

FELINE DEFENDERS

of the
National Cat Protection Society



FALL 2010

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The National Cat Protection Society is a shelter whose primary mission is dedicated to the protection and welfare of cats.



EDUCATION

Providing humane education to dispel myths of the black cat...

Believe it or not, some people avoid adopting black cats. Why? "Superstition about the bad luck of having a black cat...contributes to the problem," Sherri Skidmore, the owner and founder of a Utah-based animal-rescue project, tells ABC News.



The Source of the Superstition

Where does the superstition come from? In the 15th century, Europeans believed black cats were animal spirits that served witches. In 16th-century Italy, people thought a black cat at the ill's bedside signified death was coming. You've also no doubt heard that a black cat crossing your path means bad luck, which is a superstition that likely evolved in America soon after the pilgrims arrived from the association with witches.

The Superstition's Other Side

A black cat has historically meant good luck too! Ancient Egyptians had black cats believing that the Egyptian goddess Bast of the 22nd Dynasty would join their cat's spirit to bring riches and prosperity. King Charles I thought his black cat bore such great fortune that he had it guarded around-the-clock. He may have been correct considering he was arrested by Oliver Cromwell's parliamentary troops for treason the day after his cat passed away! Also, fishermen's wives often had a black cat to ensure their husband's safe return from sea.

Today, a black cat symbolizes only good luck to the people of Japan, Scotland, and the United Kingdom. In fact, one brings the Scottish riches and prosperity if sitting on a porch and young British women many suitors.

All Superstition Aside

Whatever the origin, it certainly doesn't make the superstition fact! Regardless of any connection to good or bad luck, black cats are like all other kitties ready to add much love and character to your home.

Please note NATCAT doesn't allow black cats to be adopted in October due to the tragic possibility of abuse on Halloween resulting from the bad luck superstition. As for the rest of the year, our black kitties are more than ready to find warm hearts in healthy homes they can call their very own.

Based on information from:

Friedman, Emily. *Prospective Pet Adopters Overlook Black Dogs and Cats, Shelters Say*. (2009). ABC News.

Black Cat Myths. (2010). Discovery Communications.

Syufy, Franny. *Cats Folklore - Witches - Beliefs About Black Cats*. (2010). About.com.

Singer, Jo. *Black Cat Myths*. (2009). Petside.com.

EVENTS

Keeping you informed of community events...

Newport Beach Events

September 25, 2010, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Pet Trek and Fitness Challenge
at Woodbridge Community Park, Irvine
(benefiting the Irvine Animal Care Center)
(949) 724-7740

October 3, 2010, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Walk for the Animals
at Huntington Central Park, Huntington Beach
(benefiting the Orange County SPCA)
(714) 374-7738

May 15, 2010, 1 to 4:30 p.m.

National Cat Protection Society Open House and Fundraiser
at the Newport Beach shelter
RSVP (949) 650-1232

Spring Valley Events

October 1, 2010, Varying times

Fall Harvest Tours (for children)
at Helen Woodward Animal Center, Rancho Santa Fe
6461 El Apajo Rd.
(858) 756-4117

October 31, 2010, 8 to 11:30 a.m.

Pet First Aid
at the American Red Cross, San Diego
3950 Calle Fortunada
(858) 309-1200

June 5, 2010, 1 to 4:30 p.m.

National Cat Protection Society Open House and Fundraiser
at the Spring Valley shelter
RSVP (619) 469-8771

**For updated event information, don't forget to check out the next issue!
If you'd like to receive the latest news and announcements from NATCAT,
please send your e-mail address to newport@natcat.org.**

NATIONAL CAT PROTECTION SOCIETY, INC. www.natcat.org

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POEM PLACE, FREDDIE AT THE WINDOW



Freddie takes the window seat in every single room.

In the breakfast nook he watches as the garden flowers bloom.

In the kitchen he can see the birds that fly to tree and back, He makes those funny kitty sounds as though he will attack.

The family room's a special place where he can view the wall,

beyond which our neighbors live who don't know Fred at all. But the office is his favorite perch where I typewrite all my poems. For there Fred looks across the yard, to a street he'll never roam.

He watches kids play with a ball or other cats like him. He even sees opossums who come out when it is dim.

Occasionally a big raccoon will in the window peek, looking for a playmate or a red goldfish to eat.

Freddie simply watches all like a big-screen TV. For he would rather look outside and stay inside with me.

