



by
MARIANNE CLARK

The Japanese Bobtail

A Thumbnail history of
The Japanese Bobtail cat in CFA

Marianne Clark is Kurisumasu, breeding and showing Japanese Bobtails exclusively since 1989, located in the Portland, Oregon area. Kurisumasu is a CFA Cattery of Distinction, Tier VII, Superior. Kurisumasu has 212 Grands, 27 Distinguished Merit Cats (2nd highest in CFA), Multiple breed winners. She has been CFA's Breed Council Secretary since 2017.

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Why do owners of Japanese Bobtails consider them the smartest and sweetest cats ever?

Is it their endearing clown activities, the affectionate kisses and hugs, the demand to be with us in our activities and their dog like habit of following people around?

The history as to how they came to be in our hearts begins with Buddhist Monks who came to the Japanese Islands around 700 B.C.

It is said they brought cats to keep rats out of the rice paper prayer scrolls. Besides breeding their cute little tails, they managed to become pets of not only the monks, but the Emperor and royalty. Peasants were forbidden to own them.

They were kept on leashes and pampered. One of the Emperors so loved his little white bobtail when she had

kittens, he ordered her to be bred again. (Guess he didn't know that cats needed no help in procreating).

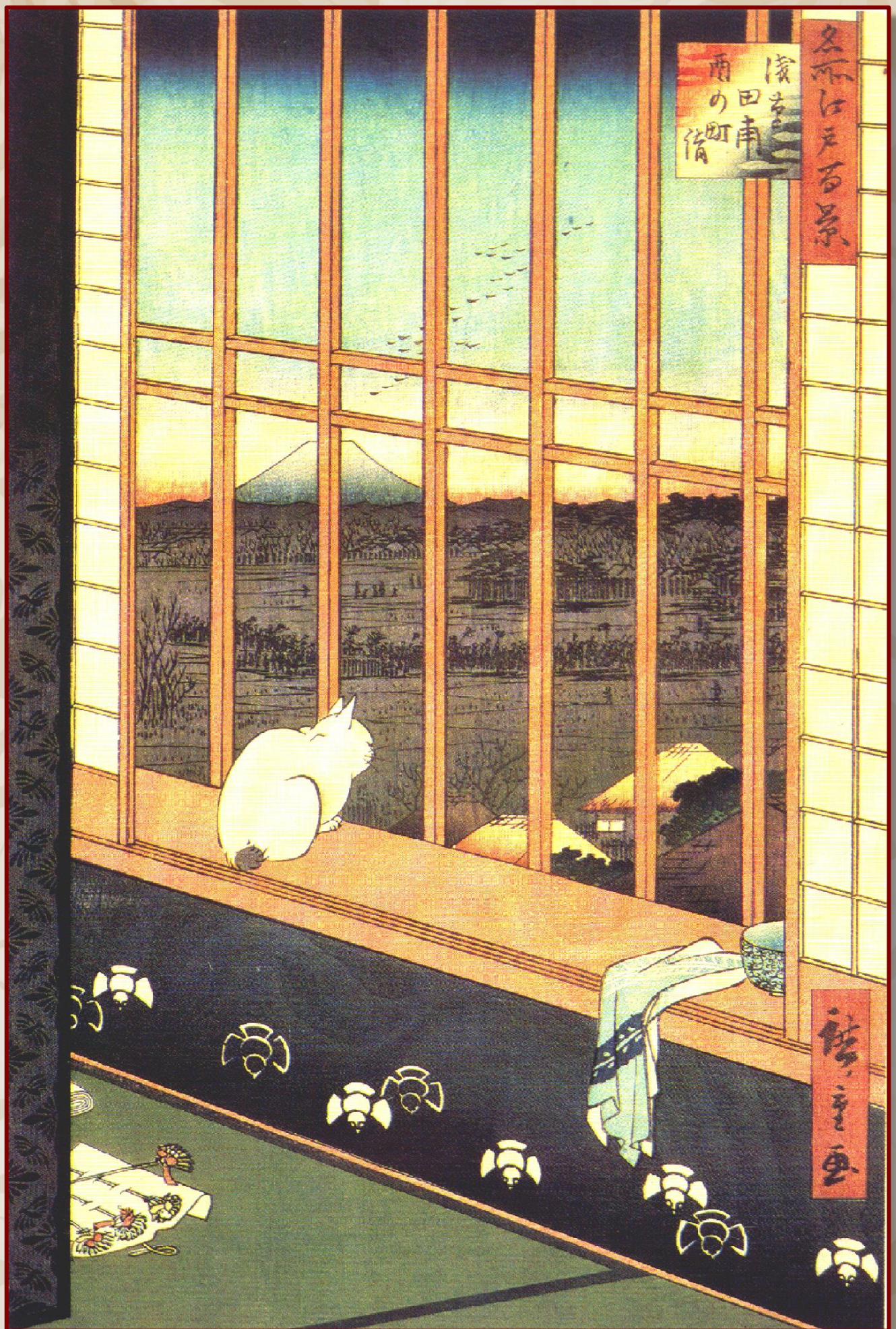
I'm quite certain they also didn't obey the Emperor and managed to escape to become the street cats they are today.

