



**TONKINFO
21st Anniversary Souvenir Issue**

**Deadline for Adverts etc:
1st August 2012**

E-mail items to tbc.uk@ntlworld.com

Neither the Editor, Committee nor Club is accountable for opinions expressed by individuals in this or any other issue

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TONKINESE BREED CLUB WEB SITE – www.tonkinese.info

- Kitten List & Stud List
- Downloadable forms and useful documents, Club publications etc.
- Breeders' cats re-homing page
- The rescue & welfare page for lost and found Tonkinese.
- Members 'For Sale' page, for any cat-related items you wish to sell (equipment, furniture, artworks, books, magazines, craftwork, cat houses etc.)
- The Tonkinese BAC page
- Etc. etc.

**If you link to the TBC site please check the address,
 there are several members who still have the wrong address.
 The TBC web site is www.tonkinese.info**

OUR 21ST ANNIVERSARY

In 1990 there were four organisations in the UK registering pedigree cats: the GCCF, the Cat Association (CA), the Independent Feline Alliance (IFA) and TICA. Of these the GCCF was by far the most established and best supported. Today only the GCCF and TICA still exist.

On 12th November 1990 several members of the CA affiliated Tonkinese Breed Association applied to the GCCF for Tonkinese Preliminary recognition; they included Beti Alston (Wilowispa), Helen Barnes (Samkabar), Doreen Bartlett (Yanazen), Diana & Tommy Bishop (Episcopuss), Pauline & Terry Earley (Ishmal), Joanne Elkington (Alaking), Mary Hodgkinson (Grimspound), Tricia Jenkinson (Tajens), Jean Nicol (Nicsmi), Stuart Pallister (Keoni), Jennifer Ponsford (Bonzer), Peggy Spicer (Varclin), Pauline Tarrant (Oakvil), Diana Waters (Rohese) and Pauline & David Wright (Keo).

A move to the GCCF was the only logical way forward for the Tonkinese. With the guidance of Lesley Pring (the GCCF Secretary), Mary Hodgkinson and Diana & Tommy Bishop drafted the initial Tonkinese breed standard, registration policy and breeding policy. The breed standard was based on the American CFA standard but altered to reflect the different shape and colour range of UK Tonks.

On 13th January 1991, the Tonkinese Breed Club was formed and a steering committee selected. The first general meeting was held on April 21st. Alison Ashford (Annelida), a respected judge and long-time breeder of Siamese, became the club's President. Mary Hodgkinson, Brenda Gill and Diana & Tommy Bishop were the elected officers. Not everyone who came from the CA continued to work with the Tonks, but interest in the breed was growing and the club already had forty-six members.

On May 11th, after some revision of the paperwork, the GCCF Executive Committee granted the Tonkinese Preliminary recognition, this was ratified at the June Council meeting and in August the breed number 74 was assigned. Judges of the Burmese and Siamese were invited to join the Tonkinese list. The first Tonkinese to be born and registered solely under the GCCF was Adraysh Petronella Pauline, a chocolate female born on June 3rd 1991. That year 271 Tonkinese were registered with the GCCF; some came across from the CA and were registered with a GCCF administration prefix according to the year of their birth; but the majority were from new litters. From October 1st the Tonkinese were shown in Assessment classes, judged against the breed standard for Merit Certificates.

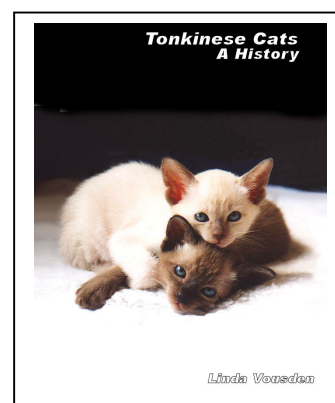
Although there was much prejudice to overcome the Breed Club worked hard to promote the breed and made a jolly good job of it. Later, when the Tonkinese Cat Club was formed the two Clubs were able to work together for the breed – on the Breed Advisory Committee, supporting each other's shows, sharing work at various outside events and of course with the Tonkinese Welfare.

Over the last 21 years we have worked to promote the breed to Championship status and this year we will be holding our 10th Championship show!

We are very grateful to Diana and Tommy Bishop, the late Mary Hodgkinson and all of the early breeders and exhibitors who worked so hard to set the foundation for the Tonkinese Breed Club, and of course the superb Tonkinese breed.

We hope to see as many of you as possible at our 10th Championship show in October, to help us celebrate this special birthday!

If you'd like to know more about the history of the Club and the Tonkinese breed why not get yourself a copy of "*Tonkinese Cats – A History*", available via www.tonkinese.me



AGM NEWS

There was a good turnout for our AGM and we thank all who attended, some had travelled a fair way.

COMMITTEE CHANGES – We sincerely thank Sue Amor, Christine Tamlin & Nicki Stevens for their service to the Club over the past few years. See page 2 for changes in Committee and contact details.

