

# The Scratching Post



**SABCCI Newsletter - Autumn 2023**

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



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### SABCCI Committee

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



*When crazy Uncle Jake & his trusted sidekick, Pong, came back from a Courgette hunt.*

### Where Did It Come From? -

#### In The Dark, All Cats Are Grey

Meaning: This is used to indicate that physical appearance is of no consequence whatsoever when the candles have been blown out.

Origin: Benjamin Franklin, one of the founding fathers of the US, and a world famous scientist, used this figurative expression, while advising a young man, that taking a young woman to bed shouldn't be deemed as an unpleasant experience, as when the lights are put off, appearances cannot be made out.  
[www.timesofindia.indiatimes.com](http://www.timesofindia.indiatimes.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](mailto:vetblooddonorclinic@ucd.ie) or 01 7166137

## Editorial

Welcome to our Autumn 2023 issue of The Scratching Post.  
SABCCI celebrating 70 years  
So if you're ready, sit back with a Dark 'n Stormy 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)



### The GCCFI Supreme Cat Show

We have swapped our show date with the SABCCI/GCCFI Joint show

Sunday the 15th of October

Ballinteer Community School, Broadford Road,

Ballinteer Dublin 16

Open to the Public 12:30 to 5:00

Best In Show 4:00 onwards

See you there!



### In Memory

In this last issue of 2023 let us remember our SABCCI & GCCFI friends we have lost this year.

Ken Taylor - Husband of Lorna. Ken was a SABCCI member, Burmese breeder and past member of the GCCFI Council.

Norman O'Galligan - SABCCI & committee member, Chairman of the GCCFI & Council member.

Rhona Sullivan - Member and President of SABCCI, past Treasurer & Council member of the GCCFI & a Siamese breeder.

Wally Brooks - Husband of Ronnie, a show supporter with his lovely wooden Best In Show trophies. He was very talented and gifted in working with wood.

### Show News

#### The First Bronze Invictus Winner

The joint shows in Ballinteer on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> April produced our very first Invictus winner when Supreme Hibernian Grand Premier Silverfern French Kiss, owned by Claudia Wagner, became an Invictus Bronze. Congratulations to them both.

#### Cat Of The Year: Moggy Who helps His Deaf Owner

A cat who has become invaluable to his deaf owner by 'hearing' for her has been voted National Cat of the Year. Zebby the moggy has no formal hearing training, yet helps 66-year-old Genevieve Moss around the home by tapping her when the phone rings or he hears any strange noises, and by pacing in front of her if someone is at the door.

The black and white cat even brings the post and slippers to Ms Moss, who lives on her own in Derbyshire. She said with Zebby around she doesn't feel lonely and 'can't imagine life without [him]'. She added: 'Without my hearing aid, I can't hear anything, but now I have Zebby to help me. He'll come and tap me when the phone is ringing, and then I can pop my hearing aid and speaker on and take the call.'

Dubbed a 'hero' by his owner, Zebby beat thousands of other felines to receive the prestigious award after deliberation by a panel of celebrities including former goalkeeper David Seaman MBE and high-profile vet Dr Scott Miller.

Ms Moss said: 'I am so proud of Zebby for showing the world how intuitive and caring cats can be, and what a positive effect they can have on people's lives'. [www.news.sky.com](http://www.news.sky.com), R. Balla, July 2023



#### Habits of Highly Effective Cats - Purring

While this may sound like teaching your grandmother to catch mice, it is a fact that contented throaty purring is irresistible to most humans. Make it evident that your human is the source of your contentment and the reason for your ecstatic purring. Purring while snuggling is one of the most powerful combinations known to cats. However, if you also knead while purring, keep those claws sheathed - a few painful punctures can undo several hours' worth of purring in all but the best-trained human. by Messybeast



## New & Rare Breeds - The Ojos Azules

Ojos Azules are a relatively new breed of domestic cat. Cats with dark blue eyes were discovered in New Mexico among feral cat populations. The first cat discovered was a tortoiseshell named Cornflower, who was found in 1984. She was bred to males without the trait which proved to be dominant as all her kittens showed it.

The breed was founded and named Ojos Azules, Spanish meaning 'Blue Eyes'. Ojos Azules are held distinct for their deep blue eyes. Unlike the blue eyes seen linked to the genes in bicour cats and cats with point colouration, both of which suppress pigmentation, this gene is not linked to any certain coat colour or pattern, giving the opportunity to have cats with dark coats and blue eyes.

The depth of colour in the eyes is greater even than that seen in a Siamese and does not cause squinting, deafness or cross-eye. They are a very rare breed. Only cats expressing the deep blue eye gene have been called Ojos Azules. They are a rare breed, In 1992, only ten were known.

It was recently discovered that cranial defects may be linked to the gene, and breeding was temporarily suspended. Following genetic investigation by Solveig Pflueger, breeding resumed in a small way with attempts to breed Ojos Azules without the lethal genetic defects. It was discovered that when the gene is homozygous it causes cranial deformities, white coat, a small curled tail, and stillbirth. However, when the gene is heterozygous, it avoids those lethal genetic mutations. The result is that breeders must cross the blue-eyed cats with non-blue-eyed cats, assuring a litter of about 50/50 blue non blue eyed kittens. Though only half of the kittens are then part of the Ojos Azules breed, this avoids having much of the litter comprised of deformed dead kittens. One indicator of the Ojos gene is a flattened tail-tip.

The breed is of medium size with large and rounded blue eyes. The head is somewhat triangular, a slightly rounded forehead with an angular muzzle and a slight nose break. The neck is arched.

The Ojos Azules' coat is short, fine soft, silky and shinney. The undercoat is not particularly developed but dense in colour. All colours are allowed. White markings are common on most tip of tail, muzzle and paws. Solid white coats are not describable as they cannot be distinguished from common white blue-eyed cats. Interestingly, the blue-eyed Ojos Azules are not deaf like most common white blue-eyed cats.

The personality of this breed is little known due to its rarity. However there has been reports of them being active, affectionate and friendly. As the coat is short they are easy to groom.

The breed, in both short and long hair variety, was accepted for registration by TICA in 1991. The TICA, Ojos Azules Breed Group Standard is dated 5th January 2004. [www.animalcorner.org](http://www.animalcorner.org), [www.Wikipedia](http://www.Wikipedia), Photo: Wikipedia



## Famous Cat Lovers - Théophile Gautier

French author Théophile Gautier (1811-1872) adored cats and talked about them all the time. Any collection of quotes about cats can't help but feature at least a half dozen from Gautier. He literally wrote the book, *Ménagerie Intime*, about his domestic life with his cats.

