

CATFLAP

Scottish Charity No.: SC026114

NEWSLETTER

Mar/Apr
2008

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Saturday 26th April - Annual Vet School Rodeo

Once again, CATFLAP will be attending this event, with tombola, new goods, etc. Always a very popular event and a lovely day out - especially if the weather is good!

Sunday 18th May – CATFLAP Bazaar & AGM

Pollokshields Burgh Hall, Maxwell Park, Glasgow from 11.30am to ca. 4.30pm.

Any member wishing to introduce an item for discussion/voting at the AGM should submit it in writing to the Charity Secretary as soon as possible, to allow for inclusion in the next edition of the Newsletter.

Saturday 14th June - Bearsden & Milngavie Highland Games

West of Scotland Rugby Ground

CATFLAP have again been invited to attend this annual event, and we will have a stall decked out with tombola, craft goods, home-made preserves etc. Opening times have still to be confirmed, but organisers usually like stallholders to be on site by 9am. We are also looking for helpers for this event - especially those with transport, and any donations of new goods which can be used for the tombola. If you can help in either or both of these areas, please contact Janice (details on back page).

Saturday 14th June - Rouken Glen Park Gala

A new venue for CATFLAP, with details still to be confirmed. As above, new goods for tombola, hand-crafted items, and helpers with transport all gratefully received! Please contact Annie or Sheila if you are able to help with these.

With Sympathy...

CATFLAP would like to send our sympathy to Cathy Watterson on the death of her beloved mother. Cathy has cared for her mother for many years with great devotion.

Sheila

We also wish to send commiserations to Donna Taggart & partner William on the sudden and unexpected loss of their wee furry boy Gizmo, due to massive a blot clot.

Annie

DEADLINE FOR NEXT EDITION OF THE NEWSLETTER:

FRIDAY 18TH APRIL

Apologies for the extreme lateness of this edition, but I've been laid low with a virus and chest infection for about 5 weeks, and wasn't able to pull it together before now. Mea culpa!

Annie

HOMING FIGURES TO END FEBRUARY 2008

Adults	44	Kittens	2
Lost & Found	3	Non-CATFLAP cats helped	4

Total number of cats/kittens homed since the start of CATFLAP 2,967

Cat Food Queries..



What's the best way to wean my kitten?

Kittens can usually be started on the weaning process at three weeks of age and should be fully weaned by 6-8 weeks of age. Canned food can be mashed up and mixed with water to form a gruel. The gruel can then be smeared around the kitten's lips to encourage the food to be licked off. Some kittens will take the food as a mash but make sure there are no big chunks. Dry food can also be soaked and used to make a gruel. Feed little and often and as the kittens get older add less water to the mixture. Many kittens will eat dry food without it being soaked by 10-12 weeks of age while most will manage a canned kitten food at 6-8 weeks.

My cat is very fussy. What's the best thing to feed it

Every cat is an individual and like people can have taste preferences. Cat foods are available in many different forms such as chunks in jelly, chunks in gravy or a meatloaf type. If your cat is very fussy warming the food slightly will help to release the natural aromas. Hand feeding can also be very useful to tempt a cat that is convalescing after an illness. One trick is to try offering a "platter" with a little of each different types of food on it and watch for the one your cat shows a preference for. Don't forget that some cats prefer crunching on a dry food.

How much food should I feed my cat?

Every cat is an individual. Like people, some pets put on weight more easily than others and need less food to keep them slim and fit, while others need extra to keep them at their ideal body weight. Feeding guides are as accurate as possible, but some pets may need less or more than this "ideal".

Assess your cat's body condition by trying to feel it's ribs - you should just be able to feel them under a firm covering of flesh. There should be a waist between the ribs and hips and the tummy should be tucked up. Cats tend to get plump, saggy tums first, and then start to put on weight over the ribs. Feed your pet less or more depending on how your cat measures up to this ideal. Once your cat is at the ideal weight further slight adjustments may be necessary.