CLUB RULES - The proposed rules changes, issued to all members with their AGM paperwork, were approved and are now available to download from the TBC web site

CLUB CONTRIBUTION TO THE GCCF OFFICE FUND – the percentage sum, agreed upon at the 2011 AGM, has not yet been requested by the GCCF; at the recent AGM it was agreed that the sum should remain as per the Club's available funds for 2011 and not increased for 2012.

THE TBC WELFARE REPORT (Val Chapple) - TBC Welfare has had another successful year rehoming nine cats and receiving some very generous donations from both old and new owners we thank them all with a special thank you to all the new owners without them what would we do. We have two Tonks who will be looking for a new home in the near future. At the moment I am trying to re home two cats for an owner who left them in England and moved to Singapore.

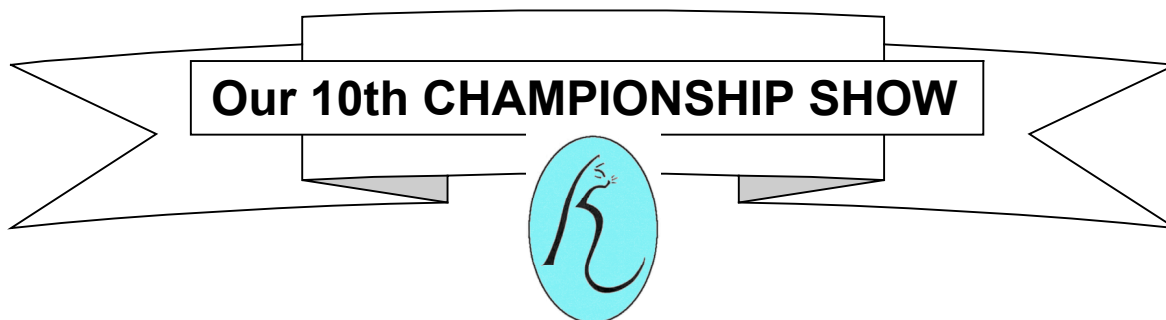
REPORT ON AOV PROGRESS – At the April 3rd Board meeting our application was referred back to us – essentially for two reasons.

1. The descriptors we asked for for our three coat-patterns (solid, mink & pointed) were not acceptable, but the TBAC can work on this.
2. The second issue is entirely in your hands – there are still too many breeders incorrectly registering all of their Tonkinese as minks, we are also aware of back-cross kittens being registered with the GCCF, which is contrary to our registration and breeding policy *. The GCCF need to know that we, as breeders, take our breed seriously.

* Regarding point 2, we believe that the GCCF registrar is still making mistakes when registering our Tonks, but we can do nothing about it unless we have plenty of evidence. I continue to compile a file on this so please send me any information you have (Linda Vousden).

CLUB ANNUAL AWARDS (not to be confused with the Club Show awards) – Congratulations and thank you to all Club members who have shown their Tonks in the past year, keeping them in the public & Cat Fancy eye. The Club has 23 annual awards available, but often unclaimed (visit the Club web site for more information) - the following were awarded at the AGM:

TBC Member	Award (for the most successful of the category)	Tonkinese
A&C Bernard	Lansdale Fable Cup - Blue Grimspound Rose Bowl –Tortie	Amorcatz Jane Eyre GrCh&GrPr Copernicus Cherryblossom
J Bernard	Ekahti Cup – Adult Neuter Melusine Romantica Leonora Memorial – Red A/K/N Tonkaholics Ambassador Award – Most Exhibited	IGrMC Mimaperks Champagne Charlie IGrMC Mimaperks Champagne Charlie Mimaperks Perkins Saturnus
V Chapple	Mymystic Pagan Salver – Tabby Adult Female	GrCh Antikpatina Prunella
H Goodburn	Ekahti Cup – Adult Male	Hylily Priceless Picasso
M Haas	Mymystic Nimrod Salver – Tabby Neuter	GrPr Chintonks Chiku
H Hunter	Ekahti Cup – Kitten Mymystic Goldenshadow Cup - Brown	Tallica Mickey Blueeyes Ch Tallica Knightandday
C & V Macey	Ishokats Vase – Chocolate series Tonkaholics Beau Regarde Award – Caramel and Apricot series Wilkinson Award – Member who has shown the most Tonks during the year	Fecheldee Tandl GrCh Fecheldee Daisie May C & V Macey
R Millward	Ekahti Cup – Adult Female Tarjjika Award – Lilac Ishmal Chloe Memorial – Brown, Blue Chocolate and Lilac	GrCh Yokota Lucie Lockett GrCh Yokota Lucie Lockett GrCh Yokota Lucie Lockett



27th October 2012

Closing Date for Entries – to be advised

Show Manager: Mrs Kathy Wilkinson

5 Beltana Drive, Gravesend, Kent DA12 4BT Tel: 01474 352 711

The Theme

OUR 21ST ANNIVERSARY

~ pedigree classes, household pet classes and cats on exhibition ~
Exhibition Pens all have free entry into the Best Dressed Anniversary Pen competition ☺

Join us - we aim to make this a party for all!

