

TONKINFO



SPRING 2025



SNOWTONK SKITTLES
from original photo by Ulla Korterman

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CONTENTS

Pg.3	Ikea World Pet Day
Pg.4	Tonkinese Patronus
Pg.5	Tonkinese Float & Favourite Toys
Pg.6	Midline Defect
Pg.8	Our Rescue Officer
Pg.11	GCCF Show News – Kitten Titles
Pg.13	A Guide to Writing a Standard of Points
Pg.14	Coat-Restriction, not Coat-Pattern
Pg.15	Quiz Time
Pg.16	The Little Ship's Cat
Pg.18	Cats With Vitiligo
Pg.20	Tonk-Mobbing
Pg.21	Cat On Your Keyboard?
Pg.22	Meowjuana for Cats
Pg.24	Catio Anyone?
Pg.29	How Does Your Cat Sleep?
Pg.32	GCCF News

WISHING EVERYONE SUNSHINE & GOOD FORTUNE



I hope you enjoy this issue. If you have any articles for the next issue **please** do send them to me at tbc.uk@ntlworld.com, it's always nice to hear from our many members. I do still have a couple of items from you that I couldn't fit in this time, perhaps the Christmas issue. Just send me stuff as you think of it

Unfortunately our Chairman, Julia, recently had an accident that left her with a broken wrist; We wish her a very speedy recovery ☺

Cheers, *Linda*



Ikea World Pet Day

IKEA UK has been actively involved in World Pet Day, collaborating with Woodgreen Pets Charity to help animals find their forever homes. They also have a dedicated pet product line called UTSÅDD, which includes items like pet beds, bowls, and cat tents. In addition, IKEA has a "Pet Shopping Network" campaign featuring pets presenting their favourite products, which has been shown on social media.



Photo by Miriam

A number of pet photos have been featured on their Facebook page including Miriam Haas's Kiri (GrPr Tallica Shining Star, TOS p 31, F). Kiri is one of the very few fawn Tonkinese in the UK.

There is a wonderful Ikea x Woodgreen Charity web site that includes a short video on the making of their 'Cat-A-Logue' and 'Dog-A-Logue' of pets needing homes. If you'd like to visit their web site just google 'Ikea Finding Fur-Ever homes', it's quicker than trying to copy the link!

TONKINESE PATRONUS

For the Harry Potter fans among you I found this curious little snippet on a web site dedicated to Hogwarts:

“A Tonkinese cat patronus can represent an owner who is particularly wily and clever, relating to both the house Slytherin and Ravenclaw. As a



patronus it can represent an owner that finds comfort in playfulness and confidence, and in the time of need, is always ready to hear a joke. The owner of this patronus always tries or helps someone else with attempt to lighten the mood when things get rough. The owner of this

patronus can be particularly playful as well, which seems like Hufflepuff, but the owner of this patronus is more competitive and ambitious with there *[sic]* playfulness, wanting to have fun, but also being incredibly serious, making it a hard balance between Slytherin and Ravenclaw. Also the owner uses wit often and sometimes sarcasm, especially when they are somewhere where they can be competitive. “

I bet you all thought you should be in Gryffindor. Personally I think the description is more about the cats than the owners!

The photo is a pair of Tonkinese kittens, members of the TBC.

Calling for Your Cat Results

So many of your beautiful cats have won their titles in the past year or so, please send in their details so that we can include them in our Honour Roll – see the Roll & online form on our web site:

Titles, Merits & BIS History under the **SHOWS** tab.



A Tonkinese Float

Purrfect for drinking in a sunny garden

2-3 scoops premium coffee ice cream

A bottle of porter or stout with espresso or chocolate overtones (e.g. The Yorkshire Heart's Blackheart Stout or Ghost Porter; or Samuel Smith's Organic Chocolate Stout; or Thornbridge Cocoa Wonderland)

Add ice cream to a tall chilled glass and *slowly* pour the beer over it. Enjoy!

Note: This a drink for adults – for children try replacing the beer with ginger beer or cola – but still remember to pour slowly 😊

My Tonks' Favourite Toys

After conducting a quick straw poll it seems that these, in no particular order, are especially favoured by TBC Cats

- Little (not big) catnip mice – especially when they've been dunked in the water bowl a couple of times.
- Little rabbit-fur mice that rattle.
- Chunky pipe cleaner toys such as spiders or crabs.
- Balled-up chunky pipe cleaners – great for retrieving games.
- Squares of cardboard carefully chewed from a box.
- Feathers.
- Bundles of raffia string.
- Wands with feathers on the end – *calls for owner participation.*
- Valerian sticks (good for cleaning teeth too).
- Small furry pom-poms.
- Catnip filled 'cigars' – good size for kicking the dickens out of.
- Catnip filled, rolled up baby socks – a good weight for chucking around.
- Shiny mice from well known pet store.
- Foam balls.
- Piles of newspaper - they love to jump around the pile with each other
- Box castles with cut-out windows, filled with newspaper.
- Soft toys that are small enough to allow them to howl their hunting success when they drop them at your feet – sometimes for you to throw.
- Toys on springs that 'fight back', wriggly worms and tunnels.