It is also said, in the 16th Century there was a panic in silk production as mice were eating the silkworms.

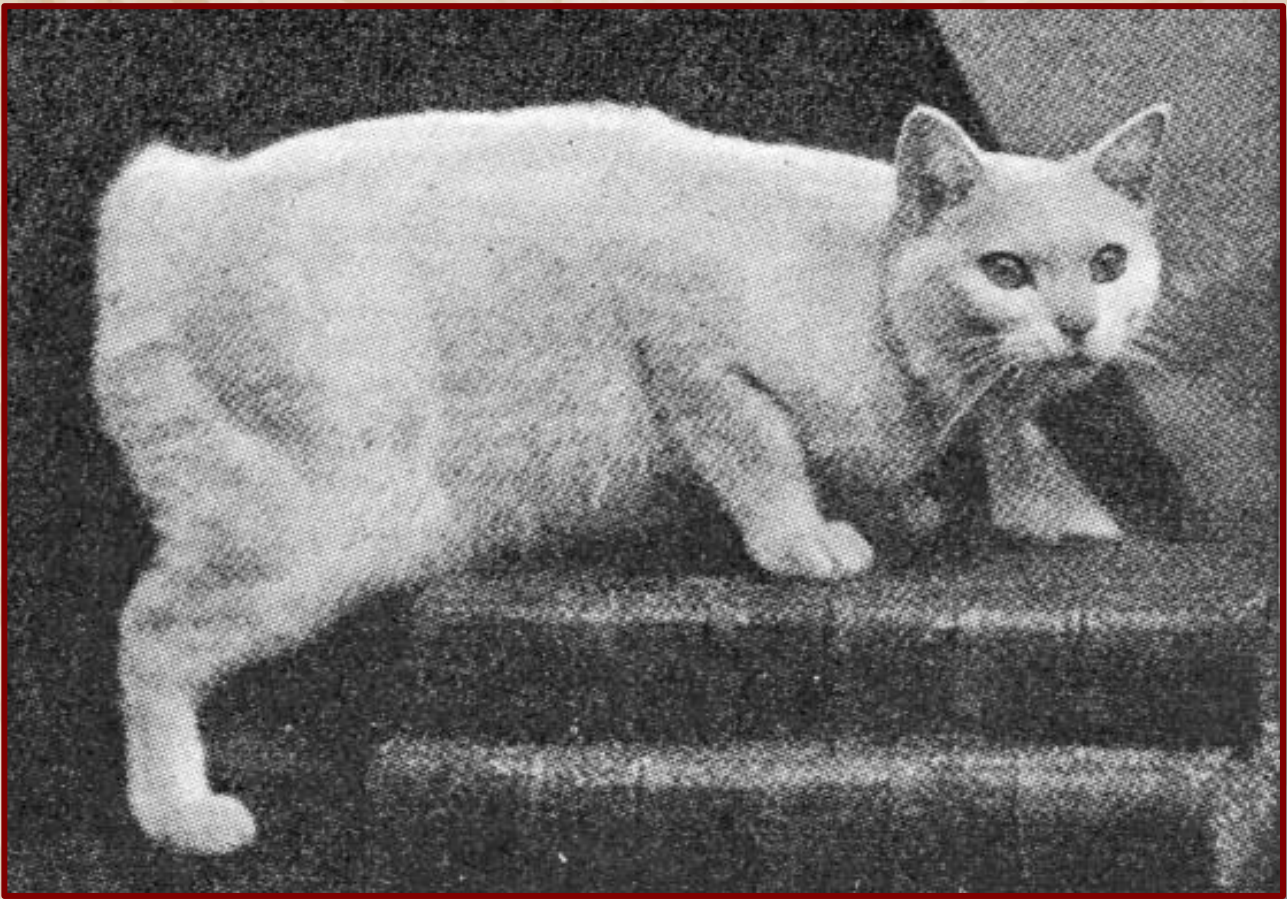
The Emperor knew they were great hunters, so he ordered the cats to be released to save the silk worms.

