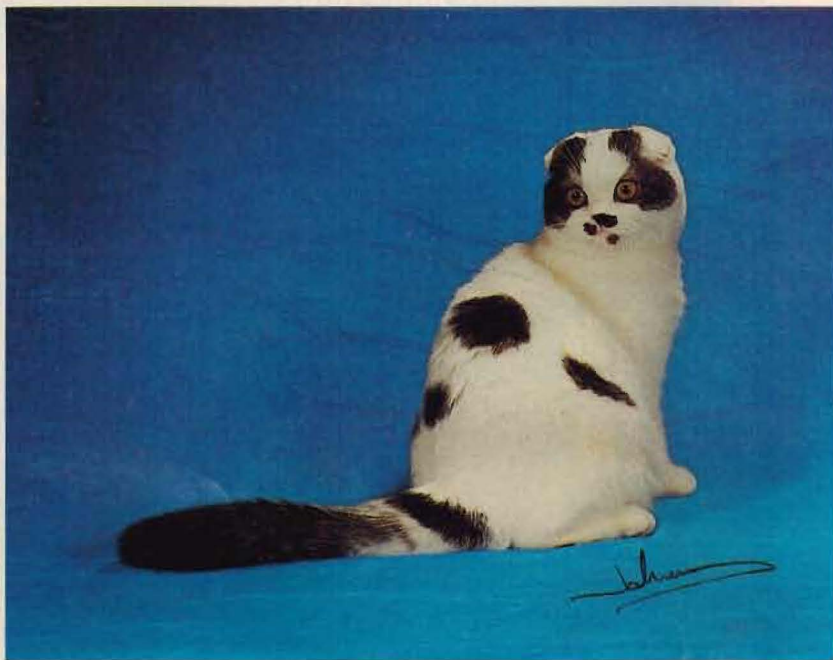


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BREED PROFILE

Irresistible Ears:

Scottish Folds and American Curls



LARRY JOHNSON/COURTESY OF SUE THOMPSON

Scottish Folds come in many colors. Grand Champion Lirkanes Bubba Boo is a black smoke and white Scottish Fold.

With their unique ears, these adorable cats make gentle, loving pets.

Perhaps no two breeds in the cat fancy elicit more oooohhs and aaaaahhs at a cat show than the Scottish Fold and American Curl. With their unique ears, both breeds have sweet expressions that can melt your heart.

A Scottish Fold features ears that are folded over to create a caplike effect and a rounded head. A Curl's ears curve back into a smooth arc and feature interior hair that fans out in a soft halo. Both breeds are known for their large, expressive eyes.

One breed has European origins; the other, American heritage. Each makes for beautiful show cats and loving pets.

Scottish Folds

by SUE THOMPSON

"Do you clip those ears, or are they born that way?" "Aren't you ashamed of what you did to that cat's ears?" "Does your kitty have a hearing problem with its ears clamped shut like that?" and "Are

your cats more prone to ear diseases with their ears down like that?" These are only a few of the questions Scottish Fold exhibitors frequently hear at cat shows. Just for the record, answers to these questions are "No, no, no and no."

Almost every Scottish Fold breeder and exhibitor who is asked about the breed is quick to share a history lesson. In 1961 in Scotland's Tayside region, William Ross, a shepherd, was returning home from work when he saw a white cat playing in the yard of a neighboring farm. Ross' attention was riveted because he noticed the cat had strange little ears that folded forward. Upon arriving home he told his wife, Mary, about his unique find. The two made plans to visit their neighbors, the McRaes, to inquire about the kitten.

The folded-ear cat was a white barn cat named Susie. The McRaes were unable to provide specific details of Susie's origin except that her mother had been a white straight-ear barn cat who had a litter of three kittens, two of

which developed folded ears. The male kitten had wandered away, but Susie remained with the McRaes. They promised to give the Rosses a folded-ear kitten should Susie produce one.

The following year the Rosses received a white folded-ear female kitten they named Snooks. From 1961 to 1966 the Rosses bred and produced several folded-ear kittens they called "Lops," named after the lop-eared rabbits. In 1966 they began registering their Lops with the Governing Council of the Cat Fancy, Britain's largest cat registry. Efforts to establish the Lops as a recognized breed began. Sometime during the late '60s they were renamed Scottish Folds.