Cats in Care - March 2008

Snowy is a young white cat who has FIV (Feline aids) He needs an indoor home with no other cats as his immune system is low and he has to avoid other cats to keep him free of infection. Before he came to CATFLAP, he had had little human contact but now that he has been cherished, he would like a loving home.

Smokey is a 6 year old, light tortoiseshell with a feisty nature, who would like a new loving home. His owner had to move away for work and could not take him.

Bonnie is semi-feral who would need an outdoor home, a farm or an outhouse.

Oscar is a grey tabby kitten, roughly 9months old, who came to us as a stray.

Smokey & Bandit are both light grey and white with tabby markings, about 5-6 years old. They came to us because their owner could no longer care for them, and they would like a loving home together.

Teddy is a 2 year old, very friendly, black and white cat, who came to us as a stray, and would like a loving home with a garden.

Cats mentioned in the last newsletter who have found loving homes are Trixie, Gypsie, Ginger, Toots & Trixi, Lily, and Baz

Anyone interested in homing any of the above should phone Sheila on 0141 423 3246.



HOW DO I GROOM MY CAT?

It is estimated that the average healthy adult cat may spend up to 30% of its time grooming. Yet, being involved in your cats grooming routine is good opportunity for you to spend quality time together bonding with your cat. There are also many other benefits in being a part of this routine.

Grooming not only stimulates the circulation and improves muscle tone, but also minimises hairballs in the stomach by removing loose hairs. This is also an opportunity to spot any problems such as external parasites, lumps, bumps or mats and even hairloss.

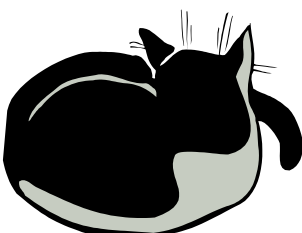
Coat condition is also a good indicator of overall health. Normally your cat's coat should be sleek and glossy. Consequently, if there are any changes in you cats coat, this may be an early sign of health changes and we would advise contacting your veterinary surgery to discuss the situation.

However, many cats may experience difficulties grooming themselves for a variety of reasons. If your cat was not groomed from a young age then she may never have become used to it. It may be a distressing experience for a nervous cat that may be reluctant to be picked up and restrained and may also be painful if the comb or brush catches her skin. If your cat is older he may have problems if his dental health is compromised or he has joint pain. If your cat is obese, he may not be able to reach certain parts to groom and may require your assistance, coupled with a diet plan!



If you are experiencing difficulties, here is some advice to increase your cat's tolerance. You may need to withhold all grooming for a few weeks. Initially we would recommend that you avoid using the traditional combs and brushes as this can cause discomfort and may even make your cat less tolerant of the process. We would recommend the use of a very soft rubber brush, which promotes more of a massage-type of action due to the rubber teeth that are more flexible than ridged comb teeth.

If your cat is happy to come and sit on your lap or near you, you can start to introduce a new routine. Ensure that she is relaxed, talk gently to her and stroke her giving food rewards if necessary. Begin stroking in places that she is very tolerant of being touched. Then, pick up the rubber mitt and brush in these places very gently for a short period of time, giving very small treats. End with a period of stroking again. Do this little and often building up the time you spend using the brush and in different parts of the body. The aim is that your cat will learn to enjoy these positive periods of interaction with you. However, you should always end these periods if your cat shows signs of agitation.



Once your cat is happy to tolerate this you can begin to introduce other brushes, again gently and for short periods of time initially. Allow your cat to get used to the brushes in association with a positive experience. Laying the brushes next to your cats feeding bowl so that she can sniff them and not feel threatened when they are introduced can do this.

Enjoy!

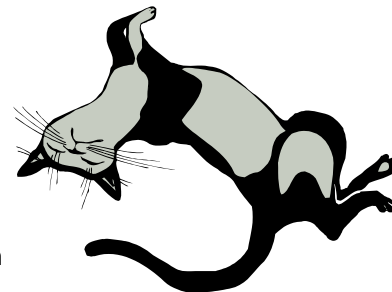
Little Known Feline Ailments

Having conquered cat flu, triumphed over tapeworm and braved behavioural quirks, it is time to focus attention on some oft-observed, but little-documented, afflictions of cats.