By Rebecca Strecker, Westminster

CAT CABLE *(Continued from page 10)*

practiced. "Most cats need to be held firmly but gently to make sure that no one gets hurt," notes the HSUS

2. If desired, find an assistant to scratch or feed a treat to your kitty while you clip
3. Press her paw the same way you practiced, and only trim the tip of one nail per sitting at first. Let it go, and give her a treat

Important note: Completely avoid the quick, which is the pink area that holds the nerves and blood vessels

4. Gradually work your way up to multiple claws per sitting. Ultimately, you want to trim her claws every 10 days to two weeks. Just the front claws should suffice, unless you see reason to trim the back ones too. Again, always reward her afterward with a treat

Definitely DON'T:

- Scold her in any way for resisting

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FEATURED FRIEND, IRIS



A 1½-year-old calico, Iris arrived at NATCAT in February of this year with her very own family! She'd given birth to a precious litter of seven kittens two weeks before we picked all of them up from Kitten Rescue, a cat adoption organization in Los Angeles. They were overwhelmed with kittens at the time and sadly, couldn't take the kitty clan in.

Luckily, we were able to – and proudly watched Iris affectionately raise her babies while developing from a scared, protective mother to a comfortable, extremely sweet cat.

Iris now adores attention and to be petted. She's looking for a loving home and by the way, so is the only kitten in her litter that hasn't yet been adopted, Sunny.



- Pursue trimming if either of you are irritable or in a rush
- Declaw. This cruel surgical procedure severs the first joint of each toe bone, producing pain that can last for weeks or months. In effect, your cat will become practically defenseless and may avoid litter, often compensate by biting, lose the ability to stretch and tone muscle, and develop arthritis

Based on information from:

Trimming a Cat's Claws. (2009). The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS).
Nail Trimming 101. (2010). The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA).

Korich, Jodi, DVM, Richards, James, DVM. *Trimming Your Cat's Claws.* (2010). Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine.

Syufy, Franny. *Top Reasons Not to Declaw a Cat.* (2010). About.com.

Visit Cat Cable in Feline Defenders every issue to read the latest in cat care. If there's any specific information you'd like to see in Feline Field or Cat Cable, please notify the Newport Beach shelter.

CAT CLUE

Did you know that the American Shorthair cat breed originated in 10th-century Rome? Its ancestor was the European Shorthair, which was brought to the British Isles from Rome and renamed the British Shorthair. *For more on the American Shorthair cat, check out our special cat breed series on page 8.*

SPRING VALLEY

42ND OPEN HOUSE AND FUNDRAISER

SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHTS

We're always excited to see our supporters at our annual Open House and Fundraiser. At the event on Sunday, June 13th this year, we checked in with a few of our special guests:



Adrienne and Jim Compton



Adrienne Compton and her son, Jim, have been coming to NATCAT for 35 years since learning about us from a friend.

Adrienne remembers when the shelter had just a shed, screened porch, baskets, and quilts! When asked her thoughts on all of the changes that have taken place over the years, she replied, "Unbelievable." She visits

us at least once annually yet supports us all year long – for both, we're deeply grateful.

Jim also loves cats, owning at least one descendant of a stray-cat family since 1959! Even his cat now, Josephine, hails from the original litter. "We like to give all of our cats human names," he said, implying his respect for pets. Helping kitties in general, he recalls bringing a couple of litters to NATCAT. While at the shelter, Jim particularly enjoys spending time with the kittens.

Betty Parmaksizoglu



Betty Parmaksizoglu learned about NATCAT from a friend in the Lions Club who had brought a cat into our shelter. That was about 25 years ago, and she has been compassionately supporting our organization ever since. Betty lives with her husband, Ali, who has volunteered at NATCAT, and their 10-year-old cat, Imzadi – Immy for short.

Sadly, they lost a kitty two years ago, but she impressively lived 16 years! And previously, would you believe that they had 15 cats? Ali thoughtfully built a house for them in their backyard, with a screened porch, shelves to sit on, a heater, and a fan. With such a sweet setup, it's no wonder they

all lived nine to 16 years!

When asked her favorite part of NATCAT, Betty kindly replied, "Everything." In particular, she appreciates "the volunteers who give their time to take care of the cats, the fact that no cat is put to sleep, and that it's a beautiful place with beautiful, caring people." Betty, you make us blush – thank you for all you do for us and in general for kitties!

The Miss and Miss Teen Vista Court



NATCAT was in the presence of royalty with the Miss and Miss Teen Vista court! Serving as hostesses at a few events a month around San Diego, Queen Tess Jerome and Princesses Denisha Gilbert, Lesley Girkins, Samantha Berghaus, Beatriz Rodriguez, and Vanessa Okafor brightened our day with crown jewels and humanitarian hearts.

All from Vista, the young women earned their yearlong reign primarily based on their interview skills, receiving prizes, gifts, and college scholarships. Tess is at Palomar College, Denisha is at Fashion Careers College, Lesley will attend UCLA, Samantha is a Vista High School junior, Beatriz is at the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising, and Vanessa is a Rancho Buena Vista High School senior. They're animal advocates as well; Tess has two cat brothers that entertainingly fetch – a 25-pound black cat, Buttons, and Rusty – five dogs, a horse, two birds, and two rats. Denisha has a four-year-old orange tabby male that shares her birthday, Simba.