He started off with Childebrand, a black-and-tan tabby whose name gave Gautier a much-needed rhyme for 'Rembrandt.' As his pets were not neutered, there were soon more cats. The white Angora Don Pierrot de Navarre and the equally white feline enchantress Marquesa Dona Séraphita had a litter of three black kittens: Enjolras, Eponine, and Gavroche. (Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables* was the latest literary sensation shortly before they were born.) Eponine had at least one kitten of her own, Cléopâtre, who enjoyed standing on three legs. Then there was Madame Théophile, an orange-and-white cat who enjoyed eating food from Gautier's fork, and Zizi, an accomplished musician who did her best work walking across the piano at night.

His love for cats followed him to the grave, where a carved cat peers out from the top of his headstone at the Montmartre Cemetery in Paris. [www.mentalfloss.com](http://www.mentalfloss.com), Photo of grave [agk-images/Gerard Degeorge](https://www.flickr.com/photos/gerarddegeorge/)



## Cat Heaven - Built On The Ceiling To Save Space

In a great use of vertical space, a woman's mom built hanging cat beds and walkways for their five beloved felines. 'We had 5 Cats but only 2 sleeping places,' explained their owner. 'This seriously had to change. The only normal thing anyone would do in this kind of situation is building a Cat Ceiling Heaven!' wrote the French speaking Rumble user, MerlinandNerina who posted the video.

They love building stuff for their cats - four Ragdolls named Merlin, Nerina, Pistache, Piccolo and Lady, an American Curl. They each have their own wooden cubbies hand-crafted in the garden. The first two cats were way too leery to use the beautifully constructed rope bridges, until Merlin, the pack leader, led the way without an issue.

[www.goodnewsnetwork.org](http://www.goodnewsnetwork.org), Photo: @MerlinandNerina/Rumble



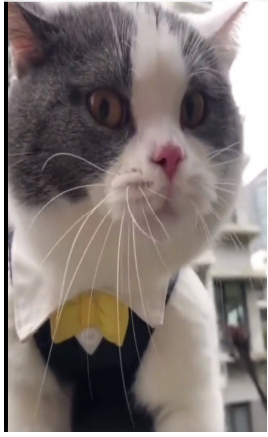
## How To Annoy Your Cat

Whenever there's any cause for a celebration, make your cat wear a party hat.

100 Fun Ways to Annoy Your Cat by Jim Erskine



## People Left Howling With Laughter at Cat With Strongest Cork Accent



A cat has gone viral on social media - as people were left howling at the 'strongest Cork accent' that they'd ever heard.

Cats are notoriously vocal creatures - meowing at pretty much anything and everything, or purring when they're happy out with the situation. People from Cork are also notoriously vocal creatures - talking to pretty much anyone, or declaring how it's the 'real capital' and how great the Rebel county is.

A video from 2019 of 'Billy' the cat went viral over the weekend after a Twitter user by the name of Myles O'Reilly reposted it, writing: 'A cat with the strongest Cork accent is the best thing you'll see on the internet today.' And we can confirm, it is!

Naturally, Irish twitter users loved it. One wrote: 'He's damn right, very modern views there from a very wise cat'. Comedian Tadgh Hickey chipped in with 'Honestly used to go out with someone who spoke exactly like that. Ah you'd miss her around the place.'

A lot of people believed that Billy may not actually be a Corkonian, mind. One wrote: 'Cork Kerry border, to be fair.' Derry Girls actor Siobhan McSweeney agreed, noting: 'More Kerry. But fabulous nonetheless.' While there were a couple of playful jabs at certain TDs as well - Danny Healy-Stray and Mewochal Healy-Rae among them.

The original clip of 'Billy' was uploaded to the popular TikTok account Turkey Animals in 2019 and has been a bit of a meme since. The original clip of 'Billy' was uploaded to the popular TikTok account Turkey Animals in 2019 and has been a bit of a meme since. [www.irishmirror.ie](http://www.irishmirror.ie). G. O'Calligan, D. Kent Digital Reporter. October 2022. Twitter photo: Myles O'Rielly

## Cat's Out Of The Bag When TSA Finds Stowaway Feline In JFK

Don't accuse the TSA of catnapping on the job. When an alert agent at New York's John F. Kennedy airport noticed tufts of orange fur poking out of a slightly unzipped suitcase, it gave him pause. As the bag went through the X-ray unit, the Transportation Security Administration agent was in for a surprise: Inside were four paws and a tail belonging to a feline stowaway.

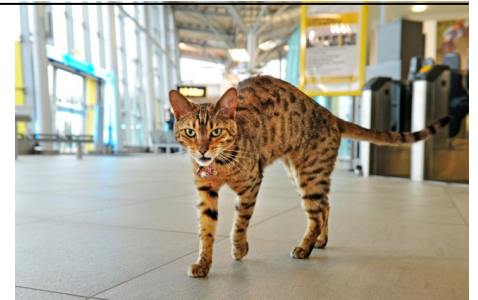
'On the bright side, the cat's out of the bag,' a TSA spokesperson tweeted Tuesday. The passenger was paged to return to the ticket counter after the cat was found, the spokesperson, Lisa Farbstein, said in an email. 'The traveller said that the cat belonged to someone else in the household, implying that he was not aware that the cat was in the suitcase. We call that a good CATch!'



The stowaway cat, identified by the New York Post as 'Smells,' was returned to its owner. The cat's owner told the Post that Smells must have crawled into the suitcase of a visiting friend. She didn't know her tabby was missing until airport officials reached her. [www.apnews.com](http://www.apnews.com), November 2022

## Cat Called 'Paul Newman' Dies After Years Bringing Happiness To Liverpool Station

A hugely popular cat who became 'the face of Liverpool South Parkway Station' has died. A dedicated Facebook page for the feline - who was named 'Paul Newman' after the iconic American actor - posted: 'It is with a heavy heart I must announce that Paul the cat has journeyed over Rainbow Bridge. I know you will all miss him just as I will. My heart goes out to Steff his owner and all of his colleagues at South Parkway who will miss him.'



The Bengal cat began visiting Liverpool South Parkway Station from his nearby home 13 years ago. He would lounge around the platform barriers, drawing attention and affection from passing commuters and station staff.

But Paul's time at the station wasn't without drama. In 2013 Paul lost popularity among the station's staff after biting a security guard. The station responded by 'discouraging' him from returning, although it refused to ban him. Last April, he managed to get onto the roof of a platform, causing concerns for staff and prompting the Facebook page to provide panicky rolling updates. Eventually Paul came back down to the station floor for a drink of water and staff breathed a collective sigh of relief.