THE MIDLINE DEFECT

The Tonkinese BAC is revising the Standard of Points (SOP) for clarity and to include an important withholding fault – “Domed or exaggerated curvature of the forehead”. This is because of a rising awareness of the Midline Defect. The Registration and Breeding policies may also need to be revised.

The Midline Defect, as it has become known, is a condition that breeders, and particularly breeders who import Tonkinese, must be aware of and look out for. The breeding/cross-breeding of Tonkinese outside of the GCCF has not traditionally been as scrupulously monitored as with GCCF registered Tonkinese - the Tonkinese BAC and the two supporting Clubs have led the way among many breeds by insisting on suitable DNA testing and breeding policies.

This defect was originally noticed, and became prevalent in Long Haired cat breeds but because of the way it is inherited, as well as the ‘fashion’ for cross-breeding, it is now known to occur in several breeds including Burmese. Please note that it is not the same as the Burmese head defect (craniofacial mutation) that affects the development of the head and facial areas in affected cats.

The Midline Defect or PPDH (congenital *peritoneopericardial diaphragmatic hernia*) has been known of since the 1980s, it is the failure of cranial midline fusion during kitten development. It results in awful cranial defects.

PPDH is very often present in conjunction with omphalocele, also known as exomphalos, which is a birth defect of the abdominal wall. The infant's intestines, liver, or other organs stick outside of the belly through the umbilicus (belly button). The organs are covered in a thin, nearly transparent sac that usually is intact at birth.

There is evidence that PPDH is a genetically inherited defect with an autosomal recessive inheritance pattern, i.e. the mutation is inherited from both parents to be expressed, but the kitten would be a carrier if PPDH was inherited from even one parent. There is not yet a DNA test for the gene but the Dept of Animal Breeding and Genetics at the Swedish University in Uppsala, in collaboration with Dr Leslie Lyons of the University of Missouri, is working on developing such a test.

The problem is that carriers of PPDH rarely show signs of the defect, unless a defective kitten is born, in which case both parents should be ruled out of the gene pool. The most common features are: large head with overly large eyes

and a severe cleft palate, underdeveloped extremities and almost no tail. Almost all have big abdominal hernia, sometimes a back hernia. A few have an open skull. It is unlikely that kittens with PPDH will survive but they have been known to and a sign of the defect such as a bulbous forehead. It is hard to identify carriers, as offspring with this condition may not be born in every litter after a carrier, but may show up after a few litters.

So, as mentioned at the start of this item, the TBAC has included a withholding fault to ensure that kittens with signs of PPDH are not promoted on the show bench, especially now with the new Kitten Challenge Certificates.



For anyone who either doesn't breed or is just starting to breed - don't be concerned if you have kittens up to the age of about six weeks old that are showing quite round heads (see picture). This is normal development as the skull grows – they will not look as rounded by the time they are ready to go to their new homes.

Photo: Normal Tonk kittens

For more information on PPDH, aka. the Midline Defect, visit the Swedish Burmese Cat Club web site that has excellent information (including English translation) and kitten photos (viewer discretion advised) – see link below. They are also calling for breeders to provide information on any such problems they may have had in their litters (in the strictest confidence of course) – sadly a DNA test cannot be developed without test subjects.

<https://www.midlinedefect.com/>

We are pleased to say that the GCCF associated Burmese clubs now also have this condition on their radar.

You will be kept informed of any GCCF Board & Tonkinese BAC approved changes to the SOP, Registration Policy and Breeding Policy. The latest issues are always available from the Tonkinese BAC web site <https://tonkinesebac.weebly.com>



Our Wonderful Rescue Officer

Did you know that many clubs don't have a breed rescue?

I am Valerie Chapple, Rescue Officer for the Tonkinese Breed Club. I have always had one or more cats in my life - at one time I had nine. I took over from Pauline Earley [*the first TBC Rescue Officer*] after helping her for a while before she retired. I've been doing this job now for over twenty years and I have re-homed many Tonkinese cats in that time.