In 1970 three Scottish Folds were brought to the United States for study at the Carnivore Genetics Research Center in Newtonville, Massachusetts, but because of a lack of interest, genetic studies were abandoned. Although that may have been unfortunate for the breed, it was fortunate that established cat fanciers were able to acquire breed-

SPECIAL PULLOUT SECTION

Aristocurl's Lizicurl Taylor is a graceful and elegant shorthaired American Curl.

Scottish Folds are often described as looking like little owls. Their large, wide open eyes contribute to their sweet expressions.



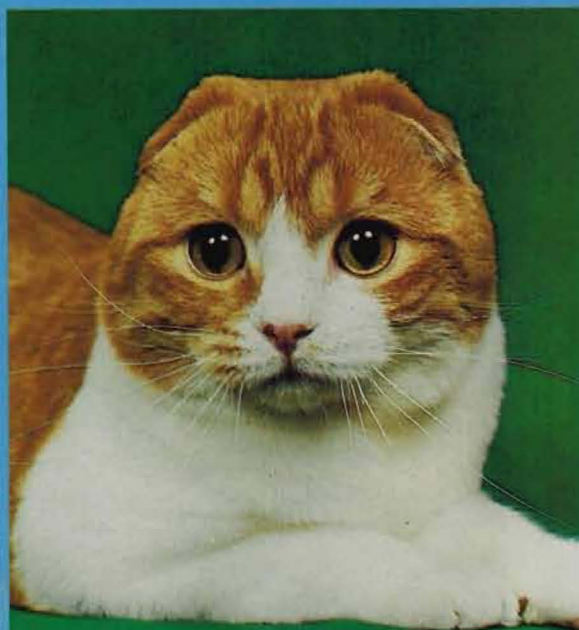
Snow B-ea-r-y of Sweetums, a copper-eyed Scottish Fold Longhair, has a beautiful, silky coat.

CAT FANCY

© January 1994
Chanan



MARK MCCULLOUGH/COURTESY OF LARRY AND JUDY ZINN



The degree of fold varies in the Scottish Fold's ears. Grand Champion Maralox's Cherry on Top is a red and white tabby with tightly folded ears.



TETSU YAMAZAKI/COURTESY OF KAREN O. BENZANA

Grand Premier Patenkats Patches of CeltiCurl, a brown tabby with white, was the Cat Fanciers' Association's first grand premier American Curl.



SHARON K. KLEAGER

American Curl kittens are born with straight ears. The curl develops between Day 1 and Day 7 and continues to evolve as the kittens mature.

stock from the original imports and, on after, establish a standard for the Scottish Fold breed. Scottish Folds were accepted to compete in cat shows for championship status in 1978. In America, the only legitimate outcrosses for breeding purposes are the British and American Shorthairs.

Every registered Scottish Fold can trace pedigree back to Susie. In the beginning, folded-ear cats were bred with first one, then the other, which probably accounts for their sturdy body and healthy constitution. However, when early breeders attempted to create an all-fold breed by mating folded-ear cats with folded-ear cats, troubles began. Kittens were born with or later developed skeletal deformities or other gross abnormalities. Today these problems have been corrected.

The Waiting Game

The gene for the folded ear is incomplete dominant, which means if one parent has folded ears the kittens are prime candidates to have folded ears. A straight-ear kitten will not carry the fold gene, nor will its ears fold later in adulthood. The degree of ear fold varies from barely tilted forward to tightly folded. For show competition, the smaller, tighter fold is preferable with the ears set in a caplike position to expose a rounded head. Ears that are too tight or too loose take away from the perfectly round head that the breed standard calls for.

Scottish Fold breeders are used to the "waiting game." They wait for 63 to 70 days for the kittens to arrive. Because all kittens are born with normal ears, they wait 18 to 28 days to see if any of the kittens develop folded ears. Even if the ears do fold, the degree of fold is not always apparent until about 9 to 12 weeks of age and sometimes even longer. The average litter contains three to five kittens. Most breeders will agree that about 50 percent of the kittens produced during a calendar year will have folded ears. Rarely do all the kittens in a litter have folded ears, and occasionally all the kittens in a litter have straight ears.