NEW VENUE - Unfortunately neither of the Clubs with whom we usually share the hall at Bracknell is running a show this year. So we've had to find an affordable venue – and fast. Kathy has done us proud and found an excellent community centre with ideal facilities just 20 minutes from our usual Bracknell venue. **The New Haw Community Centre, New Haw near Addlestone, Surrey KT15 3ND**

Schedules & Entry Forms will be available in August - they will be e-mailed to all TBC Members who have provided a current e-mail address. They will also be available to print from the TBC web site's show page. For a hard copy send an A5 SAE to the Show Manager, with correct postage please.

Volunteers Needed For:

- Help on the Show Manager's table – *no helpers = late results, place cards and rosettes!*
- Help set up on the day before the show - usually any time between 3pm and 6pm.
- Help on the Club, Tombola and Cup Tables.
- Help sell tickets & catalogues on the door



THE TONKINESE CAFÉ – Staff wanted

We have the place to ourselves and can really make this a proper celebration for our special year. As we are in a village hall instead of a sports centre we have to do our own catering but the facilities are great - no kettle boiling or washing up etc. and the food and drinks will be available.

However - all members of the Committee already have jobs to do on the day so we need volunteers to sell drinks and food in the **Tonkinese Café**, even just for an hour.

For more information keep an eye on the Show Page on the TBC web site

'BRISTOL CATS' STUDY NEEDS MORE KITTEN INFORMATION – CAN YOU HELP?

Press release issued 9 May 2012

Over 1,000 kitten owners across the UK are helping with the 'Bristol Cats' study, but even more kittens are needed to take part in the first study of its kind to investigate cat health, welfare and behaviour.

The 'Bristol Cats' study, run by the University of Bristol in association with Langford

Veterinary School, was launched in Bristol in June 2010. Due to its success the study was extended to include all kitten owners in the UK and the study has recently received funding to continue for another year. The

researchers wish to recruit a further 1,000 kitten owners across the UK who own a kitten aged between eight and 16 weeks by the end of December 2012.

'Bristol Cats' is led by academics at the University's School of Veterinary Sciences and is being carried out because little is known about the causes of common behaviour patterns and diseases of cats, such as, obesity, diet, lifestyle, aggression towards people, spraying and lower urinary tract problems.

Dr Jane Murray, Lecturer in Feline Epidemiology, said: "We are delighted with the number of people who have registered their kitten with the 'Bristol Cats' study but we need more kittens to take part. By taking part in the study participants will be part of a project that will make a difference to the lives of cats in the future.

"If you are interested in helping with the study, please call the 'Bristol Cats' team on 07827 981412 or email cat-study@bristol.ac.uk."

The results of the study will be used to help improve the health and welfare of cats in the future, in the same way that the University's Children of the 90's study, a long-term health research project that has followed the health and development of 14,000 children since 1991, has helped in the knowledge of childhood diseases.

Kitten owners, who are over 18 years of age, complete four online or postal questionnaires, initially when their kittens are approximately eight to 16 weeks, then again at six, 12, and 18 months of age. These questionnaires provide the researchers with very valuable data. The researchers can analyse these data to see to what extent certain characteristics or conditions are associated with the cat's management and other factors.

Details about the study, including access to online questionnaires and results, are available at: - www.bristol.ac.uk/vetscience/cats.

Owners can complete the questionnaires online or request paper questionnaires. Participation in the study is voluntary and owners have the right to withdraw from the study at any point.



'Bristol cats' was launched in the Bristol area on 1 June 2010 and nationwide in May 2011. One thousand kittens have registered with the study since 2010

KITTENS – Advertise yours on our Club web site – it's free. More kittens are sold via Club lists than any other medium. Just complete the form that you'll find on the kitten list page & e-mail it to tbc.uk@ntlworld.com

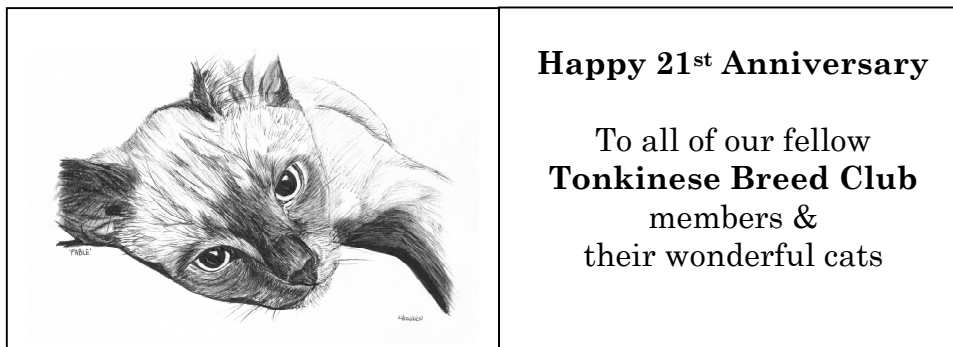
TONKINFO AUTUMN 2012

A SPECIAL SOUVENIR BOOKLET – IN FULL COLOUR!