Before Tonkinese I was a volunteer for ten years at our local Cat Protection - I did home visits and fostered any breeds in need (the then manageress found pure breed cats too much trouble), I did this four or five days a week. While working at CP I met my first Tonkinese, at that point I had never heard of them. I was asked to collect a cat that had been rehomed with an elderly couple who had always had Burmese cats. My partner and I went off to collect the cat. When we arrived I named the cat Normie because I don't know his other name. Poor Normie was upstairs and would not come down, but after a long while he came down and went to hide under the sideboard. The owners couldn't handle him at all; they told us that he was a Burmese but would not behave like a Burmese.

Normie came into the kitchen where we were all waiting to see what happened next. He jumped up onto the work surface, then onto a higher cupboard and proceeded to go round the room at head height. There was one small window in the room with a Venetian blind, when he got to it he ran up to the top leaned backwards pulled the blind off the window turned round and did the biggest wee ever – then walked over to the carrier jumped in and said lets go.

I decided to keep Normie. To start with he lived in my cattery where I fed a 'cardboard box' for six weeks - never seeing him. After a while he started going into the run, at that point I moved him from the cattery up to our house to live with us. One day he slipped past me and was away down the garden. I searched for days without finding him. Then one day when I was sitting in the conservatory I saw him coming up the garden - he was full of fleas, very hungry and constipated. Sadly a short time after that he became very unwell. I rushed him to the vet but he died, he had eaten a bee.

Normie was a BCR with the most amazing eye colour I have ever seen, I decided I was going to buy a Tonkinese kitten. I started a search for a breeder and found someone called Linda Vousden.

Linda had a litter of kittens at that time with a brown boy who was available. We went to see the kittens and arranged with Linda that we would buy the brown boy.

I named my beautiful brown boy 'Bill', pedigree name Mymystic Pagansun. We started showing him as soon as he was old enough and he became very popular with the public and judges, winning many classes. He was an Imperial Grand Premier when he died just two months short of his twelfth birthday.



I did breed Tonkinese kittens for a short time but gave up when I took over the welfare for TBC, but before this it was Siamese kittens. I was taught the whole process by Mary Dunnill who at that time was secretary to the Siamese Cat Club, a position she held for over thirty years – her prefix was Sumfun.

I have re-homed many Tonkinese cats over the years. People come back to me when their cat/cats have passed, looking to take on another one or two. I deal with quite a lot of phone calls from people needing advice or wanting to talk because their much loved pet has passed away.

I have three Tonkinese at the moment one beautiful old lady who is about to be 20 years old I have had her for just over 19 years and two young boys who are delightful and keep us on our toes.

Here are just a few of the Tonkinese that, thanks to their dedication, Val and her partner have found loving homes for. We are very grateful to Val & Chris.

Left: Bouncer and Shura





Above Left: Tess – Above Right: Biscuit



Left: Ruby - Above: Sadly name unknown



Left: Tristan

Right: Timo



GCCF SHOW NEWS

For the first time, since the GCCF was founded in 1910, kittens are eligible to win special titles. The new kitten titles went live on April 5th at the Shorthair & All Breed CC of Scotland show.



Kittens are now able to win the titles:

- ❖ Kitten Champion (KC) – for pedigree kittens
- ❖ Kitten Master Cat (KMC) – for non-pedigree kittens

These certificates function similarly to those awarded to adult/neuter cats, with two key differences:

1. Kittens must earn **three** KC/KMC certificates on three **different dates** to gain their title.
2. Entire and neutered kittens **compete together**, with classes split only by male and female.

JUDGING & CERTIFICATES:

The same standard of points (SOP) applies. Judges may withhold a certificate if the kitten has faults that can be justified, just as in adult/neuter judging. If a judge withholds a certificate they cannot award a BOB to that class.

Congratulations to Christina Gordon on her kitten, Toptonk Muiccia (TOS a 31, female) winning the first Tonkinese KCC certificate.



KITTEN CHALLENGE CERTIFICATE

Pen No. 152 Name Toptonk Muiccia

Show SA, RB, CC of Scotland Date 21/05

Signature of Judge Dorina



A Guide to Writing a SOP

Found On An Internet Mailing List – It Made Me Larf!

GENERAL

The overall appearance of the Generic Cat is feline. A general impression of canine, bovine, equine or porcine is grounds for disqualification. Size is within feline parameters. Disqualify: mouse-sized, pig sized or larger.