Tributes to Paul have been posted on social media. Layla Shaughnessy wrote: 'RIP Paul. I loved giving him a little stroke when coming home from work - he was a wonderful, mischievous boy. Sleep tight.'

Perhaps the most moving tribute so far has come from Daniel James Findlay-Belfield, who wrote: 'I will never forget how he helped me get through a very dark time in my life a few years ago. The happiness he gave to so many people, including myself, will never be forgotten. He was a Legend and I will miss him so much.' There is a call for a statue to be erected in his honour. [www.metro.co.uk](http://www.metro.co.uk), David Alexander, January 2023. Photo: Side Mersey rail



## Cats Walk Like Camels & Giraffes

Have you ever noticed that cats walk like camels and giraffes? Their walking sequence is both right feet first, followed by both left feet, so they move half of their body forward at once. Camels and giraffes are the only other animals to walk this way. [www.purina.co.uk](http://www.purina.co.uk)



## Cats In Your Dreams

If you had a dream about cats, it might be a sign of deceit and unpleasant upcoming events. The white cat's dream meaning is of an auto-induced illusion, a harmless personal fantasy, while the black cat's meaning is the uncontrolled version of this semblance.

If you also hear the black cat meowing, then it means that your friends are talking behind your back. But what does a gray cat symbolize? Many interpreters think this cat dream meaning represents you will yield to flattery and betrayal. If the grey cat symbolism appears to a man, then it means a deceitful woman will seduce him.

The orange cat symbolism could show a future pregnancy for a woman but could also be about betrayal. A dream about cats in the house might signify you are making space for someone in your home and heart.

Dead cat symbolism talks about releasing your emotions and paying attention to your deepest feelings.

So what does dreaming about cats mean really? It is generally a bad sign, and you should pay close attention to details. Dreaming of cats that are playing could mean that you need something or someone in your life that can bring or your childish nature.

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



## New York State Bans Pet Stores From Selling Cats, Dogs & Rabbits

Albany, NY - New York State on Thursday became the latest state to ban the sale of cats, dogs and rabbits in pet stores in an attempt to target commercial breeding operations decry by critics as 'puppy mills.'

The new law, which was signed by Governor Kathy Hochul and takes effect in 2024, lets pet shops work instead with shelters to offer rescued or abandoned animals up for adoption. 'This is a very big deal. New York tends to be a big purchaser and profiteer of these mills, and we are trying to cut off the demand at a retail level,' said Sen. Michael Gianaris, a Democrat. He added that the puppy mill industry treats animals 'like commodities' and said 'there is no pet store not affected.'



Pet shops have argued that the law will do nothing to shut down out-of-state breeders or increase their standards of care and said it would result in the closures of the dozens of pet stores remaining in New York. California enacted a similar law in 2017, becoming the first state to ban such sales. While that law requires pet stores to work with animal shelters or rescue operations, like New York is doing now, it does not regulate sales by private breeders. A handful of states followed. In 2020, Maryland banned the sale of cats and dogs in pet stores, triggering pushback from shop owners and breeders who challenged the measure in court. A year later Illinois barred pet shops from selling commercially raised puppies and kittens.

In New York, pet advocacy groups have long called for a full shutdown of facilities that raise and sell animals for profit, saying animals are raised in inhumane conditions before they are shipped off to stores.

Emilio Ortiz, a manager at Citipups pet shop in New York City, said the new law could serve as a death sentence for the business he's worked at for more than a decade. 'Ninety percent of our business is selling dogs. We're not going to survive this,' said Ortiz, who considers the ban unfair to stores that work with responsible breeders. 'They're closing the good actors along with the bad actors.' Jessica Selmer, president of People United to Protect Pet Integrity, a New York coalition of pet store owners, called the law 'careless' and 'counterproductive' and said she hopes the governor will 'consider legislative remedies to some of the pitfalls of the bill.'

The new law will not affect at-home breeders who sell animals born and raised on their property. Lisa Haney, who breeds dogs at her Buffalo home alongside her husband, said she supports the law. 'One pet store near me, they get dogs from all over the Midwest and different large facilities, and you have no idea where they come from and who the breeder is. People are really clueless and take the puppy,' Haney said. Her business, Cavapoo Kennels, partly focuses on breeding hypoallergenic dogs for people who have allergies, and her business model operates on a need basis. The waitlist runs from six to 12 months, ensuring each dog ends up in a home.

Gianaris said the law will allow buyers to be more conscious of where their pets come from. 'If a consumer went to a mill and saw the awful conditions, they wouldn't buy these animals,' he said. 'Dealing with a breeder allows people to see where their dog comes from, and it cuts off the middlemen that serve as a way to wash off the awful activities that take place at the mill.'

Maysoon Khan is a corps member for the Associated Press/Report for America Statehouse News Initiative. Report for America is a nonprofit national service program that places journalists in local newsrooms to report on undercovered issues. Follow Maysoon Khan on Twitter at: [twitter.com/MaysoonKhan](https://twitter.com/MaysoonKhan).

This story was first published on December 15, 2022. It was updated on December 16, 2022, to correct that breeders will not be prohibited from selling more than nine animals a year. The law defined a 'pet dealer' as a person who sells more than nine animals per year for profit. It didn't limit the number of animal sales.

[apnews.com](https://apnews.com), Maysoon Khan, December 2022 photo: AP Photo/Diane Bondarett. file



**Ghana Proverb -**

***If stretching made money, all cats would be wealthy.***

## The Quiz -

1. What animal was the body of the Egyptian Sphinx based on?
2. What colour is an ocelot?
3. What cat does not have a tail?
4. Alphabetically, what animal comes last in the Chinese horoscope?
5. What can a cheetah not do that a tiger and a puma can do?
6. What is the largest member of the cat family?
7. Who is the policeman you associate with Top Cat?
8. Which cat 'vanished quite slowly, beginning with the end of the tail, and ending with the grin'?



www.quizglobal.com Answers on page 16

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

Cornish Rex: 'I'll just talk it into place.'

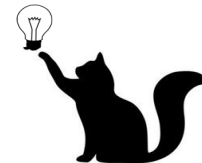
Bombay: 'Hey that was my tail! Someone should change that light bulb before I get hurt!'

Egyptian Mau: 'I am a GOD! I do not change light bulbs, now worship me in the dark and maybe I'll let you have light!'