They managed for years to survive and endear themselves to the people of Japan.

Even today the street cats live a pretty charmed life with many people feeding them in neighborhoods, temple and park colonies. I speak from having been gifted with several street cats from my Japanese friends.



A Japanese Bobtail enjoying the view from a window of visitors to Kinryzan Temple.
Painting by Hiroshige (1797-1858)



**'O UKI SAN' – An early 20th century Japanese Bobtail, (known then as a Japanese Manx)
One of several imported into the United Kingdom by Mrs. McLaren Morrison.**

Image: 'The Tatler' October, 1901. Courtesy of The Harrison Weir Collection

The trip to pampered pets in the USA began after World War II when returning military personnel had their cats accompany them home.

Even today many Japanese Bobtails have made their way to the US from their native land.

In the 1960s Japan started having cat shows sponsored by the Cat Fanciers' Association. Many judges fell in love with them being shown in the Household Pet category and recognized their uniqueness in the world of cats. Judges included Betty O'Brien (now deceased) and Robert Zenda, who still judges today.

Bess Higuchi, later a CFA judge, exhibited bobtails in the Household pet class along with American Judy Crawford and the two

working together were instrumental in sending the first "official" breeding pair to Elizabeth Freret in Virginia in 1968.

In 1970 Judy moved to Seattle and brought 38 cats with her.

In 1969, at the CFA Board meeting Elizabeth presented 3 Japanese Bobtails with a proposed standard. The breed was accepted and registration granted to cats who had certificates of Japanese origin.

This is still a practice today of CFA whose registry is open to all "street" cats from Japan who have a bobtail; hence genetic vigor is encouraged. CFA is the birthplace of Japanese Bobtail recognition.

Early breeders were concerned there would be a definite distinction between the Manx cat and the Japanese Bobtail, at least in the show ring. The standard was written



A tailed Japanese street cat resting in the lap of a statue of Buddha, c.1960

Photo: Courtesy of The Harrison Weir Collection.



CH, GP, NW KITAI'S MITU OF NEKOLADY – CFA'S FIRST NATIONAL WINNER JAPANESE BOBTAIL

Photo: Jane Howard.

for a smaller medium cat, representing fine porcelain. However, street cats in Japan vary from large, cobby and thick coats and these types are often seen in the ancient art of Japan.

It wasn't until twenty-four years later that the longhair variety of the JBT was accepted for championship status in CFA. Most registries have accepted both coat lengths except for FIFe as at the time of writing.

It was a slow start for awards and prizes for the Japanese Bobtail in CFA due to few being shown and lack of interest in the average exhibitors, although many CFA judges owned and promoted them. The first Grand Champion was a colorful mi-ke Maryott's Quan Yin of Amberleigh, owned by Mary Olsen and Patti LeBlanc.

But unfortunately "Quanie" passed from Feline Leukemia, as there was no test nor vaccines at that time. Many cat owners suffered the same loss.