Point Score

Head (25)		Body (25)		Coat (50)	
Profile:	4.16	Torso	8.12	Condition	16.79
Skull:	6.25	Legs and Feet	8.34	Length	18.14
Muzzle & Chin	8.32	Tail	8.54	Colour and Pattern	15.07
Ears	4.20				
Eyes	2.07				

HEAD - There must be only one, located at the front end of the body. Most often the head bone's connected to the neck bone; the neck bone's connected to the shoulder bone; the shoulder bone's connected . . . right on down to the tail-bone (if present). The cat must have a top of head; shapes will range from slightly flattened to domed. A concave top of head is a serious fault. Viewed from the side, nose breaks may vary from simple to compound fractures. Whisker breaks require a more complex approach. The muzzle is the first part of the cat to arrive if the animal is moving forward. It may be identified as the part that sniffs, eats, yawns, meows, growls, hisses, and sometimes chatters. It is the part to which whiskers are attached. The chin lies below the nose and is responsible for determining a proper or improper bite (this will depend on the viewpoint of the "biter" and/or the "bitee").

EARS - These come in pairs and, ideally, are located, one on each side of the head. *Disqualify:* more than two ears.

EYES- Eyes also come in pairs and are located at the front of the head above the nose. They may or may not match in colour and may be expected to be closed 80% of the time. *Disqualify:* more than two eyes.

BODY - Ideally greater in length than width. Roughly horizontal when the cat is standing, although some length-wise tilt (toward bow or stern) or sideways list (to starboard or port) is acceptable. Sharp divergence from horizontal allowed when the cat is seated. *Disqualify:* S-shaped or Z-shaped body, single or multiple hump(s), single or multiple dip(s).

LEGS & FEET - Legs one at each corner so two in front and two behind. Other locations penalised. Feet are found at the ends of the legs. Front legs should be found at the front of the cat and back legs (the ones with hocks) should be at the back of the cat - in matched pairs. *Penalise*: mismatched pairs, legs placed at incorrect ends of body, feet attached to points other than ends of legs. Toes must point forward.

TAIL - When present, the tail is ideally located at the rear of the body, and is generally the last part of the cat to arrive at a new location. There should be only one tail which may be of any length from -0.5 inch to +14.78 inches.

COAT - The coat is most functional when attached to the cat. Nudity is permissible only in cats born that way. The topcoat should be cat hair (penalise: camel hair, horse hair or fleece) and is to be securely buttoned in cold weather. Allowance should be made for looser fit in warmer temperatures. Both topcoat and underwear should reflect impeccable grooming. Any coat length is acceptable. Points are awarded according to how the length complements the style of the coat (such as short coat, long coat, car coat, trench coat, overcoat). The coat may also be textured (such as wavy, curled, crimped, wiry). Artificially textured coats such as demi-wave, permanent wave, cornrows or dreadlocks are not permissible

COLOUR & PATTERN - Available in many colours, but rarely found in heliotrope, primrose, saffron, mauve, puce, magenta, carmine, kingfisher or sky blue. Any green is extremely rare and the authenticity of the colour should be verified. *Disqualify*: Purple (as in cow) and pink (as in elephant). Coat patterns are nearly infinite. Colours and contrasts should be strong in patterns such as check, tweed and plaid/tartan. Others, such as paisley and tie-dye are more appropriately muted.

NEW BREEDS/ANY OTHER VARIETIES

Established the Section in which you'd like to see it, how many generations of pedigree you require for import (33.65 is a nice round number) and provide DNA tests to confirm full feline inheritance. You can't be a new breed or AOV without some drama and controversy. Consider including allowed out-crosses (for genetically modified cats please state preferred non-feline species for donor DNA), and how one might recognise an AOV if it occurred (maybe an ear-tag, union card or B&Q discount card).

The Tonkinese Breed Club

Serving the Tonkinese & Club Members since 1991

Visit our web site and make use of our free kitten list, stud list, breeder's re-homing page, information downloads and much more.

www.tonkinese.info

IT IS 'COAT-RESTRICTION', NOT 'COAT-PATTERN'

We've always said the Tonkinese has three coat-patterns, BCR, TCR and CPP.

Well, when reviewing our SOP we took the opportunity to more correctly refer to three coat-restrictions rather than coat-patterns – the only patterns in Tonkinese are tabby, tortoiseshell and tortie-tabby.

It may seem confusing to start with, and 'coat-patterns' will still be found in books and web sites but at least our SOP will make more sense now 😊



'THE KISS'

Photo of Pymme & Effra by Kelly Peake

QUIZ TIME

Guess the cat saying or phrase
(answers on page 29)



The Extraordinary History of a Little Ships' Cat

This has nothing to do with Tonkinese

Bismarck

The protagonist of this tale is an unassuming little black and white cat that was said to have originally been owned by a crewman of the German battleship *Bismarck*.