Havana: 'I'm 2 busy taking a siesta.'

Oriental: 'I'll take the 5th on this one.'

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



www.petplace.com

## Isaac Newton Invented The Cat Flap

The scientist is most famous for calculated gravity, but it's also believed that Isaac Newton invented the cat door. How Stuff Works writes that when Newton was working on his experiments at the University of Cambridge he was constantly interrupted by his cats scratching at the door. So he called the Cambridge carpenter to saw two holes in the door, one for the mother cat and one for her kittens! Apparently these holes can still be seen at the university today. [www.purina.co.uk](http://www.purina.co.uk)



## Cat Superstitions

- Bathing a cat will cause it to rain.
- A cat sleeping with all four paws tucked under means cold weather ahead.
- Those who feed cats well will have sun on their wedding day. (Welsh)
- The borrowed cat catches no mice. (Japan)
- All cats are bad in May. (French)
- If a cat purrs, a ghost is in the room.



I think I've wasted my money with the cat tree

## Guidelines For Cats



### Chairs & Rugs

If you have to throw up, get to a chair quickly. If you cannot manage in time, get to an Oriental rug. If there is no Oriental rug, shag is good. When throwing up on the carpet, make sure you back up so that it is as long as the human's bare foot.

## Cat Words

Catalogue - Feline placed between Firedogs for warmth.  
Caterwauling - Brick structure between caterpillars.  
Catecholamines - Underground working deposits of coal.  
Cataloguing - The process of felling trees.



## How To Annoy Your Cat



Place a mirror next to the litter box so your cat can have company.

100 Fun Ways to Annoy Your Cat by Jim Erskine

*Cats never strike a pose that isn't photogenic.*

Lillian Jackson Braun, Author





# 2023 Dublin Championship Cat Show

(SABCCI/GCCFI)

Ballinteer Community School, Ballinteer, Dublin 16

16th April 2023



The Dublin Championship Cat Show, normally held in October, swapped show dates with the Supreme Show. This only gave less than a 6 month gap between the last one held on the 29th of October 2022, however that didn't seem to deter our exhibitors from entering the 101 cats!

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 and to Ballinteer Community School for once again allowing us to hold the show at their school. Also I would like to thank all the people who helped at set up on Saturday and during show day. Special thank you to Ronnie Brooks, Lorna Taylor, Carmel Byrne and Colm Noonan.

## Best of Variety

### Section 1

**Adult:** Miss L M Garcia's, Int Ch SYLABOW Burlington Bertie (Persian)

**Kitten:** Mrs C & Miss S Caughey's, Hinchkitz Cinnamon Nspyce (Persian, Tortoiseshell)

**Overall:** Mrs C & Miss S Caughey's, Hinchkitz Cinnamon Nspyce

### Section 2

**Adult:** Dr C M Wagner's, Friendlyghost Chaiyya Chaiyya (Maine Coon)

**Kitten:** Dr C M Wagner's, Friendlyghost Elsa The Lioness (Maine Coon)

**Neuter:** Dr C M Wagner's, Ishcus Quevaga (Maine Coon)

**Overall:** Dr C M Wagner's, Ishcus Quevaga

### Section 3

**Adult:** Miss A Hill's, Pawsome Black Steel (British, Black)

**Kitten:** Ms J Kirnaja's, Furryblisslove Alisia (Longhair British)

**Neuter:** Ms A Duffy's, Int GrPr Astralcharm Definitely Maybe (British, Cream)

**Overall:** Ms A Duffy's, Int GrPr Astralcharm Definitely Maybe

### Section 4

**Adult:** Mrs A Howard's, Int Ch Coco Wave Cult (Cornish Rex)

**Kitten:** Ms R Healy's, Danakil's Geronimo (Abyssinian)

**Neuter:** Miss S Mackenzie's, Pr Daddy Talkie Toaster (Devon Rex)

**Overall:** Mrs A Howard's, Int Ch Coco Wave Cult

### Section 5

**Adult:** Ms K Patience's, Girona Satine (Burmese, Brown Tortoiseshell)

**Kitten:** Mr L Steele's, Luxdon Madame Mayhem (Asian Tabby)

**Neuter:** Ms K Sluiters', Pr Sliabh Ginhiroyuki (Burmese, Lilac)

**Overall:** Ms K Patience's, Girona Satine

### Section 6

**Adult:** Mr D Dowds' & Mr S Cahoon's, Niterap Trump Card (Siamese, Self Pointed)

**Overall:** Mr D Dowds' & Mr S Cahoon's, Niterap Trump Card

### Non-Pedigree Sections

**Household Pet:** Mrs C Fleming's, Tora (Tabby)

**Pedigree Pet:** Miss French's, Boise (Kitten)

### Overall Best In Show Pedigree

Dr C M Wagner's, Ishcus Quevag



### Overall Best In Show Non-Pedigree

Mrs C Fleming's, Tora





# Deciphering Indicators of Feline Happiness



## Abstract

Understanding the emotional states of animals, including domestic cats (*Felis Catus*), has been a subject of interest for both pet owners and researchers alike. This article delves into the various behavioural and physiological indicators that cats display when experiencing what is commonly interpreted as 'happiness.' Through a comprehensive exploration of feline behaviour, body language, vocalizations, and physiological responses, we aim to provide a nuanced understanding of how cats express happiness.

## Introduction

Cats, renowned for their enigmatic nature, have captivated human attention for centuries. One of the fundamental aspects of feline behaviour is the display of emotions, including happiness. While interpreting feline emotions is still a challenge due to their subtle expressions and evolutionary adaptations, many studies have shed light on the indicators that suggest happiness.

So, what are the behavioural Indicators of happiness?

**Purring** - One of the most recognized indicators of feline happiness is purring. Purring is often linked to contentment and relaxation. This rhythmic sound, produced by the rapid contraction of the laryngeal muscles, is associated with positive experiences such as being petted, cuddled, or in a familiar environment. Studies have shown that cats often purr during times of low stress and when engaging in affiliative behaviours with other cats or humans. While purring is thought to be partly voluntary and partly instinctive, research suggests that cats can purr for several reasons, using the soft rumble as a way of communicating and as a form of self-soothing or even healing. This is why cats will often purr when they are injured, or after a stressful event.

Kittens are born blind and deaf, staying so until they are around two weeks old. However, they begin purring after just a few days, primarily to let their mothers know where they are, and to attract their attention at feeding time. This behaviour continues into adulthood and will be familiar to cat owners who are treated to a coercive display of purring come dinner time. But this is just one of several different ways in which the purr is used.

