

SE Region March 2012 Newsletter

Cat Behavior Bunting and Touching Noses

Cats have many ways of communicating, through their body language, their sounds and most of all, their odors. Some people believe that a cat's sense of smell is even more accurate than a dog's, which is saying something. Compared to a cat's sense of smell, a human's sense of smell is vestigial. Imagine getting as much information from smell as you do from a newspaper, or the internet!

A cat also has an organ at the top of its mouth called a Jacobson's organ, which allows it to taste/smell strange objects to get even more information about it. Most folks who have lived with a cat for a while can tell its body language, but a person who's just gotten their first cat might need some help deciphering all the ways that it can communicate. For example, what does it mean when two cats touch noses? When two strange cats decide to touch noses, they're picking up all sorts of information about each other, very quickly. It would probably take two humans the span of a long lunch to find out what two cats find out about each other just by scent: their gender, where they live, how many humans live with them, the sexes and ages of the humans, whether the cats are neutered or not, whether one or both of them are pregnant, what they had to eat recently and most important, whether they're ready to make friends, or call it a day and go their separate ways.

If the cats decide they'd rather part company, they do, with no one the worse for it. If they decide they might like each other they'll start to rub their mouths and heads and maybe their sides against one another. This is called bunting. They might then lick each other about the head. This looks very affectionate, but it's rather more like a handshake for cats who've just met. It means that they've decided to get along and not to kill each other.

The cat rubs those specific parts of their body against each other or their owner because the top of the head, the lips and the chin have scent glands. Intermingling scents gives everyone a group smell and a group identity. That's why it's important to allow two cats, or a cat and a dog to safely sniff each other when one is introduced into the other's home. When a cat bunts their owner or the cats or dogs they've lived with for a long time, they're saying "These people, two and four legged, belong to me and not the cross-eyed moggie down the street."

One thing a person might do when they meet a cat who doesn't seem overtly scared is to hunker down a bit and extend their finger. The cat will take this as an invitation, and might come up and bump its nose against the tip of the finger, as it would with the nose of another cat. If the cat accepts the human, they'll bunt against them. If they don't, they'll give the human what can only be called a "dirty look" and walk away. For the human, it can only be "Better luck next time!"



Meet The Breed

Bengal

General Description Loved by those who appreciate its inquisitive and loving nature, the Bengal is a medium to large cat renowned for its richly colored, highly contrasted coat of vivid spots or distinctive marbling. Originally developed from crosses between the domestic cats and the Asian Leopard Cat, the Bengal is the only domestic cat that can have rosettes like the markings on Leopards, Jaguars and Ocelots. Today's domestic Bengal cat comes only from breeding Bengals to other Bengals and requires no specialized care. Since their beginnings in 1986, the Bengal's regal beauty and alluring charm have quickly made it one of the most popular breeds. Employing scientific insights and a cooperative spirit, Bengal breeders continue to develop these stunning cats with careful selection for temperament, health and beauty. Bengals participate in TICA shows throughout the world and have a devoted following of happy pet owners who couldn't imagine sharing their lives with anything other than these feline beauties.

History Throughout history there are indications of a profound human fascination with the large and small wild felines that inhabit the jungles and forest of the world. In 1963, Jean S. Mill crossed the domestic cat with the Asian Leopard Cat, a spotted five to twelve pound shy wild cat species from Asia. This was the first effort to use hybrid offspring to create a breed of domestic cat with the loving nature of a favored fireside tabby and the striking look associated with Leopards, Ocelots and Jaguars. The modern Bengal breed traces to cats bred by Mrs. Mill beginning in the early 1980's. The breed's name is a reference to the scientific name of the Asian Leopard Cat, *Prionailurus bengalensis*. The hybrid crosses are registered as Foundation (F1, F2 & F3) Bengals that are not eligible for show and only the females are used for breeding. Accepted as a new breed in TICA in 1986, Bengals gained championship status in 1991. They are now one of the most frequently exhibited breeds in TICA. An enthusiastic group of breeders around the world have successfully fulfilled the goal of creating a docile, civilized house cat that wears the richly patterned coat of the jungle cats and has some of the arresting features that have inspired and aroused humanity for centuries.