He was on board the ship on 18 May 1941 when it set sail on Operation Rheinübung, the *Bismarck's* first and only mission. *Bismarck* was sunk after a fierce sea-battle on 27 May, from which only 115 from its crew of over 2,200 survived.

HMS Cossack

Hours later he was found floating on a board and picked from the water, the only survivor to be rescued by the homeward-bound British destroyer, HMS *Cossack*. The crew of *Cossack* named their new mascot "Oscar".



He served on board HMS *Cossack* for the next few months as it carried out convoy escort duties in the Mediterranean and north Atlantic. On 24 October 1941, *Cossack* was escorting a convoy from Gibraltar to the United Kingdom when it was severely damaged by a torpedo fired by the German submarine *U-563*. Crew were transferred to the destroyer HMS *Legion*, and an attempt was made to tow the badly listing *Cossack* back to Gibraltar, but worsening weather conditions meant the task became impossible and had to be abandoned. On 27 October, a day after the tow was slipped, *Cossack* sank to the west of Gibraltar. The initial explosion had blown off one third of the

forward section of the ship, killing 159 of the crew, but Oscar survived this too and was brought to the shore establishment in Gibraltar.

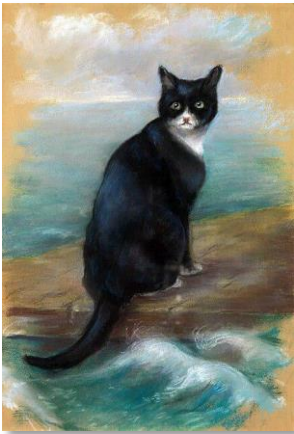


HMS Ark Royal

Now nicknamed "Unsinkable Sam", he was transferred to the aircraft carrier *HMS Ark Royal*, which coincidentally had been instrumental in the destruction of the *Bismarck*.

However, Sam was to find no more luck on *Ark Royal*. When returning from Malta on 14 November 1941, this ship too was torpedoed, this time by the submarine *U-81*. Attempts were also made to tow *Ark Royal* to Gibraltar, but the unstoppable inflow of water made the task futile. The carrier rolled over and sank 30 miles from Gibraltar. Fortunately, the slow rate at which the ship sank meant that all but one of the crew could be saved.

The survivors, including Sam who had been found clinging to a floating plank by a motor launch and described as "angry but quite unharmed", were transferred to *HMS Lightning* and the same *HMS Legion* that had rescued the crew of *Cossack*. *Legion* would itself be sunk in 1942, and *Lightning* in 1943.



Retirement

The loss of *Ark Royal* proved the end of Sam's naval career and he was transferred to the offices of the Governor in Gibraltar. He was later sent back to the United Kingdom, where he saw out the remainder of the war living in a seaman's home in Belfast.

Sam passed away in 1955. A pastel portrait of Sam (titled "Oscar, the Bismarck's Cat") by the artist Georgina Shaw-Baker is in the possession of the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich.

Cats With Vitiligo

Anyone who has ever heard of Michael Jackson will have heard of vitiligo; but did you know that animals can also have the condition?

In 2014 Lydia, a Tonkinese owner in America, contacted me with concerns about her cat's coat becoming "splotched with white fur", she wondered if he might be a rare male tortoiseshell. To cut a long story short I suggested she ask her vet about vitiligo as he had already told her the cat was perfectly healthy. It turns out that he did have vitiligo, as did three of his littermates!

Vitiligo is one of three dermatological conditions that affect the pigmentation of cats.

Albinism: Albino cats have a complete lack of pigment in their fur, skin, and eyes. This gives them pinkish skin, colourless fur, and pale blue or even pinkish eyes. Albinism is caused by a genetic mutation that interferes with pigment production. As you know Siamese, Tonkinese and Burmese come into the genetic albinism group – their pigmentation is restricted by temperature to one degree or another.

Note: *Albino cats are not the same as white cats, which have a dominant white gene that can cover up (mask) all other fur colours.*



Lentigo: This is most common in 'orange' cats, and occurs on their noses, lips, paw pads and eyelids (aka leathers). It's caused by an increase in melanin production, which results in dark spots or freckles.

Photo: Episcopuss Sybilla, Apricot BCR



Vitiligo: This is a *de-pigmentation* of skin, mucus membranes and/or fur. It is a genetic condition, not usually noticeable at birth and typically develops in cats when they are young. It appears as white or pale patches on the skin or fur, often on the face, around the eyes or on the nose. These patches can increase in size and number over time. The affected areas may also include the claws. It does appear spontaneously but it has been seen as a result of skin trauma. Vitiligo is not life-threatening and does not cause any other health issues - treatment is not available or necessary. It is quite rare, and only affects between 0.5% and 2% of cats of all breeds and sizes.