The next few years was dominated by a father/son combo, GC Mr. Lee of Far, the 2nd grand champion and his son GC Ranwins Fugi San of Far East. Ran was Best of Breed for 3 years from 1978-79-80.

Just as the Cat Fancy began to grow so did the number of Japanese Bobtail Breeders.

Many dedicated breeders showed and were successful in the 1980s. Ch/GP NW Kitai's Mitu of Nekolady was the first National Winner in CFA. She was owned by Barbara Romanos and Barbara was a tireless promoter of the breed sharing her lines and knowledge to newcomers.



GC, BW, NW BASSETTI'S PACHINKO – FIRST TIME DOUBLE NATIONAL WINNER AS A KITTEN & ADULT

Photo: Chanan

Big names that came out of the 80s were (alphabetically): -

Bassetti (Janet Bassetti), Choneko (Dee Hinkle), Kiddlyn (Linda Donaldson), Kurisumasu (Marianne Clark), Maricho (Marilyn Knopp), Nekomo (Doug Myers / Allen Scruggs) and Wyndchyme (Karen Bishop / Jill Archibald / Lynn Search). Today Kurisumasu and Kiddlyn are still breeding and showing.

Throughout the years JBTs became very successful with many National Winners, Regional Winners and Grand Champions. Bobtails from the US were exported to many countries.

I personally exported to South Africa, Poland, Germany, Denmark, U.K., Switzerland, New Zealand and Australia.

Some Pioneer highlights are:

- GC BW NW Nekomo Hirohito, first NW in Championship, 1988
- GC BW NW Bassetti's Pachinko, first time double NW as a kitten and adult, 1988
- GC BW RW Bassetti's Saisho in 1989 first male Distinguished Merit (DM*) who still has the most Grands – 30
- GP Kurisumasu Kindei, first longhair grand, 1994
- GC BW NW Choneko Yoyo of Nekomo, highest finish in standings for a JBT 1995
- GC RW Kurisumasu Kohana, DM, first Longhair DM, 1996
- GC GP BW NW Maricho's Hoseki, first National Winning LH (Premier). 1996



GP KURISUMASU KINDEI – CFA’S FIRST JAPANESE BOBTAIL LONGHAIR GRAND.

Photo: Carl Widmer.

- GC BW Kurisumasu Ki-to, DM and GC Kurisumasu Momiji, DM the first and so far only littermate breed winners in the same year, either division, 1997
- GC BW NW Bassetti’s Sugureta Kin, 1994, first time a JBT was the Best Shorthair Cat in CFA
- GC BW NW Wyndchymes Mask-of-Zorro, 2001, 2nd Best Cat & Best Shorthair Cat in CFA
- GC BW RW Kiddlyn’s Watagashi, Only two time Breed Winner, 2002 & 2004