Next year I'm handing Tonkinfo over to a new Editor – who is yet to volunteer ☺

In the meantime I am looking forward to producing a special 21st Anniversary Issue – it will be available to collect at our show in October, and afterwards it will be posted to any member who is unable to come to the show.

Proclaim your special show-cat, or your prefix (whether still breeding or not) or honour a beloved Tonk (whether shown or not) or perhaps include a special memorial. Here is a wonderful chance to be a part of a little bit of Tonkinese history – I'm taking adverts for just £2 per 'card'. See the example below; this is bigger than a standard business card and gives you room for a full colour picture or two!



Approximately:
5" x 1.85"
(13cm x 4.75cm)

Send me your finished layout, picture and £2 as soon as possible (cheques payable to the Tonkinese Breed Club) – if you only have a rough layout I will be happy to format it for you. I can also edit your picture to show it to best advantage, just let me know if that's what you want. If you have any questions just e-mail or call me - mymystic@ntlworld.com 0118 9619444.

If you don't want to place an advert but just a congratulatory message to your fellow members I shall be happy to include it
[Linda Vousden]

GREAT NEWS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE BURMESE

After many years of painstaking research, Dr. Leslie Lyon's group at US Davis' Centre for Companion Animal Health has identified the gene that has been responsible for the lethal Burmese head defect since

the 1970s. Now that the gene has been found, a DNA test for the mutation should follow fairly soon.

This is an exciting breakthrough that should finally allow the International community working with this breed to share their gene pool more freely. At a seminar this April Dr Lyons confirmed that both the Burmese (European and US) is the most inbred of breeds, so the forthcoming DNA test for the lethal HD gene gives the promise of genetic diversity and a much healthier breed.

Well done to all those that contributed pedigrees, blood samples, cheek swabs, and financial support to this project over the decades, both directly and through the Winn Feline Foundation.

What do you get if you cross a cat with a canary?

A peeping tom

The Young Exhibitor Scheme A personal perspective

I first found out about the YES scheme when my nanny told me about it. I have been doing YES for about a year now and I really enjoy it.

I enjoy learning about all the different breeds and I enjoy taking part in the presentations especially as I show my Pedigree pet Bobbi Beau and he is always a good boy for me. It makes it fun to do something I enjoy at the Cat Shows!

I loved it when Anne Gregory kindly did a tea party for us to celebrate YES's 1st Birthday, it was really fun. It is really encouraging to learn all about the different breeds of cat, and to learn about looking after them and how to prepare them for shows.

I enjoy having a nice lunch with the judges, we sit in a quiet area where we can enjoy ourselves. I think the YES scheme helps me meet new people as there are children about my age on YES. When you do presentations you can get certificates and rosettes. Doing presentations helps you to get more confident as you speak about your cat. You have to say how to get your cat ready for a show and know about health and safety.

If you are a young person interested in learning about cats, maybe becoming a steward or if you just love cats you should join the YES scheme.

Bethany Skinner (aged 10)

[If you'd like to know more about the GCCF's YES! programme go to <http://www.gccf-yes.co.uk>]

A BIT OF GCCF HISTORY - *a couple of GCCF rules from 1956*

On Names - A name once registered cannot be registered again for 20 years after the 31st January following the last registration. The fee for the exclusive use of a distinguishing prefix shall be £1 & 6d. Prefixes will not be accepted that bear a close resemblance to any already in existence, nor the names of towns, counties nor districts comprising a wide area, nor names of colours, nor recognised titles. A lapsed prefix shall never be taken by any person except the original owner except with the express approval of the Council. No prefix may be used as an affix or vice versa.

On Challenge Certificates - A Championship Show shall be one at which the Council permits competition for Challenge Certificates. The Council shall decide the number of Challenge Certificates to be offered for each variety during any season, and at what shows they shall be granted.

Good Advice ?

I was advised that a little fat might help to improve my cat's coat condition. I asked a friend what she would use, she said, "Try bacon".

Well I've had bacon baps for lunch every day at work for the past three weeks - but my cat's coat looks no different to me!

Techno-Something ?

Wife's text to husband at work:
"Windows at home frozen - what should I do?"

Husband replies:
"Spray some de-icer or pour hot water on them"

Wife's text a few minutes later: -
"Did that, now computer won't work at all"

What do you get if you cross a tiger with a snowman?

Frostbite !

THE TRUTH ABOUT CATNIP

Is it safe and what does it mean if your cat doesn't like it?