Personality While you can train a Bengal to have "good manners", they are an active, inquisitive cat that loves to be up high. If you don't like a cat to leave the floor, a Bengal is probably not the right cat for you. Bengals are busy by nature. They are very affectionate and can be a "lap cat" whenever THEY want to be, but in general their idea of fun is playing, chasing, climbing and investigating. When a Bengal is in full play mode, it's rather like trying to hold on to running water! They'll often save the cuddle time for when they want to sleep. Many Bengals enjoy water and may join you in brushing your teeth or taking a shower. Some Bengals are vocal while others are more quiet and selective about using their voice. Bengals will also, in general, ALWAYS want to be where you are. After all, that's where the action is! And Bengals are all about "The Action". When given the choice of a static toy, and one that does wild, unpredictable things, Bengals will always choose the "wild" one! For individuals or families who enjoy rambunctious, funny, beautiful and dynamic feline companionship, consider the Bengal.

Traits The Bengal is most noted for its luxurious short, soft coat which may appear in either the spotted or marble pattern. Some Bengal's coats feature something called glitter which imparts an iridescent sheen to each hair. The spotted pattern is most associated with the "leopard look" as the coat features clearly discernible spots and rosettes. The Bengal's spots can be large or small and often include rosettes, like the spots of Jaguars and Leopards, which are two-toned spots. Bengals may also be marbled, which is a derivative of the classic or "bull's eye" pattern found in many breeds of cats but with an especially dramatic appearance in Bengals. The marbled Bengal has a swirling pattern that appears as random swirls or thick diagonal and horizontal lines flowing across the coat of the cat. The most popular color of the Bengal is the brown/black tabby, a lackluster description for coats that can be anywhere from a cool grey to vibrant shades of golden, bronze, copper or mahogany with spots or marbling ranging from rich browns to intense black. Bengals also come in a range of colors associated with a form of albinism, called "snow" by breeders, that indicates Siamese and Burmese ancestry. In these colors the coat appears ivory, cream or light tan with spots or marbling that may range from light brown to dark chocolate and the eye color is blue to aqua. Silver Bengals have grey to nearly white

backgrounds with dark grey to black patterns. Also distinctive about the Bengal's coloring is that they may have nearly white undersides and facial markings that still show the tabby pattern. Bengals are medium to large cats, from 6-15 pounds, with males generally being larger than females. A healthy Bengal is well muscled and has an appearance that depicts its athleticism. Bengals are balanced cats and none of its physical features should appear exaggerated or especially pronounced. Bengals are generally confident, curious and devoted companions. They get along well with other pets when properly introduced and enjoy being part of a family. Each Bengal is an individual and those interested should find out as much as they can about this wonderful breed before adding one to their family.

(Taken from the TICA breed pages.) Laurie Patton

A friendly reminder for clubs from your SE Region Webmaster:

Please contact me as soon as Jo approves your show date(s) so I can enter them on the SE Region Show Schedule (and include Jo's post approving them).

I'm available to help clubs with their online flyers, entry forms, summary sheets, and raffles. Just e-mail me at delynne@mindspring.com and provide me with the following:

1. Hard copy of your flyer - preferably as a MS Word document saved with the .doc extension (for MS Word 2007 or earlier). I can also work from a PDF file, but Word is preferable.
2. Any graphics you wish me to use. Although I can "print screen" and crop graphics in a document, they work better if sent separately as either a jpg or gif file.
3. Hard copy of your summary sheet - preferably as a MS Word document saved with the .doc extension (for MS Word 2007 or earlier). I can also work from a PDF file, but Word is preferable.
4. Hard copy of your raffle sheet - preferably as a MS Word document saved with the .doc extension (for MS Word 2007 or earlier). I can also work from a PDF file, but Word is preferable.
5. Name and e-mail address of who will proof the online info before it is announced to the lists.