Cats often purr when humans stroke them, leading to an association between purring and pleasure. Observed feline behaviour suggests they may also be trying to encourage further interaction, as if to say 'please continue to stroke me'.

A 2009 study found that cats can conceal a cry within their purr that triggers a nurturing instinct in their owners, like the cries of a human baby. The study saw that when purring to ask for food, the noise cats made was 'more urgent and less pleasant', suggesting they can manipulate their purrs to communicate different things.

According to New Scientist readers, cats will also adapt noises like their meow to elicit a response from their owners. This means that if a cat were to have a deaf owner, it is likely they would meow less once they learned it did not trigger a response. However, the same cat would continue to purr, without changing the frequency of the sound.

Research into feline behaviour has lagged that of dogs, but a 1991 study concluded that purring emanates from the cat's voice box, or larynx. When cats breathe, they dilate and constrict the glottis, the area around their vocal cords, in a rapid, rhythmic fashion. As the air vibrates over the laryngeal muscles of their larynx, the purring sound occurs.

But why do they purr after a stressful event? A 2001 study published in The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America showed that domestic cats and some species of big cats, including pumas and cheetahs, could purr at frequencies best for pain relief and even bone repair.

So how can you tell why your cat is purring? Your best chance of understanding them is to look at their body language and the context. If they are purring first thing in the morning, they may be asking to be fed. If you have just returned from a day at work, they might be saying hello and if they are sitting on your lap, purring contentedly, they might just be signalling their approval.

**Playfulness** - A playful demeanour is a strong manifestation of a cat's positive emotional state. Play behaviours, including chasing toys, stalking, pouncing, and wrestling, show both physical and mental well-being. Play serves as an outlet for energy, a means of honing hunting skills, and a mechanism for building social bonds.

**Relaxed Body Posture** - Cats display a range of body postures to communicate their emotions. A relaxed body posture, such as lying on the side or back with limbs stretched out or tucked in, signals comfort and contentment. The act of exposing the belly, often misinterpreted as an invitation for a belly rub, is more a sign of trust and a relaxed state than an explicit request for physical contact.

## Physiological Indicators

**Reduced Stress Hormones** - A happy cat is likely to have lower levels of stress hormones such as cortisol. Studies have shown that cats in comfortable and familiar environments (SBEs) show reduced stress hormone levels, indicating a positive emotional state.

**Grooming** - Cats engage in self-grooming not only for hygiene but also to relax and express contentment. A cat that dedicates time to meticulous grooming in an unhurried manner is often experiencing a state of comfort.

## Olfactory

The Secure Base Effect (SBE) refers to a human or non-human animal's ability to use the presence of a bonded caretaker, or other familiar stimulus, as a source of comfort that facilitates stress reduction and exploration in novel or stressful contexts. Recent research has shown that some pet domestic cats (*Felis Catus*) display SBE in the presence of their human owner, a finding that could be used to improve cat welfare.

In applied settings, cat owners are often encouraged to leave behind items holding their scent when leaving their cat in a novel location (e.g., boarding facility), so that these items can be provided to the cat if they show signs of separation distress. While this practice has not been studied scientifically in cats, scent objects have been found to produce SBE in human research under similar conditions. Olfaction is thought to play a significant role in the social behaviour of domesticated cats, even in early life, as exposure to nest scent has been found to reduce stress in kittens. The possibility that owner scent might be sufficient to elicit SBE in cats is an important empirical question with applied implications. In the study it was found that owner scent would reduce cat anxiety when in an unfamiliar environment, on average, cats displayed a lower frequency of stress-related behaviours when the owner was present. However, this effect was not seen when the cat was alone with the scent object. These findings highlight the importance of using evidence-based practices to address cat anxiety in applied settings.

## Conclusion

The multifaceted nature of feline happiness is revealed through an intricate tapestry of behaviours, body language, vocalisations, and physiological responses. While individual cats may exhibit unique preferences and nuances in their expressions, in general cats indicate their emotional state of 'happiness' which owners can learn to decode and thereby forge deeper connections and enrich the lives of their cats

Jim Stephens MS.CABC, Companion Animal Behaviour Counsellor, [www.petsbehave.com](http://www.petsbehave.com)



## Canoe Cat Tilly Has Her Paws On The Tiller

A pet cat has been bringing joy to boaters after taking a liking to trips on the water on its owner's canoe. Tilly, a fluffy calico, has been accompanying owner Holly Hancock, a keen sailor and law lecturer at the University of East Anglia (UEA), since she was a kitten. The three-year-old moggy is seen regularly on the Norfolk Broads at Horning, looking out at the scenery. 'It's not every day you see a cat in a boat, but she loves it and seeing her seems to brighten up everyone's day,' Ms Hancock said.

Tilly is part-Norwegian forest cat and although she is mainly an indoor pet, she started following her owner down the garden when she was about five months old and wanted to get in the canoe. She's very adventurous and into everything, so I take her on the canoe and she just loves being out on the water,' said Ms Hancock. 'I do put a harness on her, and take her little carrier - which is like a bed - so she can go in there if she wants but she is so intrigued by all the wildlife she usually just sits and watches. Seeing her brightens up everyone's day. People are so surprised to see a cat on a boat, whereas you see lots of dogs out on the water - I sometimes think Tilly thinks she is a dog.'

A spokeswoman for the Broads Authority, which manages the waterways, said while they had no bylaws preventing animals from being aboard a vessel, they would 'recommend that all pets wear life jackets (with handles) when on board a boat to prevent them getting into difficulty and make it easier to get them out of the water should they fall in'.

[www.bbc.com](http://www.bbc.com), Photo: Holly Hancock

## I'm 13 Years Old & A New Baby Arrives

My name is Truffles, no I'm not a chocolate! I'm a chocolate-coloured Burmese cat. My owners, my two mums, explained to me when I was young that I got my name when they incorrectly referred to my colour as brown and were told no, I was chocolate. So my name is Truffles.

I landed on all four paws when I arrived as a four month old kitten in my new home. I was and am so spoilt here, with my own bedroom, complete with a furry pineapple to sleep in, toys and many happy hours spent purring loudly on my mum's knees. I even get to sleep with my mums. As a shorthaired cat I get cold at night, (well that is my excuse). Soon after my arrival I became Top Cat in my little cul-de-sac. I regularly visited our friendly neighbours, taking catnaps in their bedrooms. As a Burmese I talk lots, so I was spoilt rotten by our neighbours while my mums were at work.