Catnip, catmint, catwort, - it doesn't matter what you call it. Lions, Tigers, and your hearthside Panthers just can't seem to get enough of this fragrant herb. Originally from Europe and Asia, minty, lemony, potent catnip, *Nepeta*, has long been associated with cats.

There are a number of varieties including N.Mussinii and N.Fassinii but it's N.Cataria that seems to be most popular. Research has shown that cats big and small adore this pungent mint, but why?

Inheritance determines whether your furry friend falls for the feline wacky-baccy. About one cat in two inherits sensitivity to it, usually noticeable from between three and six months of age.

Catnip's allure is in its volatile oil, specifically one chemical in that oil - nepetalactone. Found in catnip's leaves, stems, and seeds, it only takes one or two sniffs before susceptible felines are licking, chewing and rolling head-over-tail in bliss. Although intense, that bliss is usually short-lived, lasting about 10 minutes for most cats. For some cats the euphoria translates into aggressive playfulness, others become mellow and calm but no matter what reaction your cat has, once the pleasure passes it'll be about two hours before it responds to catnip again.

Because cats *do* respond to catnip again and again, the herb can be a powerful training aid. To re-direct your furniture-clawing cat try rubbing a scratching post with catnip to make it more appealing. To make a new cat-bed more appealing sprinkle a little of the herb on it.

You can also provide enrichment for an indoor cat by creating catnip toys. Sprinkle a bit of the herb into an old sock, then knot the top. Or put a big pinch of catnip in a small paper bag and crush the bag into a tight ball.

The type of catnip you use will affect the intensity of your cat's response to toys and training. While most cats enjoy the herb dried or fresh, sprays are less attractive because they generally don't contain enough nepetalactone.

Fortunately catnip is non-addictive and safe to eat. It's an easily grown and pretty perennial plant with silver leaves and lavender-like purple flowers that are attractive to bees – so best not to grow it in your cat's outside pen. If you don't have a garden you can create your own indoor cat garden with one pot of catnip and one of wheat, oat, rye, or barley grass - your cat will enjoy both, but be sure to use heavy based pots otherwise you may find them tipped over frequently. Catnip's potency doesn't last forever; the essential oils quickly dissipate. So whether you pick your own catnip from the garden and dry it, or buy dried catnip for your feline friend, you can store what you don't use in the freezer.



You're off the Olympic team – you tested positive for catnip!

... and while on the subject of garden produce, here's a handy tip,

Summer berries are delicious, but quite delicate. Raspberries in particular seem to become mouldy even before you get them home. How frustrating to spend £s for a punnet only to that grey fuzz growing on their insides the next day. Well, with fresh berries coming in to the shops here's a tip to keep them fresh. - wash them with vinegar. When you get your berries home, prepare a mixture of one part vinegar (white or apple cider probably work best) and ten parts water. Tip the berries into the mixture and swirl around and drain - the vinegar solution is so diluted that you won't taste the vinegar - and pop into the fridge. The vinegar kills any mould spores and other bacteria that might be on the surface of the fruit, and voila! Raspberries will last a week or more, and strawberries go almost two weeks without going mouldy and soft. So go forth and stock up on those pricey little gems, knowing they'll stay fresh as long as it takes you to eat them.

Caramel and Apricot
A tasty dish, pretty colours or a potential problem?

Linda Vousden

Yes caramel and apricot is a tasty dish, yes they are pretty colours, and yes the Dm gene is a potential problem – but not one that we can't try to manage.

I made a proper fool of myself at our recent AGM (I know – not for the first time). I thought I'd said, "All cats inheriting the dominant dilute modifier from just one parent will be caramel, apricot or will carry the gene". I wondered why there was such an intense discussion about this – until later I was informed that what I'd actually said was that all kittens in a litter with just one such parent would be affected – not the same thing at all! Many apologies to all who were present, and I'm writing this for the purpose of clarification.

The effect of the dilute modifier gene (Dm) was noticed and remarked upon in the 1970s, possibly earlier, but it wasn't until the 1990s that Cat Fancy registries began to officially acknowledge it, for instance the GCCF's registration of Caramel and Apricot Siamese in the UK. When the words 'Dilute modifier' are mentioned people divide into three groups;

- The Ostriches** – *there's no such thing, and if there is it's certainly not in my cats, my breed etc.*

I was an ostrich, but found that I'd inherited the dilute modifier (Dm), or rather my beloved and sorely missed Mymystic Pagan had, from her Siamese sire Cachet Tabbeocca Tiptoes. The vote is still out on Mymystic Pharoah as he is from a different line and is clearly a different colour 'Blue' from any of his Caramel offspring.

- The Sceptics** – *there probably is a dilute modifier, but it's just a colour, what harm can it do?*

I became a sceptic, but over the years I've watched the rapid decrease of 'clean' blues and creams in another breed whose breeders will not acknowledge the Dm.

- The Pragmatists** – *there is a dilute modifier, and its taking over our dilutes.*

I'm now a pragmatist, and would dearly like to see Tonkinese breeders lead the way in trying to manage the spread of the Dm in an effort to keep the beautiful Blues, Lilacs and Creams that we once knew – before they all disappear for good.