Do understand, my work (online flyers, entry forms, summary sheets, and raffle pages) are copyrighted. Please do not copy my work for any personal or club web pages. The appropriate avenue would be to provide a link (the URL) from your personal or club page to the online flyer and forms.

If you haven't finalized all your info, I can do a preliminary flyer for you. Just e-mail me what you have. Then keep me updated as things progress.

I am also willing to help create a club web page hosted on the SE server. Just let me know at delynne@mindspring.com and provide me with the info and graphics you want on the page. If you have a club site already, please send me the URL so I can include it on our SE Clubs page.

DeLynne



Irish Sayings

May you always have walls for the winds,
a roof for the rain, tea beside the fire,
laughter to cheer you, those you love near you,
and all your heart might desire.

May St. Patrick guard you wherever you go,
and guide you in whatever you do--
and may his loving protection be a blessing to you always.

May you have love that never ends,
lots of money, and lots of friends.
Health be yours, whatever you do,
and may God send many blessings to you!

May the sun shine, all day long,
everything go right, and nothing wrong.
May those you love bring love back to you,
and may all the wishes you wish come true!

May your feet never sweat,
your neighbor give you ne're a treat.
When flowers bloom, I hope you'll not sneeze,
and may you always have someone to squeeze!





Recipe Of The Month

Irish Stew

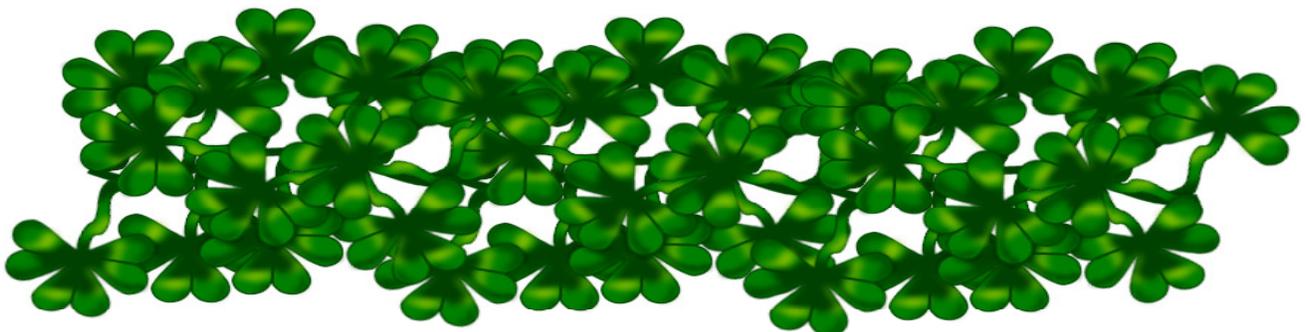


Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 pounds boneless lamb shoulder, cut into 1 1/2 inch pieces
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 1 large onion, sliced
- 2 carrots, peeled and cut into large chunks
- 1 parsnip, peeled and cut into large chunks
- 4 cups water, or as needed
- 3 large potatoes, peeled and quartered
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh rosemary
- 1 cup coarsely chopped leeks
- chopped fresh parsley for garnish

Directions

Heat oil over medium heat in a large stockpot or Dutch oven. Add lamb pieces and cook, stirring gently, until evenly browned. Season with salt and pepper. Add the onion, carrots, and parsnips and cook gently alongside the meat for a few minutes. Stir in the water. Cover and bring to a boil before turning the heat down to low. Simmer for 1 hour or longer, depending on the cut of meat you used and if it is tender yet. Stir in potatoes, and simmer for 15 to 20 minutes, before adding leeks and rosemary. Continue to simmer uncovered, until potatoes are tender but still whole. Serve piping hot in bowls garnished with fresh parsley.



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Taken from www.TICA.org – Laurie Patton

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Anyone wanting to submit articles, recipes, trivia or anything you think others would like to read can send me the info at PiratesLairMC@aol.com

I am in need of some Meet Your Neighbors... I only have one left for next month..!!...

Thanks to all who contributed this month..!!..

Laurie

Don't forget that the SE Region is on Facebook

<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=300505338191>

Until next month!