CAT TIP

Cats scratch to sharpen their claws, ridding the dead outer layer. However, certain cats can't properly scratch, causing this layer to overgrow. Trimming prevents claws from either becoming lethal weapons or overgrowing. *For more on keeping claws trim, check out page 10.*

FELINE FIELD

Helping you get to know more about your cat...

Cat Breed Series: The American Shorthair



In our ongoing series on cat breeds, you've learned about the Siamese and Abyssinian. This issue, we'll help you get to know more about your American Shorthair – America's very own cat breed.

Born from the British Shorthair brought to the New World by early settlers on ships including the Mayflower, the American Shorthair soon thereafter grew to be a bigger, heftier breed. Why was the breed brought over in the first place? It had proven to effectively hunt rodents, so the settlers knew the cats would catch the rats on the ships. The breed was also very valuable to miners during the Gold Rush.

The modern American Shorthair has short, pointed ears, a broad, round head, and of course, short hair, which is easy to comb. This hair can be a variety of colors – in fact, there are more than 80 varieties and color patterns including calico, solid, tabby, and tortoiseshell. One of the healthiest breeds, the American Shorthair typically lives 15 to 20 years. Usually, males weigh 11 to 15 pounds and females weigh eight to 12 pounds.

Behaviorally, the breed is laid back yet social, affectionate, and self-sufficiently playful. These characteristics qualify the American Shorthair as an ideal addition to other cats and the entire family – even if your family is a busy one.

Based on information from:
Popular Cat Breeds. (2009). Discovery Communications.
Zenda, Bob. *Breed Profile: American Shorthair*. (2010). The Cat Fanciers' Association.

Knowing increasingly more about felines can help you understand your own cat's behavior and desires. Visit Feline Field in Feline Defenders every issue to obtain such knowledge, which can only nurture a happier and healthier relationship with your faithful friend.



Interested in adopting an American Shorthair cat? Like National Cat Protection Society – Spring Valley and National Cat Protection Society – Newport Beach to see some of our adoptable cats and kittens!



NATCAT NEEDS YOUR HELP!

Each year, NATCAT finds loving, responsible homes for hundreds of unwanted cats and kittens. Donations and memberships help us supply food, shelter, and medical care while they await adoption. Please help us continue to provide this vital service.

Join NATCAT by becoming a member!

- \$10 YEARLY \$1000 LIFE MEMBER
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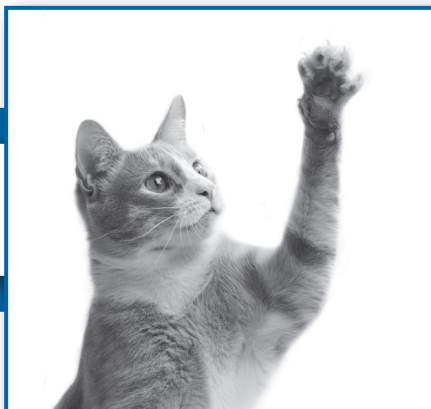
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- www.natcat.org (to PayPal)
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Please mail form and check (if any) to:

NATCAT - PO BOX 6218 - Long Beach, CA 90806

CAT CABLE



Supplying the latest information in cat care...

Claw Trimming

Trimming your cat's claws prevents them from overgrowing into the paw and causing pain and infection. It also rids the sharp ends that result from scratching, saving your valuable furniture! Nervous? Don't bite your own nails at the thought – just follow these steps to first, prepare your cat for the event and then, to comfortably trim.

Prepare Your Cat for Trimming

Every other day:

1. When your kitty is feeling calm – perhaps after dinnertime, sit on a chair with her in your lap facing outward in an area free of noise and distraction. "Try resting the cat in the crook of one arm while holding one paw with the other hand," recommends the HSUS
2. Gently massage her paw with your thumb on her pad and forefinger on top for up to three seconds, flexibly following any movements while maintaining contact
3. Extend a different claw each day by lightly pressing on its closest joint with your forefinger and the corresponding digital pad with your thumb. Let it go, and give her a treat
4. When you can smoothly extend a claw, the ASPCA suggests familiarizing her with your clippers – "When the nail extends, clip [uncooked] spaghetti with the clippers while still holding your cat's paw gently"

Trim Away

When you and your cat feel prepared:

1. Sit with your cat in the same position and in the same place you

Continued on page 4



Where There's a Will, There's a Way

Protect the Ones You Love

Give the gift of quality life after you're gone by including the National Cat Protection Society in your will.

Our humane education programs teach animal population control and responsible cat care to children and adults. These programs aim to reduce the number of unwanted cats and enhance animal welfare for years to come.

Your bequeathed donation can support these efforts by helping us promote the humane treatment of all animals and adoption of the homeless cats continually entering our shelters.

**Please write today for our free brochure:
"Planning for Your Charitable Donations"**

c/o National Cat Protection Society
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