The importance of the straight-ear folds must not be overlooked. Straight-ear Folds are the same cat with the same look and personality; however, their ears are perked. Straight-ear Folds are equal to the Scottish Fold breeding pro-

gram because a folded-ear Fold should always be mated with a straight-ear cat, whether it be a straight-ear Fold or a legitimate outcross.

Straight-ear Folds are the same cat with the same look and personality.

A Sweet Expression

Scottish Folds have often been described as looking like little furry owls. This is probably because of their large wide open eyes and sweet innocent expressions. The eyes may be any color as long as it corresponds with the coat color.

A shorthair Scottish Fold's fur is dense, plush, medium-short and soft. It should stand out from the body because of its density. It's impossible to see a Scottish Fold for the first time and not have a burning desire to run your fingers through its fur.

In the beginning, Folds were bred with different breeds of cats. For that reason, occasionally longhair and shorthair kittens appear in the same litter when both parents exhibit short hair. For many years the longhair Folds were placed in pet homes because even though they were registered Scottish Folds, their coat length did not conform to the Scottish Fold standard initially established for the breed. In recent years longhair Fold supporters convinced the cat associations that the longhair gene is legitimate and should be recognized. Longhair Folds may be referred to as Highland Folds or Scottish Fold Longhairs, depending on the registry.

The standard for the Scottish Fold Longhair coat is medium to long. The face and body should have a full coat, but short hair is permissible on the face and legs. Britches, tail plume, toe tufts and ear furnishings should be clearly visible, and a ruff is desirable. The longhair coat should be silky, not cottony, in texture.

Kittenish Ways

Scottish Folds seem to stay in perpetual kittenhood and tend to live long healthy lives with proper care and nutrition. Scottish Folds are devoted but undemanding. They are usually docile but enjoy playtime, and absolutely nothing is sacred if it happens to be in their path. They are intelligent, often playing fetch or other games.

Although not all Scottish Folds are lap cats, almost all want to sit near their human companions whether it be on the arm or back of an occupied chair or maybe just beside a warm body in case they feel the urge to be petted. Folds always want their human companions in sight and will resort to following them from room to room. They thrive on affection, giving as well as taking.

Although exceptions exist, Scottish Folds are quiet and have petite voices if they deign to say anything. For no obvious reason apparent to the observer, Scottish Folds often sit up on their haunches like prairie dogs but have never been known to bark.

If you decide to acquire a Scottish Fold, you may need patience. Because the number of folded-ear cats is limited, straight-ear Folds are usually more plentiful and may be easier to locate. Sometimes it takes several months to find a pet-quality, folded-ear kitten; most breeders will hold their kittens four months or longer if they believe the cat might be show quality. New owners should expect to be required to sign a spay/neuter agreement when acquiring a Scottish Fold as a pet.

Although we will probably never know the actual origin of the folded-ear cat, selective breeding has melded to blend the Scottish Fold into one of the cutest and most adorable cats ever created.

Sue Thompson is the Cat Fanciers' Association Scottish Fold breed council secretary and a member of the International Scottish Fold Association.

The American Curl

by NANCY REYNOLDS KESTER

The American Curl recently marked a milestone. On October 23, 1993, the cat registries marked the 10-year anniversary of the first public exhibition of this unique

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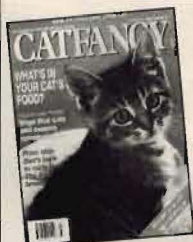
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CHANNAN

Not all Scottish Folds have folded ears. Perk-eared Scottish Folds make the same wonderful pets as their folded-ear counterparts.

EARS continued

and rare addition to the world of purebred feline companions. The American Curl is a graceful, semi-foreign cat with ears that smoothly curl back from its face.

Healthy, vigorous and curious, Curls are tolerant and outgoing, with a sweet expression that seems to say "Pet me." Give in: The silky, soft coat and responsive body language of these beautiful cats will soon have you hooked.

The American Curl breed, the newest addition to the Cat Fanciers' Association's roster of championship cats, is based on a spontaneous mutation, not from another pedigreed breed but from the American domestic cat. This is the same basic gene pool that gave the world the Maine Coon and the American Shorthair breeds.