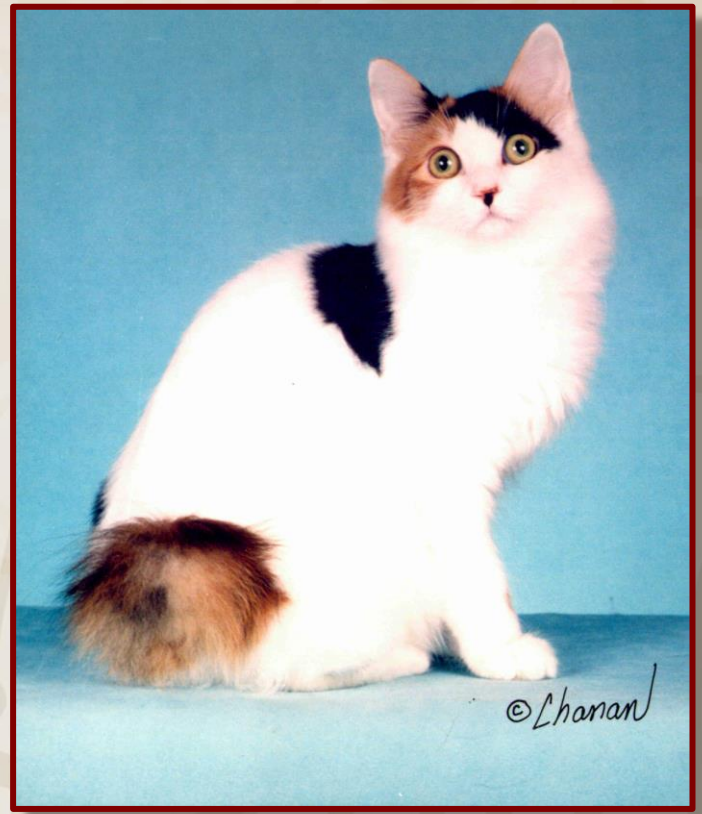
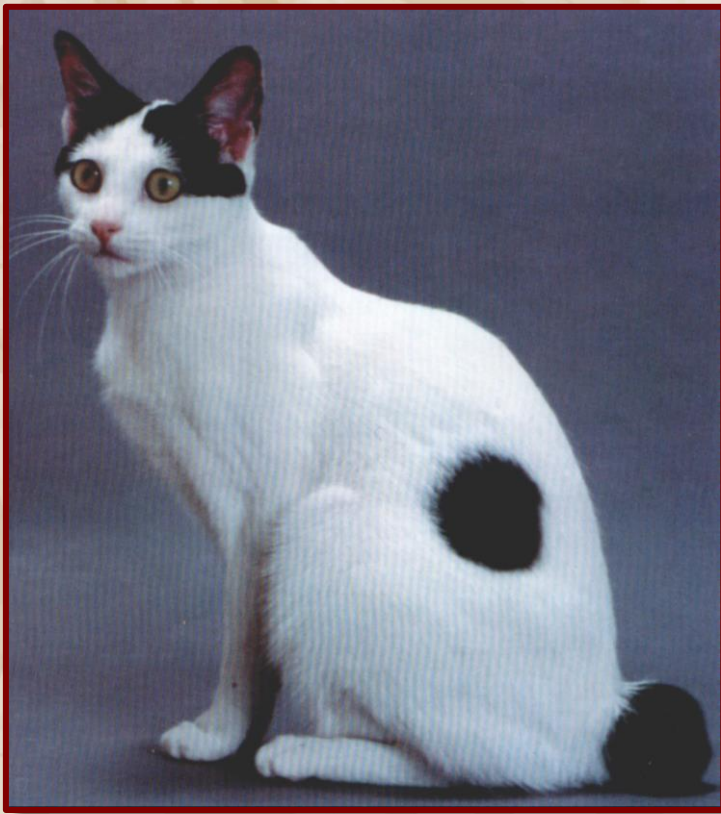
In 2006 two cats to be noted are due to their unusual colors, a departure from the traditional red, white, and black, both National Winners and many breed winners followed in their paw steps of different colors.

- GC BW NW Kenipurr’s Hajime of Kurisumasu, DM 15th Best Cat, Smoke Mi-ke.
- GC BW NW Ginchika Okonomiyaka, DM, 17th Best Cat, Silver Patterned/White.

From 2006 and onward. For even more information on Pioneer Cats, visit <https://www.japanesebobtailbc.org/INTRO-PIONEER-CATS.pdf>

One breeder who “swims” against the current is Linda Donaldson of Kiddlyn. Linda has devoted her JBT life since 1985 to breeding the “odd” colors, she has granded a myriad of colors, solids of black, white, blue, red tabby, classic tabbies, tortoiseshells, blue-crème and others.

But of course, she had “normal” colors, too! Ginchika consists of Jennifer Reding and



**Above left: GC, BW, NW CHONEKO YOYO of NEKOMOMO finished highest in the Standings for a JBT in 1995.
Right: GC, RW KURISUMASU KOHANA DM – the first Japanese Bobtail Longhair DM, 1996.**

Photos: Left: Jane Howard. and Right: Chanan.

Nikki Crandall-Seibert who began to specialize in silvers in 2002 with an import from Japan.