When I was one, my mums adopted my brother, Sparky, a red Burmese. I loved him. We played for hours together and with all my friends, getting into lots of trouble, but had lots of adventures too. One dark evening, Sparky was running after leaves in the wind as we often did. A car drove by too fast, hitting Sparky and killed him. I was inconsolable, sad, lost and lonely.

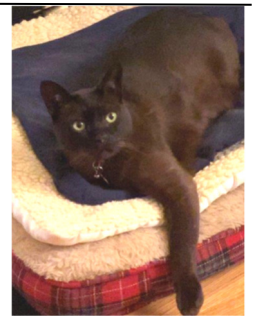
After a year, a funny coloured tabby arrived named Pia. Pia was timid and shy, she loved me following me everywhere, she shared my bedroom. Pia wasn't always well. She got these strange fits which were frightening. My mums said she had epilepsy (I still don't know what that is). Together we won an RTE competition, Ireland's Most Pampered Pets.

Then my worst nightmare, a male Siamese called Sam, arrived. His parents died. He needed a home. He's a big boy, beautiful blue eyes, sits like an aristocrat, thinking he knows it all. You cannot imagine my horror and jealousy. Pia would often lie between us so there would be no fighting! My little heart took another blow last year when Pia died suddenly. I just can't accept she has gone.

My mums knew I was lonely and Sam isn't really my friend. They adopted another tabby kitten from the DSPCA called Belle. Belle is six months old and I'm 13! What were they thinking!

A new baby arrives, My world is upside down!

Muriel Haire, Dublin



# The Catwalk

## The Riverreign Five -

What is going on out there?

H. Phelan, Meath



## Pebbles -

Pebbles want to hitch a lift in Figaro & Poppy's stroller.

A. Kiely, Dublin



## Ruby Button -

That was yummy. Can I have more please?

G & L Hughes, Dublin



## Gus -

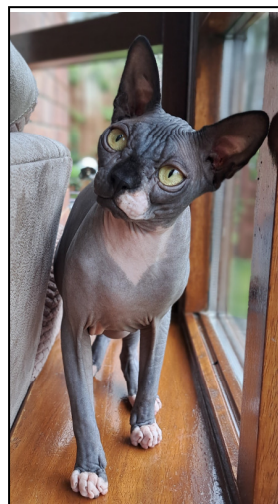
But I am happy here, I don't want to get up and go home.

T. MacDonagh, USA





# The Catwalk



**Shanti -**

Were you looking for me?

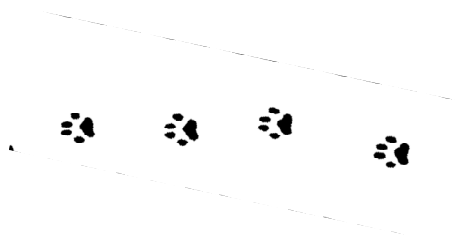
L. Sipailiene, Waterford



**The Visitor -**

I just love your garden. It is far nicer than my one.

S. Galbraith, Dublin

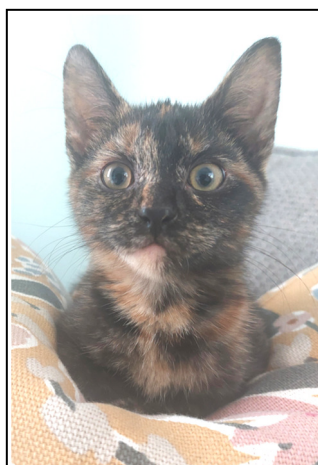


**Truffles -**

The new baby that arrived is too lively for me!

(did you see my article on page 10)

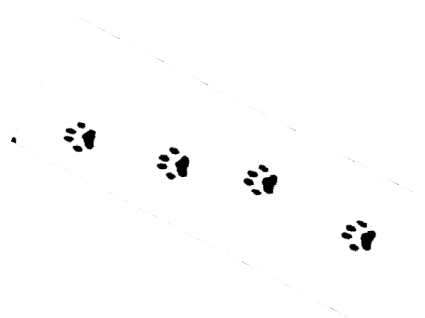
Muriel Haire, Dublin



**Taiga -**

Did somebody say treat?

E. Carroll, Dublin



## Welcome To Kotor, Montenegro's Medieval Town That's A Cat Lover's Dream

Enter Montenegro's medieval old town of Kotor, wedged between craggy mountains in the corner of a breathtaking, secluded bay off the Adriatic Sea, and it's not the centuries-old stone walls you'll notice first. Nor is it the handsome 1602 baroque-style clock tower or the Venetian, cafe-strewn main square. It won't be San Giovanni castle spied far in the distance or even the rugged limestone cliffs of Mount Lovcen that hover above.



No, the first thing you'll notice in Kotor are all the cats. Hundreds to be a little more precise. Weave between the old town's medieval maze of museums, shops, bars and restaurants and a bowl of biscuits can be found on many street corners, often accompanied by a posse of well-fed felines. That's because here in Kotor – one of Montenegro's most popular and picturesque destinations – cats bring you luck. Or so says Oxana Troshina, Kotor resident and owner of Cats of Kotor, the first cat-themed souvenir shop to open its doors in the old town back in 2012.

More than 10 years later and many more cat-devoted shops have followed suit, with the addition of a dedicated cat museum, which says they feed the feline population with some of their profits. This is one of the many ways cats get their food and board in Kotor, with a network of residents sharing the responsibility – particularly in the colder winter months when the cats are invited inside homes, says Oxana. 'Cats are a sign of good luck,' she adds. 'Many old people in Kotor will tell you they have always loved cats. Even many years ago, maybe the middle of the 20th century, all their doors would have cat flaps especially for the cats so these guests can always come in the house.'

Theories for how this obsession developed are up for discussion. After surviving wars, sieges and earthquakes – including one that devastated Kotor 44 years ago this April – some believe cats have helped to save the town over the years. Others say the lucky charms were brought to Kotor by sailors, who docked their feline-filled ships in the Bay of Kotor during a revolt by the Austro-Hungarian navy in 1918 known as the 'Cattaro mutiny' – coincidentally (or maybe not) Kotor was historically known as the Italian 'Cattaro', from when the city was once under Venetian rule. 'Kotor was built by the Venetian Republic and the symbol of the Venetian Republic is a lion, so they have always been respected,' Oxana adds, referring to the patron of Venice, the Lion of Saint Mark.