COLLAPSIBLE LEGS

Symptoms: The affected cat places one side of its head on the ground as though cheek-marking the concrete, carpet, etc. After several such manoeuvres, the legs on that side of the cat suddenly collapse, leaving the cat wagging its feet in the air.

Treatment: This involves placing the palm of one hand on the exposed belly and rubbing gently. There are side-effects though - some feline sufferers attack the rubbing hand while others recover spontaneously, often after prolonged treatment. This condition is probably incurable and any cat which requires prolonged treatment after an attack will most likely suffer repeated attacks of collapsible legs throughout its lifetime.



SNUDGING

Symptoms: The affected cat repeatedly head-butts any available part of a readily available human and turns its head slightly so that the lips and cheek are rubbed against legs, arms, clothing, etc. This condition gets its name from a contraction of the phrase "soggy nudging." *Snudging* may well be a form of excessive scent-marking. A bad attack can result in soggy clothing.

Treatment: Give the sufferer lavish affection. Most attacks subside between 10 minutes to 1 hour after onset of symptoms. You may need to dry off snudged clothing or skin. Attacks recur frequently, usually when the most readily available human is engrossed in a TV program, book or telephone call.

BED-HOGGING

Symptoms: The cat spreads to take up all available free bed space at night. It then expands a bit more until any human occupants occupy the smallest possible area of bed. It may do this on top or underneath the covers or on the pillow. It is highly contagious -- any other cats on the bed will also develop symptoms of bed-hogging.

Treatment: The most obvious solution is to evict the cat from the bed. If this is morally unfeasible, train yourself not to give way as the cat expands. Buying a bigger bed is probably pointless as most affected cats can easily expand to fill standard, queen-sized and king-sized beds. Otherwise, simply train yourself to sleep while hanging precariously off the side of the bed. Attacks of bed-hogging have been known to last up to 23 hours (in one case a 3-day attack was noted by a cat-owner who was confined to bed with flu; the cat thoughtfully kept her company during this time).

NON SPECIFIC INSECT INFESTATION (also NONSPECIFIC SPIDER INFESTATION)



Symptoms: A disorder more prevalent among outdoor-going cats and cats with access to conservatories and garden rooms. Symptoms range from minor (the odd greenfly in tail, money-spider on fur) to severe (entire ecosystems of insects living on cat, spider webs spun between ears/whiskers, cat so weighed down with spider webs that it has difficulty walking).

Treatment: Minor symptoms can be treated by simply removing the infesting agent (aphid, ladybug, spider, etc.) and combing webs out of fur. If the cat suffers recurrent or severe symptoms an exercise regime is highly recommended since highly mobile cats appear to attract fewer greenfly (research into this factor continues).

IRRITABLE LAP SYNDROME

Symptoms: The cat appears unable to settle comfortably on laps, instead treading, kneading, rearranging itself, fidgeting, vocalizing, getting up and turning around, falling off lap and getting back on again, attacking magazines, needlework, computer keyboard, telephone, etc.

Treatment: Immediate treatment is essential. Drop whatever you are doing (literally if need be) and give 100% attention to the sufferer otherwise symptoms may escalate and become quite distressing to the lap-owner. Only prolonged attention will cure an attack of *Irritable Lap Syndrome*. Like *Collapsible Legs* this syndrome is incurable, although attacks may be effectively treated as and when they occur.

Ctd/

LAP FUNGUS DISORDER

Symptoms: Having taken over a human lap, the cat proceeds to spread in all planes. This may be accompanied by secondary symptoms such as high volume purring, dribbling, kneading and snoring. The condition is highly contagious and several fungoid cats may infest a lap simultaneously.

Treatment: Topical treatment with proprietary anti-fungals is ineffective. Prompt treatment (as per Irritable Lap Syndrome) is required to alleviate the worst symptoms although in a number of cats, such treatment actually exacerbates the condition. This disorder manifests itself periodically through the affected cat's life and there is no long-term cure.