Vitiligo in a melanistic Leopard and a Mountain Lion



Left: A black DSH with typical mature vitiligo 'snowflake' markings.



Above Right: A Tonkinese with vitiligo – you can see why Lydia thought her cat might be a rare tortoiseshell male.

TONK-MOBING

There are no Tonkinese shows in 2025 but our Chairman, Julia, had a brain-wave - 'Tonk Mobbing' ! Indeed we had our first mob at the Cambridgeshire show on March 29th with 17 Tonks entered. Regular exhibitors from both the TBC & TCC were contacted to see whether they would show their cats. The Show Manager kindly allowed us to have a mini-show for Tonks, and Judges selected the BIS Adult, Kitten and Neuter – with special certificates and rosettes provided by the Tonkinese Cat Club.

We would like to hold another 'Tonk-Mob' later this year – will you join us and show your Tonk? We will be sure to let you all know of any plans. 😊

Things Heard In A Veterinary Practice

- A young couple came in with their first ever kitten, the man wanted to know about a weird groaning noise the kitten was making. When it started to purr and he shouted "that's it!"
- Woman thought her cat had a spinal disease because it arched its back every time she scratched it.
- "I only feed my cat a raw diet - cooked eggs and cooked chicken"
- Woman asked how her cat could possibly have fleas, when they lived in a gated community.
- Woman called in concerned that her cat had only had one kitten, because she had more than one nipple.
- On Maine Coon cat food – "does it have Maine Coons in it?"
- "... but he's a boy cat, why does he have nipples?"
- When told that his cat was diabetic the owner replied "Impossible. He doesn't eat candy!"



**BOOKS FOR
TONKINESE ENTHUSIASTS
& CAT BREEDERS**
visit
lindavousden.com

"Moments Make Memories"

Although retired from breeding and showing now, Coral & Vince Macey have been TBC members since its GCCF affiliation in 1991, and have continued to support the Club in many ways since then.

Here they are on just one of the occasions that their Fecheldee cats were BIS winners.



Cat On Your Keyboard?

I am often plagued with cats that insist on joining me as soon as I want to work at my desk! I'm sure you know the problem. My solution is to spend half an hour or more trying to herd them out of my workroom before sitting down at the keyboard. Inevitably Malu evades me, so I have had to put up a blanket on my scanner.



When I was browsing Amazon, as ya do, I came across a Tonk (or Tonk-like) cat sitting on a desk-clamped bed – amazing. Naturally I searched for more and found them! I don't think I'd put one on my desk but I might consider fitting one to a window ledge or book case etc.

What do you think? Here are a few that I found on Amazon just search on 'Cat Desk Bed' if you are interested. Oh, if you think this might be too eccentric take a look at the selection on page 29.



MEOWJUANA FOR CATS



Recently while judging I found my nose curling up at a rather pungent odour. It is not especially attractive to people but Valerian does have an effect on cats (and Captain Picard, for those Trekkies among you).

Valerian for cats is the chopped root of the plant rather than leaves like catnip.

Valerian root contains a different set of active compounds, such as actinidine and valeric acid, which can elicit a response in cats who are indifferent to catnip. For pet owners seeking variety or a solution for cats that don't react to catnip, valerian root offers a fresh and

effective option. It causes mental stimulation as well as an increase in exercise, but can also leave your cats with an overall calm and relaxed aura.

For cats that struggle with anxiety - whether due to loud noises, new environments, or separation from their owners - valerian root can serve as a natural calming agent. The compounds in valerian root interact with the central nervous system, helping to soothe frazzled nerves and create a sense of calm. This makes it particularly useful during stressful events like vet visits, travel, the introduction of a new pet or the first time at a show.

Do not give your cat valerian supplements meant for humans as the dosage may be too strong and have additional ingredients that are harmful to our furry friends. Otherwise valerian for cats is perfectly safe. Dried valerian root is usually coarsely chopped into small pieces to release a stronger scent, so a little sprinkle goes a very long way. Use it like catnip. It is safe to smell and ingest in small amounts used in play. It cannot be metabolised by your cat, which makes it impossible to overdose or become addicted to. However, moderation is still the key. Overexposure can lead to overstimulation, which

may cause temporary hyperactivity or agitation. To avoid this, limit your cat's interaction with valerian root to a few times a week.

Kittens typically don't respond to valerian or catnip as their senses have not yet matured. In mature cats the response to catnip and valerian root may be an inherited factor; around 30% of cats are genetically non-responsive.