How does the Dilute modifier work?

When 'diluted', the Brown, Chocolate, and Red colours become Blue, Lilac, and Cream respectively and are known as dilute colours.

A different gene, the Dilute modifier, only shows its effect on the dilute colours – Blue and Lilac and become Caramel, Cream becomes Apricot. When a dilute kitten inherits the dominant version of the gene (Dm) its colour will be modified; when inherited by a non-dilute kitten the Dm will be carried.

A cat may be: -

- DmDm** – A modified dilute or a non-dilute carrying Dm, it has inherited two dominant versions of the gene (homozygous)
- Dmdm** – A modified dilute or a non-dilute carrying Dm, it has inherited one dominant version and one recessive version of the gene (heterozygous)
- dmdm** – neither modified nor carrying the DM, it has inherited two recessive versions of the gene (homozygous)

The following table shows the percentage variation of kittens you'll have from each mating combination. The Dilute modifier is not sex-linked so it doesn't matter which parent has the dominant version (Dm).

	<u>DmDm Modified or carrying</u>	<u>Dmdm Modified or carrying</u>	<u>dmdm Unmodified, not carrying</u>
<u>DmDm Modified or carrying</u>	100% DmDm	50% DmDm 50% Dmdm	100% Dmdm
<u>Dmdm Modified or carrying</u>	50% DmDm 50% Dmdm	25% DmDm 50% Dmdm 25% dmdm	50% Dmdm 50% dmdm
<u>dmdm Unmodified, not carrying</u>	100% Dmdm	50% Dmdm 50% dmdm	100% dmdm

There is no DNA test for Dm, nor are there plans to produce one yet (re: UC Davis & Langford), which makes it difficult to know whether a Caramel or Apricot cat has one or two copies of Dm – for the same reason we can't be certain that a non-dilute cat isn't carrying Dm. The consequence could be the eventual loss of unmodified dilutes so it is important to record pedigrees and register kittens carefully.

This is not to say that we shouldn't use our lovely Caramels and Apricot Tonks, it would not benefit the breed to reduce our breeding lines - but if you wish to breed true Blue, Lilac or Cream Tonks check your pedigrees and keep them separate from lines with Caramel or Apricot cats, or Brown and Chocolates that may carry the dilute modifier.

DON'T RISK YOUR CAT'S LIFE – Watch For The Signs

In the middle of March this year we nearly lost our Pharoah. Over a weekend his drinking and peeing increased considerably. Monday he was lethargic so we took him to the vet. He was admitted, severely dehydrated, and remained with them for a week. He tested positive for diabetes and was going into ketoacidosis – just hours from dying.

We were stunned. Apart from the signs over the weekend he seemed to be 'normal', he wasn't overweight and was generally bright and alert. To save you the details I'll just say he returned from the brink. Fortunately he has no other underlying problems. It's not been easy to find the right insulin dose for him and he had a frightening hypoglycaemic episode, but now he's much improved and is responding well to his revised daily routine.

With hindsight we *had* been topping up the water bowl more often in the summer, and he was peeing more than usual but it stopped so we just put it down to the warm weather. Again in the late Autumn we found ourselves topping up the water bowl more often, but we put that down to having turned up the thermostat for the season – and we put the harshness of his coat down to seasonal changes too. His weight loss? Well he is 15 and older cats do loose weight. Blind fools that we were!

The reason for this article is to give you the chance to act before you too almost loose your cat. It's so much easier to take control and manage diabetes in a cat if you start as soon as possible and, let's be honest, more economical – you **really** don't want to know our vet bill!

A recent UK survey found that 1 in 200 cats is diabetic, and these figures are rising as vets and owners become more aware. Just a few years ago, many treatable diabetic cats were put to sleep, because it was assumed they had gone into kidney failure with no hope for the future.

So watch for any one, or combination, of the following signs: -

- Increased thirst (polydipsia)
- Increased urination (polyuria)
- Voracious appetite (polyphagia)
- Weight loss
- Poor condition of coat
- Straining to pass urine and/or passing bloody urine associated with a bacterial urinary tract infection (bacterial cystitis)

Don't feel foolish about insisting on a simple and instant glucose test. In a cat with undetected or uncontrolled diabetes the danger is ketoacidosis - the cat quickly becomes extremely depressed with one or more of the following: vomiting, diarrhoea, dehydration, complete loss of appetite, collapse, coma. Emergency veterinary attention is required.

Which Cats Are Most At Risk?

- Diabetes can occur at any age but it is more common in 7-10 year old cats
- Male neutered cats
- Cats with an indoor/sedentary lifestyle
- Obese cats
- Cat on Corticosteroid or progestagen treatments
- Burmese – *see note below*

Is Diabetes Inherited?