SMURGLING

Symptoms: Varied: sucking at clothing, owner's earlobes/ nose/fingers/skin, drooling, glazed expression. Often accompanied by kneading and high volume purring.

Treatment: Ultimately incurable. It is possible to remove smurglable items from around the cat. The ailment may be transmitted to humans in the form of large laundry bills, misshapen clothing and chapped skin.

GREEBLINGZ

Symptoms: Random dashes through to helter-skelter running through house in pursuit of unseen prey. *Greeblingz* are believed to be non-visible entities, and some authorities have linked them to UFO sightings or feel that they may be diminutive other-dimensional beings. Cats suffering from *greeblingz* typically have wild-eyed expressions. There is a minor danger of *greeblingz* attaching themselves to humans; if a cat tackles such *greeblingz*, injury to humans may result. A very few cats are naturally immune.

Treatment: None known. Anti-epileptics are ineffective as the condition appears unrelated to other forms of seizure. Avoid getting in the way of a cat engaged in *greebling* hunting. Attacks usually subside spontaneously, perhaps as *greeblingz* return to their own dimension. These irritating creatures are not visible to human eyes, but no doubt the superior sight and hearing of cats enables them to see them.



www.moggies.co.uk

A CAUTIONARY "TAIL"...

As some of you know, amongst my cat "collection" I have 2 disabled moggies, Poppy (3-legged) and Honey (brain damaged at birth). I also have a cat-proof garden...or thought I did.....

About 2 months ago a neighbour's cat started dancing on my conservatory roof...then she started finding a way into the garden. Since the cat-proofing is to stop mine getting out, the visiting cat also could not get out. But all seemed well, mine just pretty much ignored her. Then there was the weekend I was ill in bed (chest infection, thanks for asking) and surfaced on the Sunday night to find her in the house! Again, all seemed well, there really didn't seem to be a problem with this. I put her out the front door and thought no more of it.

Two weeks later, I'm grooming Poppy, and find a bit of matted fur near her tail, so I comb it out. Next thing her backside and my hand are covered with the most foul-smelling pus it has been my misfortune to be near. Yes, she'd been bitten, an abscess had formed, and that was it bursting. I cleaned her up and the vet shaved her rear and put her on antibiotics to help it all heal up cleanly. One vet bill!

Three days later, Honey jumps on to me in bed, and turns round to settle down. I spot a bit of matted fur near her tail, give it a wee tug to remove it...yep, you've guessed it...the whole damn thing happened again...another bitten cat, another abscess, another vet bill!



I've put a letter through the marauding cat's owner's door, saying what happened and including the vet bills, but so far not even a phone call. The cat's been back since then and gets booted out pretty fast, I can tell you.

And the moral of the story is....even if there appears to be no problem, never trust a visiting cat!!

Janice



www.catflapcharity.co.uk

For most enquiries from the public the first point of contact should be our **Homing Officer**, Sheila Frater. The telephone number which should be used for these enquiries is:

0141 423 3246

Correspondence should be sent **direct to the relevant person**, where possible.
General correspondence may be sent to :

Sheila Frater, 190 Titwood Road, Glasgow, G41 4DD

For ...	Contact	Telephone / email
...information about homing or welfare matters, or general cat queries	Homing Officer Miss Sheila Frater	0141 423 3246 sheila.frater@tiscali.co.uk
... general information about the Charity, or correspondence for the Trustees	Charity Secretary Mrs Elizabeth Cathcart	High Kilwinnet Strathblane Road Campsie Glen Glasgow G66 7AP 01360 311344
... information about financial matters or to order catflap goods	Treasurer Mr Alan Beveridge	c/o sheila.frater@tiscali.co.uk
... information on membership, the cat sponsorship programme	Membership Secretary Dr Janice Kennedy	8 Beech Avenue, Bearsden E Dunbartonshire G61 3EX 0141 942 4390 catchemist@tiscali.co.uk
...articles etc for the newsletter/website	Newsletter Editor & Webmaster Ms Annie Macfarlane	annie@lassommoir.freeserve.co.uk 0141 423 5541 07710 784528



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