Valerian root is available in several forms, making it easy to incorporate into your cat's routine. Dried valerian root is a popular option and can be sprinkled on toys, scratching posts, or bedding. Valerian-infused sprays allow you to apply the scent to specific areas without the mess of loose root.

Note: As always, if your cat has a pre-existing medical condition or is on medication, consult your veterinarian before introducing valerian root; and source valerian root products from reputable suppliers to ensure they are free from harmful additives or contaminants.

	Cat Nip	Valerian
Primary Effect	Stimulating, leading to playful and energetic behaviour, often with rolling and rubbing	Calming and relaxing, often with a more sedated state, particularly after the initial stimulation.
Duration	Effects typically last 10-15 minutes, followed by a refractory period where the cat is less responsive.	Calming effects can last for hours, providing prolonged stress relief.
Response Rate	Not all cats respond to catnip, and some may even react with mild aggression	While valerian root doesn't affect all cats, it generally has a broader appeal and more consistent calming effects compared to catnip.

In conclusion:

- Use catnip for playful entertainment and to encourage activity.
- Use valerian root for relaxation, anxiety reduction, and stress relief.
- Both catnip and valerian root can be used in toys, sprays, or as a sprinkle in their play area.

CATIO ANYONE?

Unless you have a cat that is happy to keep close to the confines of your garden (such as Julie's Laszlo) you'll want to provide a safe place for your cats. These days the level of traffic is worse than ever and there are so many other dangers for free-ranging cats that you already know of. If you are a breeder then the necessity to keep your cats safely confined is obvious!



It is fairly easy to provide some type of enclosure, but will it stand up to the intelligence of breeds such as Tonkinese? Janet told me of her Egyptian Mau

testing the netting that she thought would keep her cat safely confined – Nala just saw a suitable climbing



frame to help her onto the nearest flat roof! So Plan B was put into force and now

Nala has a fully enclosed play ground; as you can see she stills climbs to the top of a roof, but can't go any further!

There are all sorts of enclosure you can buy or build to give access to sunshine and fresh air - from a lean-to over the French windows, a suitable box on a flat-roof, window ledge or balcony or an isolated enclosed pen. You can have a catio company build it for you, buy a DIY plan from them or even design your own and have your own carpenter (insert your own or partner's name here) build it.



IDEALLY THE PEN/ENCLOSURE SHOULD PROVIDE:

Safe and secure outside access. It should be fully enclosed with a roof and base that will prevent the cats getting out and other cats/creatures from getting in (including digging under the fence). Whatever kind of enclosure you have you should include a safety gate – if you have more than one cat the chances are that one at least will try to get out of the gate as you are trying to get in!

Fresh air and sunshine. Use strong, close-mesh wire fencing rather than netting (that their paws can get caught in) to allow a breeze but no escape, and to prevent small birds from getting in.

Stimulation and the opportunity for exercise. Include shelves for sleeping on, climbing structures of some kind, scratching posts, ramps or steps.

A natural environment, as far as possible. Make sure it has fresh water in a regularly cleaned bowl or even a little fountain. A small area of planted grass – even if it is a large seed tray or box; cats like to chew grass and love to sleep on it. If possible include shrubs or cat safe potted plants.

Shelter from excess sunshine/heat of sudden onset of rain. Include a covered area or cat house

Add some pampering touches. Rugs, cushions, cat beds or deck chairs, maybe even a hammock or two and what about a parasol? Don't forget the litter tray and remember to keep it extra clean to avoid problems with flies.

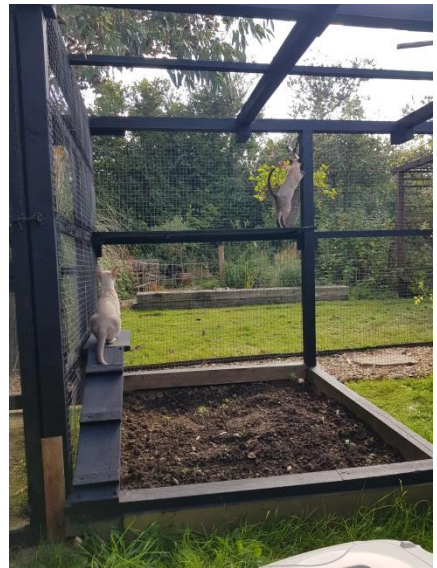
Easy accessibility. If possible provide the cat/s with free or easy access to the enclosure and back into the house – perhaps through a window, door or cat flap. Build a tunnel if the pen is some way from the house – they'll love running up and down the tunnel and it will save your arms carrying them out each time.



HERE ARE A FEW CLUB MEMBERS' ENCLOSURES, TO GIVE YOU SOME IDEAS.