1 in 53 Burmese cats in the UK are diabetic (as opposed to 1 in 200) and in some lines the risk is as high as 1 in 10. As we are a Burmese related breed we should be extra vigilant.

However, although diabetes has been seen in littermates there is no real evidence of inheritance. It is extremely unlikely that a cat will also get diabetes if a sibling is diabetic - but if they live together they should both be routinely monitored by your vet, because they'll have the same lifestyle risk factors.

The Good News

By detecting the signs early enough, and taking proper action, it is possible to give your cat an excellent quality of life. As many as 50–60% of diabetic cats may even fully recover if the diabetes is detected, and appropriate treatment started, soon enough. We didn't spot the signs early enough for Pharoah's diabetes to be transient, so he will be insulin dependant – but you have the chance to do better for your cat.

On a lighter note, if you know Pharoah's reputation or have seen him at a show you'll understand this - while recovering at the vet's he went into 'show mode' (being used to the pen and the attention) and the nurses were concerned about his demeanour, they couldn't tell whether he was lethargically depressed or just relaxed. It seems that most of the time he was our own lovable, chilled-out Pharoah! They were so impressed with him that they sent him home with special rosettes ☺

[Linda & Mike Vousden, Mymystic]

Fore-warned is Fore-armed

LIVING WITH A DIABETIC CAT

or Feel the fear, and do it anyway.

Kathy Wilkinson

I have been associated with 3 diabetic cats now, and the difference in their diagnoses and treatments is quite dramatic.

Just after New Year 2001, my husband called out to me that Smudge had just used the litter tray. Nothing unusual in that, you might think, but you would have been wrong because Smudge was an ex-stray who had previously waited until going outside in the morning to do his toilet. We had also noticed that he seemed to be drinking a little more water than previously and that he seemed to be eating very well too, but was also losing some weight. Then I saw him use a tray and so took him to the vet.

Bob first suggested that it was probably his kidneys - back in 2001 diabetes and hyperthyroidism weren't as 'common' as nowadays. Clinical examination revealed that his kidneys didn't feel too bad, but a full blood profile would be needed, so the sample was duly taken - most respectfully too because Smudge can be 'free' with his feet if he feels threatened, as several of the vet staff can testify - one of the vet nurses had even had to go to A&E when he had to have something done one time!

My feelings re the 3 possibilities were:
Kidneys - tablets wouldn't be difficult, just hide it in a piece of raw meat and down it goes (years of abscess treatments to prove this).

Thyroid - I already knew quite a bit about this as a friend at work's cat had recently been diagnosed and treated for this and I had read up on the condition.

Diabetes - well, I read up a bit about it and found that tablets weren't much good for cats, so I decided I wasn't even going to think about diabetes any more because I don't like needles.

No, it was going to be his kidneys or thyroid, but then I got a call with the results - it was

diabetes. Ideally Smudge should have been admitted to have a blood glucose curve performed. However, as he gets so frightened and therefore rather aggressive, we all decided that this would not be representative (stress increases blood glucose) and so we gradually increased the amount of insulin until he was considered stabilised. I watched him like a hawk because I was frightened of his going into a 'hypo', where he had had too much insulin. At that time there was no such thing as a glucometer for cats, and home testing was not considered. We had to do regular urine testing as well as his having bloods at the surgery.

Insulin injections became just part of the daily feline routine. The result for Smudge was initially very good - but then he developed an infection, which put everything out of 'synch', and he was never properly stabilised after that. He also wouldn't eat the prescription food that was recommended, resulting in a conscious decision by the vet and myself to let him have what he wanted (within reason). He had regular monthly checks for his diabetes and did really well. Later on he developed a heart problem also and eventually we lost him about 2 years after his diagnosis.

Tabitha and her diabetes

When Tabitha, a moggy, was diagnosed with diabetes in about 2005 it was more of a shock than with Smudge as she had other problems and this seemed to be really unfair for the old girl. She was about 13 yrs old when diagnosed. She had been hyperthyroid and had had surgery, and had kidney problems as well, so didn't need this condition.

We managed to get her stabilised reasonably quickly, although the trips to the vet for the glucometer check really stressed her out. Giving her injections wasn't nearly as bad as doing them for Smudge as she was a placid cat.

When she had been diabetic for about 6 months I found an Internet group, which was very supportive. They all talked about home blood testing and a lovely lady did come to our home to show us how to do it. However, when

she tried it on Tabitha's ear, Tabitha really got upset and as I was due to have 2 operations on my left hand it was decided to leave it until after I had recovered from my operations to try properly.

Having these operations I was therefore unable to drive for several weeks. All our cats who needed checks had them immediately prior to my operations - Tabitha was the last one - and then she was the first one to have a check when I got the OK to drive again.

TOO LOW!! Said Stephanie when she took Tabitha's blood glucose. So we then had to work backwards as it were, decreasing the amount of insulin and we were actually able to wean her off the hormone altogether. Tabitha was one of the few cats who 'self-cure' from diabetes. Cats are the only species that can do this, but not every cat does. She became an ex-'sugar-babe'.

