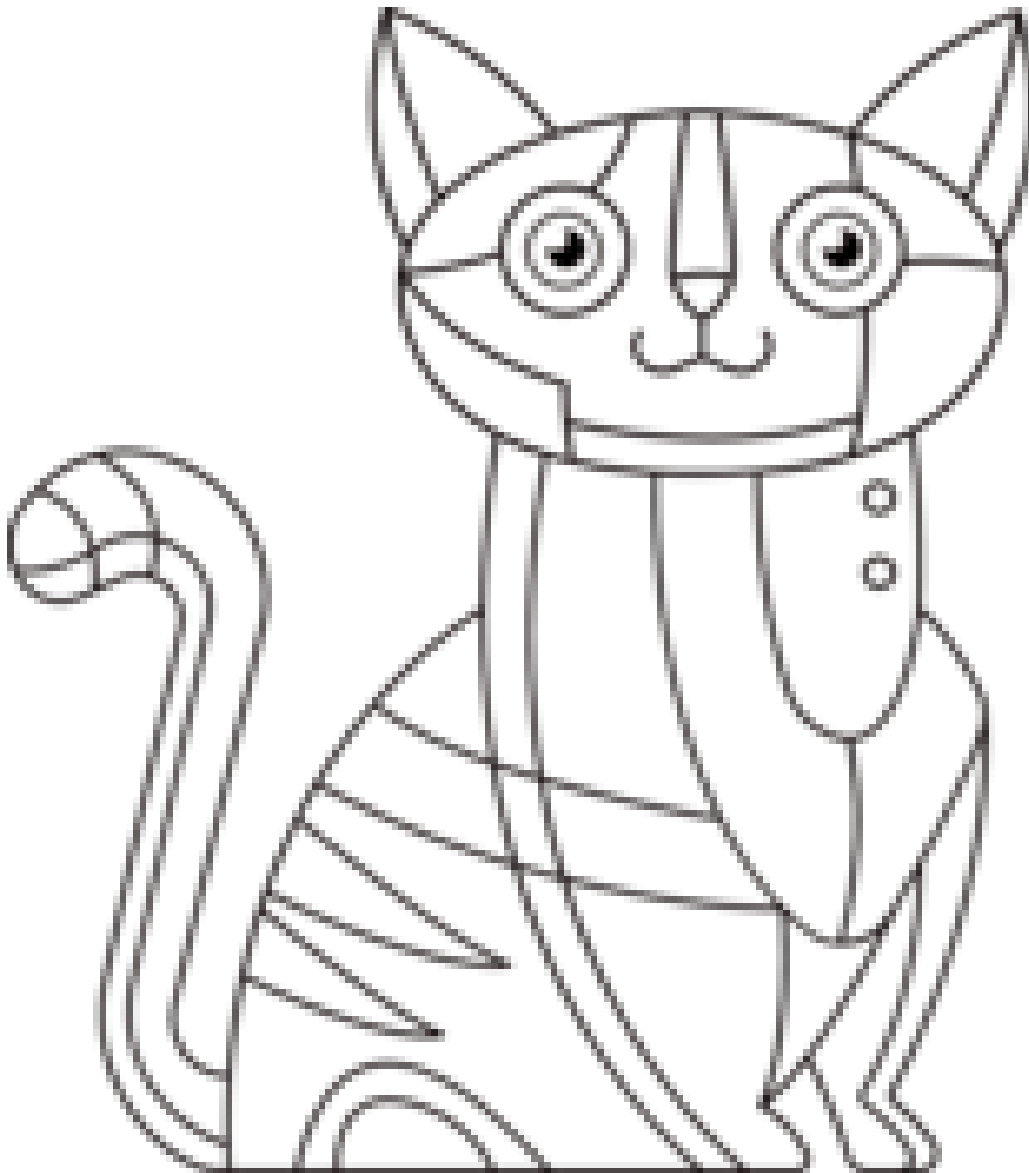
Abingdon resident, Cherie Belcher, said she had never heard of Willow before: 'I carried on with my shopping, went to load up my car and, as fate would have it, along comes this beautiful cat,' she said. 'I've not seen him since but hope to meet up with him again, I took pic to show my granddaughters. He jumped in my car, he made himself comfortable in my granddaughter's car seat and had a wash. Further comments and pictures of the opening day confirmed that the new store 'is definitely Willow approved'.

www.bbc.com, December 2023 Photos: Adventures of Willow from Didcot, Grace Beacham-Vickery





KIT'S KORNER



Colour in the Abstract Cat

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

Cat Makes History In Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race

When Oli queues up on the starting line for the Sydney to Hobart yacht race on Tuesday, he'll be making history. That's because Oli is a cat.