Miriam's Kiri and Maddi enjoying their garden pen – built for them by a retired zookeeper turned pen designer.



Donna's Rudy & Pearl as kittens, exploring their playpen

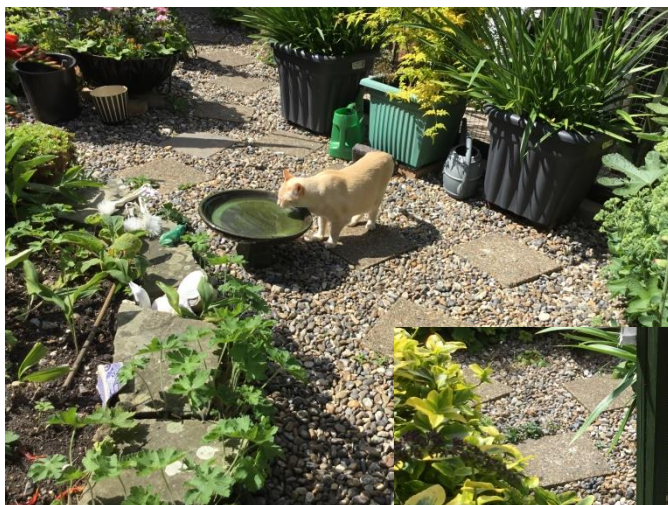
Right: Cats do love to lie on grass, even if it's in a tray or box.





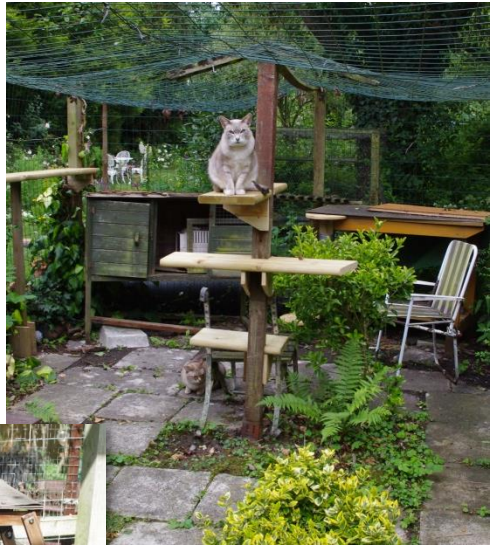
A suitable outdoor shelter

Liz's Frank, happy and safe in his garden pen.



Renata's Tassi
(Taleh Tasimow)
safely enjoying the
sunshine





*Linda & Mike's mob
enjoying their series of
pens, tunnels and a
pergola/catio that have
evolved over the past 30
plus years*

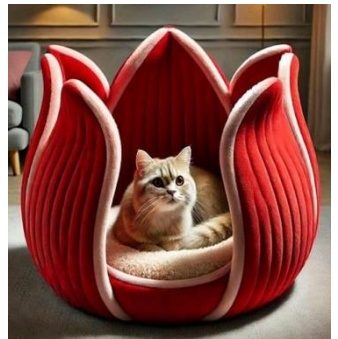
How Does Your Cat Sleep?

My cats sleep in warm, soft beds, big enough to accommodate a queen and her litter or a few adults. *So I am a cruel cat owner!*

My cats don't have designer beds. Should I invest upwards of £300 for them? Here is a selection of beautiful beds available for your darlings ranging from a measly £300 to a magnificent £3,000+ !



Yes - there are cat beds inside the fish tanks!



Of course if you want to have a Cat Bed all to yourself



... oops too late, they found it!

Quiz Time Answers Starting top left:

1. All cats are grey in the dark
2. Cat among the pigeons
3. Cat and the canary
4. Cat in the hat
5. Cat burglar
6. The cat that's got the cream
7. Catwalk
8. Kitten on the keys



GCCF NEWS

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

4th February 2025

Keeping a safe online community is very important to us at The Governing Council of the Cat Fancy. To maintain this safe space, we have implemented a new Social Media Policy which we ask all members to comply with. Not adhering to this policy may result in removal from commenting, a block from our social media pages, or further disciplinary action.

Please take a moment to review the full policy here:
<https://tinyurl.com/uaf7dr63> – by being a member of our social media pages, you confirm you are happy to comply with our policy.

SHOW ETIQUETTE REMINDER

7th March 2025

It is so sad that the GCCF found it necessary to remind people how to behave at shows toward judges and show officials. I am only posting this here as a courtesy, because it is a notice on the GCCF web site. - read GCCF BYLAWS SECTION 4 – EXHIBITS AND EXHIBITORS, Rule 31

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The use of Club Members' photographs is greatly appreciated