In 1981, a slender black female named Shulamith was rescued from the streets of California. She had a sweet personality and ears that turned back from her face in a gentle curve. Even more unusual was that half of each litter born to her and the local tomcat also had the unusual ears, though with differing degrees of curl.

Selective breeding and record keeping for the breed began in 1983. A number of American breeders began working on this fascinating new cat. The breed standard was expanded and refined as the population of rare cats gradually increased.

Shulamith's Story

In addition to her ears, Shulamith possessed a number of characteristics that continue to be a focus of the breed. She was slender, with soft, silky fur and a light minimal undercoat.

Today, the ideal Curls are well-balanced, moderately muscled cats yet still slender in build. They are alert and active with gentle dispositions. The head is a modified wedge without flat planes, moderately longer than wide. When seen in profile, the nose on the lower face should be straight, with a gentle curve at the bridge from the bottom of the eyes to the forehead. The profile should gently curve to the top of the head, without a long flat plane or a rounded dome; the muzzle should have a smooth transition at the cheek line, without a pronounced whisker break. The muzzle should be neither pointed nor square, with a firm chin that is in line with the nose and upper lip.

The breed's distinctive feature, the curled ears, should have at least a 90-degree arc of curve not exceeding 180 degrees. It is a show disqualification for the ears to curl so much that they touch the back of the head or the ear itself. The moderately large ear should be wide at the base and open, curving back in a smooth arc when viewed from the front or rear. There is firm cartilage in the ear from the base to at least one-third of the height, while the tips are rounded, soft and flexible. The curled ear causes interior hair to fan out in a soft halo, a perfect complement to the expressive

walnut-shaped eyes.

In length, the Curl's body should be one and one-half times the height at the shoulder. The cat is flexible without being tubular, cobby or coarse. Legs are medium long. The tail should be as long as the body, full and plumed on the long-haired American Curl. At some times of year, the long hair on the tail can be the only sign that a cat is a longhair. The coat is silky and lies flat; it rarely mats.

The American Curl is found in both long and shorthair varieties and in all colors and patterns. Though the majority are solids, bicolors, calicos and tabbies, Curls are also seen in smoke and color points.

Add a Curl

A Curl makes a loving addition to the family. Curl kittens are active and curious. Each new object they discover becomes the basis for a new game. They want to do everything together, from emptying the dinner dish to a nap on the big soft sofa pillow to a sneak attack on their patient mother.

Most American Curls are fond of other creatures, too. Dogs and children are high

on the list of things to be near. Some American Curls are drawn to water. Once, one of my cats perched on the side of the tub as I bathed. I offered my knee for the cat to step on; then the cat settled down and snuggled on my chest. Before long, the cat was in the tub with me, soaking wet and still purring.

Developing Curls

American Curl kittens are born looking like any other baby cat, but between Day 1 and Day 7, the ears of those kittens that carry the curl gene firm up and begin to curve back, often making tight little rolls on their heads. As the kittens mature, the ears gradually unfurl, reaching at 4 months of age their adult degree of curl. Kittens need only one parent with the Curl gene to end up with curly ears. It is possible for a kitten to get the gene from both parents, thus being a homozygous Curl, ensuring that all offspring it may produce will have curled ears. The gene appears to be benign and nonlethal; we now have many generations of curl to curl breeding without harmful effects. Straight-eared cats of good type from

American Curl litters that don't carry the Curl gene are valuable in a planned breeding program and also make outstanding pets.

An American Curl is never to be bred to another pedigreed cat. This is a problem in Europe, where a few non-neutered Curls have been sold and are now of breeding age. Breeding is only allowed between an American Curl and either another American Curl or an American domestic that fits the Curl standard in all ways except the curl of the ears.

I hope I've answered some of your questions regarding this fascinating breed. Look for the American Curls the next time you attend a cat show. You'll find these special cats to be sweet, accommodating and eager to share your life, your bed and probably your soup. Share the special legacy of a black curly eared cat named Shulamith. 🐾

Nancy Reynolds Kiestler is the secretary for the CFA American Curl breed council, as well as treasurer and membership secretary of the North American Curl Breed Club.



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