Most Japanese Bobtails love to show and everything involved, tolerant of the long car rides and plane rides and the admiration of strangers – judges and spectators.

There hasn't been a year go by that at least one Japanese Bobtail doesn't appear in the Top National Winning cats.

This year is a first (2022) where the Cat of the Year in CFA is a Japanese Bobtail, a longhair, GC BW NW Nudawnz Dobutsu No Mori, "Acey"; owned by Lorna Friemoth and her extended family.

Congratulations and it's been a long wait coming, where the Persians/Exotics have formerly dominated.

"Acey" joins an exclusive club of breeds which include a Burmilla, a Bombay,

American Shorthairs, a Sphynx, and Russian Blue, to overcome the Persian parade.

2022 is a year for the "different" in our Breed. The 2nd Best Longhair Japanese is a Silver Patterened & White male, GC RW Kiddlyn's Honjomasamune and in the Shorthair Division Best is a Seal Point and White Female, GC BW RW Songgwangsa The Point Is: Bunny!

Second best is GC RW Kurisumasu Suisai-Cho, an odd-eyed dilute female, and 3rd is GC RW Kiddlyn's Klassic Kuda, a solid red tabby.

JBT owners are as active and crazy as their cats, people say. In the show hall you can find many of us are not content showing just one, but many!

Smart judges hide their toys before the JBTs come to their ring. Don't be surprised if one pops out of a kitchen cabinet or deftly opens up a door. Fetching is just one of their

HIGHEST SCORING JBT'S 2021-2022 SHOW SEASON

CHAMPIONSHIP

GC, BWR, NW	NUDAWNZ DOBUTSU NO MORI	MI-KE	4355.45
	Ow: L FRIEMOTH, S FRIEMOTH, K FRIEMOTH, J FRIEMOTH, L GALLION, P GALLION, L GALLION		
GC, BWR, RW	SONGGWANGSA THE POINT IS: BUNNY!!! BLUE POINT-WHITE F		1538.25
	Br/Ow: OLIVIER GRIN		
GC, RW	KURISUMASU SUISAI-CHO	DILUTE MI-KE	958.80
	Br/Ow: MARIANNE CLARK		
GC, RW	KIDDLYN'S KLASSIC KUDA	RED CLASSIC TABBY M	698.00
	Ow: LINDA K DONALDSON, SCOTT THORNILEY		
GC, RW	KIDDLYN HONJOMASUMUNE	SILVER PATTERNED-WHITE	618.95
	Ow: LINDA K DONALDSON, SCOTT THORNILEY		
GC	GINCHIKA NO QUIERO SABER	SILVER PATTERNED MI-KE	196.40
	Ow: J REDING, N CRANDALL-SEIBERT, C SEIBERT, M CAMPBELL		
GC, AW	WYNDCHYMES KOBE	BLACK-WHITE M	175.10
	Ow: KAREN BISHOP, JILL ARCHIBALD		
GC	GINCHIKA JIJI	SMOKE MI-KE	147.60
	Ow: J REDING, M CAMPBELL, N CRANDALL-SEIBERT, C SEIBERT		
CH RW	KIDDLYN'S RYUJIN	SILVER PATTERN/-WH M	81.60
	Ow: LINDA K DONALDSON, SCOTT THORNILEY		
GC	KURISUMASU KIZETSU CHO	SILVER PATTERN MI-KE LH*	70.95
	Br/Ow: MARIANNE CLARK		