Charity Kotor Kitties also helps to feed and medicate stray cats. Set up by visiting tourists in 2018, the group launched a spaying and neutering programme in an attempt to cut back on the overpopulation of street cats in the area. In 2022, they registered as a Montenegrin charity and since founding have raised funds to neuter 8,862 cats (as of April 2023). 'It is essential to keep the population of the street cats at a level where they can live in good health with enough food and medical resources to survive,' a Kotor Kitties spokesperson says. 'A cat population which is unchecked is more susceptible to disease and food resources can be scarce.'

Those eager to explore everything else Kotor has to offer won't be disappointed, either. The old town is entered through a magnificent, pink-tinged stone sea gate, which forms part of the wider Venetian fortification that dates back to the 12th century. This includes San Giovanni castle, which is perched 280m above sea level at the top of a mountain, overlooking the old town. Hike up for views of Kotor's royal blue and turquoise bay. [www.independent.co.uk](http://www.independent.co.uk), R. Wilson, April 2023

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## A Cat & Rabbit Team-Up to Co-parent Their Litters

A cat and a rabbit have teamed up as parents of both their litters after they gave birth days apart and they even feed each other's babies. The bunny known as Amy became an inter-species nanny more than two weeks ago, after Chrissy the cat moved her kittens into the rabbit hutch.



Destiny Hampton had set up a hutch for Amy and her brood, but after checking in one day, discovered Chrissy snuggling up with her own newborns. The discovery came as a big surprise because Hampton didn't even know the feline was pregnant. The photo on the left shows the moment Hampton walked in on the unlikely natal scene. 'I was a little worried at first that they might fight, or hurt each other,' said the 47-year-old woman.

The wildlife rescuer and owner of Roberson Creek Farm in Tobaccoville, North Carolina, attempted to separate the pair out of concern for the babies. But that turned out to be a mistake. Both mothers immediately stopped feeding their young as a result of the stress. The animals were not only getting along well, they were co-parenting their young. Chrissy was feeding the baby rabbits. Amy is only feeding her young once a day, so Chrissy is often picking up the slack.

'They get along great,' exclaimed Hampton on social media. 'They all want to be together, the babies and the mothers. It's so weird, because cats move their babies a lot but Chrissy...doesn't. I think maybe she knew that the rabbit mom wasn't making enough milk and wanted to help her.'

The main reason Hampton was shocked is because Chrissy 'isn't the nicest cat. Chrissy is feral. She won't let me touch her, but she loves Amy apparently. The babies are all doing great, and cuddle all the time.' [www.goodnewsnetwork.org](http://www.goodnewsnetwork.org), Screenshots from video by Destiny Hampton – SWNS





## Health -

### New Pill Treats Diabetic Cats Without Daily Insulin Shots

When Mark Winternheimer's 12-year-old tabby cat was diagnosed with diabetes last year, the treatment was daunting: twice-daily injections of insulin, an implanted monitor and frequent visits to the vet. Despite their qualms, Winternheimer and his wife, Courtnee, of New Albany, Indiana, learned to give Oliver his shots. 'For us, they're part of the family,' Winternheimer said of Oliver and their two other cats, Ella and Theo. 'You wouldn't deny another family member care if it's available.'



Now, a new, once-daily pill promises to make treating feline diabetes easier in newly diagnosed animals, without the shots. 'A pill is a huge step forward from a needle,' said Dr. Audrey Cook, a cat veterinarian at Texas A&M University. One caveat: The pill called Bexacat can't be used in cats like Oliver, who had previously received insulin.

The biggest benefit may be the ease of use, experts said. While many cat owners successfully treat their cats with twice-daily insulin, often for years, others struggle. Research shows that owners put down 1 in 10 cats with a new diabetes diagnosis. Another 10% are euthanized within a year, in part because of the difficulties of treatment. 'Some people are afraid of giving insulin injections. Some people don't have the time to dedicate to the care of their cats,' said Dr. Catharine Scott-Moncrieff, a Purdue University veterinarian who consulted with the makers of Bexacat on the product testing.

Made by Elanco Animal Health Inc., Bexacat was approved by the Food and Drug Administration in December and is expected to be available in the U.S. in the next several weeks. It's the first drug of its type approved for animals; similar drugs have been approved for people for about a decade.

Diabetes, whether in people or pets, is caused when too much glucose, or sugar, builds up in the bloodstream because the pancreas doesn't produce enough insulin, a hormone, or use it properly. Bexacat lowers blood sugar by causing it to be excreted in urine. Symptoms of feline diabetes include increased thirst and urination, increased appetite and weight loss.

'About a quarter of U.S. households include one or more cats, totalling more than 58 million felines. Between 1 in 100 and 1 in 500 cats in the U.S. are diagnosed with diabetes, which is rising as obesity rates in the species approach 50%', said Dr. Bruce Kornreich, director of the Cornell Feline Health Center at Cornell University. 'In studies involving more than 300 diabetic cats, Bexacat improved glucose control and decreased at least one symptom of diabetes in more than 80% of newly diagnosed, healthy animals, company documents show. But several cats in the studies also died or had to be euthanized after taking the drug, prompting a so-called black box warning about possible side effects, including diabetic ketoacidosis, a life-threatening complication. Because of those concerns, the drug can't be used in cats previously treated with insulin and animals must be carefully screened for liver, kidney and pancreatic disease and to ensure that they're otherwise healthy', said Scott-Moncrieff. 'It will be life-changing for some cats and some owners, but it's not for every cat.'

'The list price for the drug is about \$53 a month, according to Elanco. Most vets will double or triple the cost of the drug, charging pet owners about \$100 to \$150 a month', said Cook. 'Depending on the source, that may be higher than the costs for insulin and the syringes or pens to give it', she said. 'Cats taking insulin need to be monitored frequently, but cats taking Bexacat will need to be watched, too. I think costs will be broadly similar, but there are a lot of variables here,' Cook said.

In Oliver's case, the cat tolerated the injections and a glucose monitor that had to be inserted underneath his skin, Winternheimer said. His owners did OK, too, but they were relieved when Oliver's diabetes went into remission last fall. 'No question, the idea of giving Oliver a pill instead would have been appealing' Winternheimer said. 'I would have definitely preferred that if it were available.'

[www.apnews.com](http://www.apnews.com), Jonel Aleccia, January 2023

*Editors note:* Our Burmese girl Burbonne, pictured above, was a diabetic for 8 years of her 19 years of life. She had insulin injections twice a day for the 8 years except for a short time when she went into remission called the 'honeymoon' period. There was daily monitoring and recording of injection amounts, times and with water intact. A few 12 hour glucose curves were also done. Through all her care and many trips/tests to the vets she tolerated it very well. However, pills disguised as treats were never tolerated. While the pill treat is a great addition to diabetic care in cats, I wouldn't want to imagine the problems we would have had compared to the injections. G.H.