Levi - our most recent diabetic cat

Levi, another moggy, has been diagnosed within the last month as being diabetic. He is my Mum and sister's cat. The most special thing about Levi and his diabetes, however, is that he is being given his injections by my sister, who is visually handicapped. He doesn't trust me one little bit as I am the one who takes him to the vets for his checks - he has idiopathic hypercalcaemia (high calcium of unknown origin) for which he is having regular blood tests, CRF and arthritis. The steroids are helping with the calcium problem as well as the arthritis, but have just pushed him over the edge into diabetes as it were, but he must have been pre-diabetic for a while anyway. Thankfully he is on a minimum dose of insulin, 1 unit once a day, and this seems to be correct dose. My sister cannot see well enough to draw up the insulin in the syringes and therefore I have to go round every couple of days and fill the syringes - not ideal, but making best of the situation. Obviously, therefore, we are not in a position to try home glucose testing on Levi so his checks will continue to be at the vets. Thankfully my sister stepped up to the line to try the injections and is coping very well. I am

really very proud of her for doing this. She felt the fear, and did it anyway too!

The advances in treatment of this condition over just the past 10 years or so are really obvious to me. With Smudge there was no real emphasis on glucose curve testing, but by the time of Tabitha's diagnosis that had changed a bit and it was recommended as a possibility. With Levi, however, it was the first thing that was done as soon as Mary had decided that she was going to try to do his injections. A lot still depends on the nature of the individual cat, but it is obviously the most sensible way to go about things. And if you are able to do the home glucose testing, then good control would seem to be a distinct possibility.

If you'd like to know more about diabetes, or other problems that could affect your cat and how you can help them, check out the FAB web site -
<http://www.fabcats.org/owners/disease.php>

The FAB's 'Well Cat For Life' programme provides a 'gold standard' for advisable routine checks, and when these should be performed throughout your cat's life, encouraging owners and veterinary practices to work together to form a partnership of care for the benefit of cats.



*Picture from the past –
A lovely litter of Ishokats kittens,
bred by Hazel Forshaw,
one of the TBC's earliest members.*

Tail-Enders

Some surprising cat facts!

THE LARGEST PET LITTER

On 7th August, 1970, a four year old Burmese called Tarawood Antigone, who was owned by Valerie Gane (Burdach Burmese) of Oxfordshire, UK, gave birth to nineteen kittens. The surviving fifteen kittens consisted of 1 female & 14 males.

BEST MOUSER

The world's best mouser was tortoiseshell moggy Towser, April 21st, 1963 to 20th March 1987. In her lifetime she caught 28,899 mice, plus numerous other unfortunate creatures such as rats & rabbits. Towser worked for the Glenturret Distillery. A statue has been erected in the distillery grounds to honour Towser.

SMALLEST CAT

The world's smallest cat was a Blue Point Himalayan by the name of Tinker Toy from the USA. Tinker Toy was just 2 ¾" tall (at the shoulder) & 7 ½" long (about the size of a cheque book). He weighed 1lb & 8oz. Tinker Toy was featured in an article in the August 31, 1993 issue of National Enquirer; he passed away in November 1997.

HEAVIEST CAT

Himmy who lived in Cairns, Queensland, is the heaviest recorded cat, weighing in at a staggering 21.3kg (46.8lbs). Himmy, a spayed tabby died at the age of 10 of respiratory failure. Fortunately the Guinness Book of Records is no longer accepting nominations in this category, as they don't want to encourage pet owners to overfeed their animals.

OLDEST CAT (The average life expectancy of an indoor cat is between 9 to 15 years.)

The oldest recorded cat was Crème Puff of Austin Texas. Born on August 3rd 1967, Crème Puff passed away in August, 2005 at the grand age of 38 years.

According to the Guinness Book of Records, the oldest living cat is a Burmese called Kataleena Lady who lives in Melbourne, Australia. Kataleena Lady was born on March 11th, 1977 making her 35 years old!

Also deserving a mention are - Puss, who was born in 1903; owned by Mrs T. Holway of Devon. Puss passed away on 29th November 1939, one day after his 36th birthday.

..... and Granpa who lived to the ripe old age of 34. Granpa Rexs Allen (Granpa for short) was a Sphynx adopted from the Humane Society in Texas.

TONKINFO - Re-Cap

- **Volunteer to help at your show**
- **Advertise your kittens on the Club web site**
- **Advertise your studs on the Club web site**
- **Think about helping the Bristol Cat Study**
- **Be alert for simple signs that can help your cat, in case of diabetes**
- **Register your kittens in all of the three coat-patterns**
- **If you haven't read it already – read the Tonkinese Breeding Policy – available to download from www.tonkinese.info**

Book your advert, or message, now for the full colour 21st Anniversary Souvenir issue of Tonkinfo (Autumn 2012)