KITTENS

GC, RW	NUDAWNZ ODOROKUBEKI ISAN	DILUTE PATTRN MI-KE LH*	911.80
	Ow: LORNA FRIEMOTH, JASON GALLION, LUCY GALLION, LINUS GALLION		
CH, RW	KIDDLYN'S HIKARI OF KURAMAKATZ	BLACK SMOKE-WHITE F*	437.10
	Ow: A. DIEHM, C JENSEN, S THORNILEY, LINDA DONALDSON		
GP,	KIDDLYN'S ITSUTSU HOSHI	RED MAC TBY-WH N	225.55
	Ow: LINDA K DONALDSON, SCOTT THORNILEY		
	WYNDCHYMES KOBE	BLACK-WHITE M	178.45
	Ow: KAREN BISHOP, JILL ARCHIBALD		
CH	KURISUMASU TOUKA-CHO OF RAGTIME	CAMEO PATTERN/WHITE F*	142.60
	Ow: MARIANNE CLARK, LAURA GREGORY, JOHN GREGORY		
No title	NUDAWNZ NEVER HAVE I EVER	CAMEO PATTERN/-WH N*	114.35
	Ow: CAROL POWELL		
	WYNDCHYMES SILVER BELLE	SILVER PATTERN/-WH F	111.25
	Ow: L SEARCH, V CRAWFORD, K BISHOP, J ARCHIBALD		
PR	KIDDLYN'S GRACE OF CATSNTATS	BLUE-WHITE F	104.90
	Ow: BECKY SMITH, LINDA K DONALDSON		
	GINCHIKA OH NO! THERE GOES TOKYO!	BLACK SMOKE-WHITE N	97.85
	Ow: PATTY MAHANY		
GP, RW	KURISUMASU TORA-USAGI	BLACK-WHITE N	97.45
	Ow: MARIANNE CLARK, BETTY CARRUTHERS		

HIGHEST SCORING JBT'S 2021-2022 SHOW SEASON

PREMIERSHIP (ALTERS/DESEXED)

GP, RW	BENHANA ARAMIS OF KEMAGE Ow: ANNE MATHIS, KEVIN E MATHIS	BLACK-WHITE N	1724.75
GP, NW, AC	KAWAIKATS KEIKO CATSUI OF BUNIKATS PATTERNED MI-KE LH S* Ow: JAIME KARTAK LERNER		1470.40
GP, NW, AC	KAWAIKATS TAKENGEI Ow: JENNIFER SPADAFINO, TYLER DEEL	BROWN PATTERN/-WH*	1429.80
GP, RW	MISHA'S NAWO Ow: YUMI MASUDA	BROWN PATTERNED-WH N	624.95
GP, RW	KURISUMASU TEXAS BUNNY OF GULFCATS RED PATTERNED-WH N Ow: MARIANNE CLARK, TONI HUFF		615.40
CH, GP, RW	KURISUMASU KACHIMUSHI Ow: MARIANNE CLARK, DEBI GOMEZ, LINDA OSBURN	RED SMOKE-WHITE *	590.70
GP, RW	KURISUMASU KEMURI-CHO Br/Ow: MARIANNE CLARK	SMOKE MI-KE LH *	409.10
GP	KURISUMASU RAIHATSU OF ARROW Ow: LINDA J OSBURN, MARIANNE CLARK	BLACK-WHITE N	370.35
GP	KENIPURR'S JILLIAN Br/Ow: KENDALL SMITH	BLACK SMOKE-WHITE SPAY	198.80
GC, GP, RW	GINCHIKA ISHITSUKURI Ow: PATTY MAHANY	SILVER PATTERN/-WHITE N	163.85

passions and we don't need to teach them!
They just seem to know!

Most like the water and will jump into the shower or tub. We are kept young by their silliness. But like potato chips, most people can't just have one!

Marianne Clark

**FOR MORE IMAGES
OF PRESENT AND PAST
JAPANESE BOBTAIL WINNERS
AND EXHIBITS AT SHOWS
TURN TO OUR GALLERY
OF JAPANESE BOBTAILS
BEGINNING ON PAGE 50**

NOTE:

Marianne Clark is **Kurisumasu**, breeding and showing Japanese Bobtails exclusively since 1989, located in the Portland, Oregon area.

Kurisumasu is a CFA Cattery of Distinction, Tier VII, Superior.

Kurisumasu has produced 212 Grand Champions, 27 Distinguished Merit Cats (2nd highest n CFA) and Multiple Breed winners.

Marianne has been CFA's Breed Council Secretary for the Japanese Bobtail breed since 2017.

*DM, a male cat that has produced 15 Grand Champions, or a female cat that has produced 5.