Since the event began as a casual cruise down the east coast of Australia in 1945, it has attracted all manner of colourful competitors - from media magnate Rupert Murdoch to Australian cricket legend Michael Clarke and former UK Prime Minister Sir Edward Heath. But there's no record of any feline seafarers in the gruelling regatta. Carrier pigeons - sure: they were once used to send messages back to shore and have graced many a deck during the ocean classic. But cats? No.



Oli's owner Bob Williams says the pair didn't set out to be pioneers. The moggy is simply part of the furniture on Sylph VI and leaving him behind on the boat's jaunt south was out of the question. 'I've done lots of crazy things, but this isn't one of them,' Mr Williams told the BBC ahead of the race.

Organisers - while initially bemused - are also on board. There are no race rules prohibiting animals, and cats have a long history in maritime travel, the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia pointed out. 'One of the great things about the Rolex Sydney Hobart is all the wonderful characters in the race and the diversity of boats,' Commodore Arthur Lane said.

While most eyes will be on the speedy super maxis - giant yachts with up to 24 crew - during the Boxing Day race, Sylph, a 12m (40ft) yacht made in 1960, will set off in the two-handed division where smaller boats compete with a slimmed down team. 'We're jokingly saying [it's] the two-handed and four-pawed division,' Mr Williams said. A friend of his is co-skippering, he explains, and as for Oli: 'He's SC - ship's cat.'

While Sylph is an old hat - having taken part in six Sydney to Hobarts many decades ago - this is Mr William's first time racing it. But both he and Oli have plenty of experience at sea. A retired navy officer, Mr Williams has spent his life traversing the ocean - including a recent single-handed circumnavigation of the globe - much of it with a feline companion by his side. Oli, who is about 10 years old, joined him five years ago and quickly earned his sea legs. The laidback kitty can usually be found meowing orders or napping on the job in the boat's cockpit. He used to get seasick, and he was a bit stressed to start off with... but now he's fine. He quite enjoys life,' Mr Williams said 'He's very sensible... Whenever it gets rough, he'll disappear down below to find a nice, safe spot to curl up.'

And get rough it just might. The 630 nautical mile (1,166km) dash has long been characterised by unpredictable and often brutal conditions - the worst, 25 years ago. This year forecasters have warned that the fleet could be in for thunderstorms, strong winds, and even hail along parts of the course.



Mr Williams jokes that he hasn't lost a cat at sea yet. But turning serious, he stresses that he is prepared for any emergency. 'The cat overboard routine is just to have something like a towel or a thick rope handy so that they can climb back on board.' There's no life jacket for Oli though, because he simply wouldn't wear it: 'They're Houdinis... they'll escape from anything they don't like,' Mr Williams says. But although cats hate the water, he knows for a fact Oli can swim, because he once legged it into the ocean to avoid an overzealous dog.

Sylph and her occupants will be playing it safe though and proceeding towards Hobart at a comparatively leisurely pace. The record for the fastest finish - set in 2017- is one day and nine hours. But that was a massive, modern super yacht built for speed. Competitors in the 1998 race were battered by a monster storm, which sank five boats and claimed the lives of six sailors. 'Sylph is an older slower boat... Our ambition is to get to Hobart in time for the New Year's celebration.' There they'll mark the occasion with a nip of rum, and perhaps some milk on the rocks for Oli.

www.bbc.com, T. Turnbull, December 2023 Photos: Getty Images



How To Annoy Your Cat

Knit kitten mittens.

100 Fun Ways to Annoy Your Cat by Jim Erskine Photo Fruugo.ie



Always
kiss your
CAT GOODNIGHT

Law of Cat Electric Blanket Attraction:

Turn on an electric blanket and a cat will jump into bed at the speed of light.