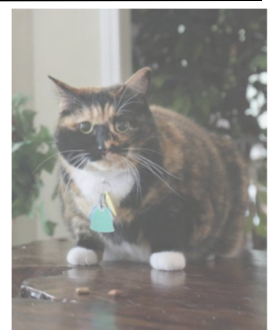
### 'Guard Cat' Credited With Preventing Would-be Robbery

Belden, Mississippi (AP) A Mississippi man said his pet cat helped prevent a robbery at his home, and he credits the calico with possibly saving his life. Bandit, a 20-pound (9.1-kilogram) cat, lives with her retired owner Fred Everitt in the Tupelo suburb of Belden. When at least two people tried to break into their shared home last week, the cat did everything she could to alert Everitt of the danger, he told the Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal. 'You hear of guard dogs,' said Everitt, 68. 'This is a guard cat.'

The attempted robbery occurred sometime between 2:30 and 3 a.m. on July 25, Everitt said. He was first awoken by Bandit's meows in the kitchen. Then, she raced into the bedroom, jumped onto the bed and began pulling the comforter off of him and clawing at his arms. Everitt knew something was wrong. 'She had never done that before,' Everitt said. 'I went, 'What in the world is wrong with you?''

Everitt got up to investigate and saw two young men outside his back door. One had a handgun, and the other was using a crowbar to try and pry the door open, he said. Everitt said by the time he retrieved a handgun and returned to the kitchen, the would-be intruders had already fled. Everitt told the newspaper that he did not call the police. He said the situation could have been different without Bandit. 'It did not turn into a confrontational situation, thank goodness,' Everitt said. 'But I think it's only because of the cat.' Everitt adopted Bandit from the Tupelo-Lee Humane Society four years ago.

<https://apnews.com>, Taboola, August 2022, Photo: AP







## KIT'S KORNER

### Word Search

Find the hidden words below

J	A	L	I	A	T	Q	L	K	F	F	Y	F	W
O	J	C	B	I	R	D	U	Q	P	S	C	U	B
F	O	W	S	W	A	L	C	A	N	W	B	V	F
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J	S	L	I	W	I	W	G	R	C	A	T	I	A
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**FELINE, MEOW, PURR, WATER, FOOD, KITTEN, CAT, SNUGGLE, LOVE, SLEEP,  
CLIMB, LEAP, MOUSE, BIRD, TOYS, SCRATCH, CLAWS, TAIL, WHISKERS**

## 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 ^..^

### Hero Cat Saves Owner Was Having A Heart Attack By Pounding It's Paws On Her Chest

A hero cat saved his owner's life by pounding his paws on her chest to wake her up after she suffered a heart attack. Sam Felstead was asleep when she was woken by her seven-year-old cat Billy at 4.30am. She realized she was unable to move her body and had a shooting pain down her right side so called out to her mom Karen for help.

Karen then rushed the 42-year-old to hospital where doctors told her she had suffered a heart attack in her sleep - and she believes Billy's swift actions saved her life. 'I was a bit shocked, I went to bed and I felt fine. I'd even been out with the dogs - and I didn't feel ill or have any pains whatsoever. Suddenly I woke up and Billy was on my chest and was meowing loudly in my ear hole. He was really meowing and he wouldn't leave me. He doesn't do that normally. He's never woken me up before. He's not a lap cat... and he's certainly not a cat that wants to be on your knee all the time. He likes to be alone. Her mother, who is Billy's favorite human, was quite surprised, too. 'I'm just glad he woke me up. Who knows...it could've been worse for me.'



Doctors found one of her arteries was blocked and used a balloon to open it back up again. Sam spent three days in hospital before being discharged and was reunited with her beloved Billy. 'I'm grateful for him as my alarm was set for another two hours so who knows if I would have woken up. The doctors said it was a good job I got to hospital in time. I do think he saved my life and so does everybody else around me.'

One cat behavior expert said Billy may have picked up on physiological changes in Sam. 'I do believe he probably did save her life, because that's what enabled her to get medical help.' [www.goodnewsnetwork.org](http://www.goodnewsnetwork.org), Photo: Sam Felstead with Billy/SWNS



#### Purr-dah:

### German Town Bans Cats From Going Outdoors To Protect Rare Bird

Authorities in the southwest German town of Walldorf have ordered some cat owners to keep their pets indoors until the end of August, to protect a rare bird during its breeding season. The decree is designed to help save the crested lark, which makes its nest on the ground and is therefore easy prey for feline hunters. The bird population in western Europe has declined sharply in recent decades. Authorities in Walldorf wrote that 'among other things, the survival of the species depends on every single chick'.

A songbird, the crested lark is found across Europe, including in Britain. Numbers have been declining across the continent in recent years. Some 15,000 people live in Walldorf, eight miles southwest of the city of Heidelberg. The decree, which applies to all cats in the southern part of the town and will be repeated for the coming three years, has reportedly distressed pet owners.

Regional daily Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung reported on Wednesday that the head of the local animal protection association plans to take legal steps to challenge the decree. 'Please remain calm,' it quoted him as saying. 'I can assure you we'll do our best to stop this disproportionate measure.' [www.independent.co.uk](http://www.independent.co.uk), May 2022 Photo: Wikipedia

### Rules For Cats - Another Cat??

No way! Establish your territory early. Make that intruder respect you. He'll give you lots of room and walk around you. When you know he wants to eat, go over and pick on the food so he has to wait. If you like his food, steal it. Deny him all privileges. Be sure to carry on if they give him any attention. [Cats.alpha.pl](http://Cats.alpha.pl)



### Cats Put Their Best Foot Forward

Some cats can have a dominant front paw, there have been a few studies to show that females favour their right paw, and males tend their left. [www.purina.co.uk](http://www.purina.co.uk)

Pictured is Arthur, the cat from the Kattomeat, advertisements who ate left handed.  
Image: mirroepix

#### Quiz Answers: page 7

- 1 Lion
- 2 Yellow with black markings
- 3 Manx
- 4 Tiger
- 5 Retract it's claws
- 6 Tiger
- 7 Officer Dibble
- 8 Cheshire Cat

### You Know You Are a Cat Person When....

- The highlight of your European vacation was meeting cats in every museum and monument. Your travel pictures feature you holding a cat in front of each historic site.
- Ninety-nine percent of the photos you put in scrapbooks are of your cats.
- Your cat get's her way... all the time.

