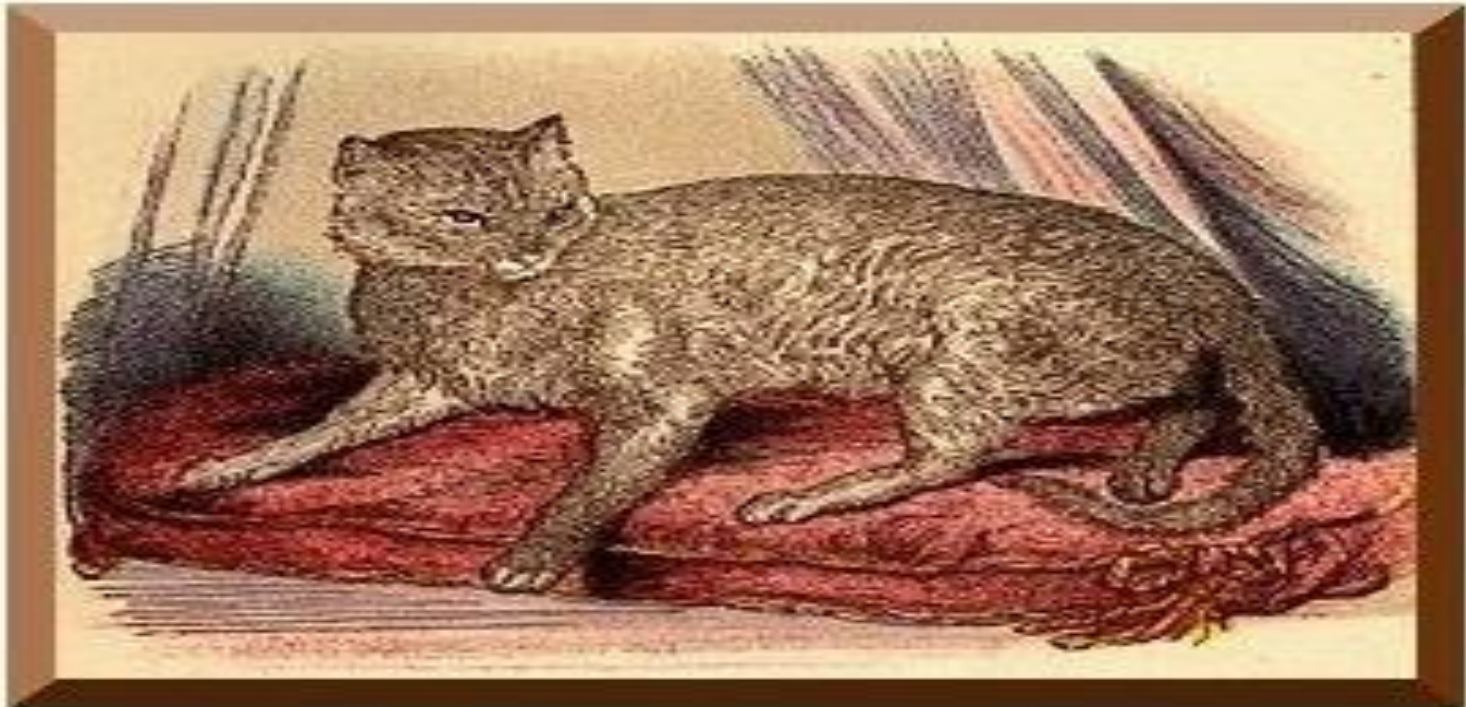


# The Abyssinian Breed History of the Abyssinian



# HISTORY OF THE ABYSSINIAN



***"A sketch of Zula, published in Dr. W. Gordon Stables: Cats, Their Points and Characteristics and Curiosities of Cat Life in 1874."***

# Cat Mummies British Museum

*Cats were the exclusive animal of the goddess Bast, also known as Bastet. Bastet was the goddess of love and war and was believed to appear on earth as a cat, and as a result, the cats were immensely regarded and worshipped in ancient Egypt.*

*The British Museum has a considerable collection of cat mummies which clearly indicates the important position that the cat held in the land of the Pharaohs.*



# Mystery of the Abyssinian Cat

*In their booklet published in 1951, Child Of The Gods, Helen and Sidney Denham, refer to the Abyssinian as a “Child of the Gods” Sidney Denham explains, “It may well be that the religious beliefs of ancient Egypt are forever alive, and in the Abyssinian cat of today we have the reincarnation of a divinity”!*





# The Grayer-Anderson Cat

## British Museum

### The Grayer-Anderson cat

## Communicating with the gods

Cats were kept as pets in ancient Egypt, but gods could also appear in the form of cats. This bronze figure comes from a temple and probably represents one form of the goddess Bastet. Every year some 700,000 people travelled to Bubastis in northern Egypt for a festival in Bastet's honour, according to the Greek historian Herodotus.

Thousands of bronze figures of gods, in varying sizes and forms, were dedicated in temples throughout Egypt. The donors of the statues hoped to communicate with the gods. Only the king or someone very wealthy could have afforded to commission an example as fine as this cat, adorned with precious metals.

The scarab beetles on the cat's head and chest symbolise rebirth, while the silver *udjat*-eye on the pectoral invoked protection and healing.



- Bronze with silver plaque and gold jewelry. Around 600 BC.
- Possibly Saqqara, Egypt

# Considered to be the oldest breed of the cat family

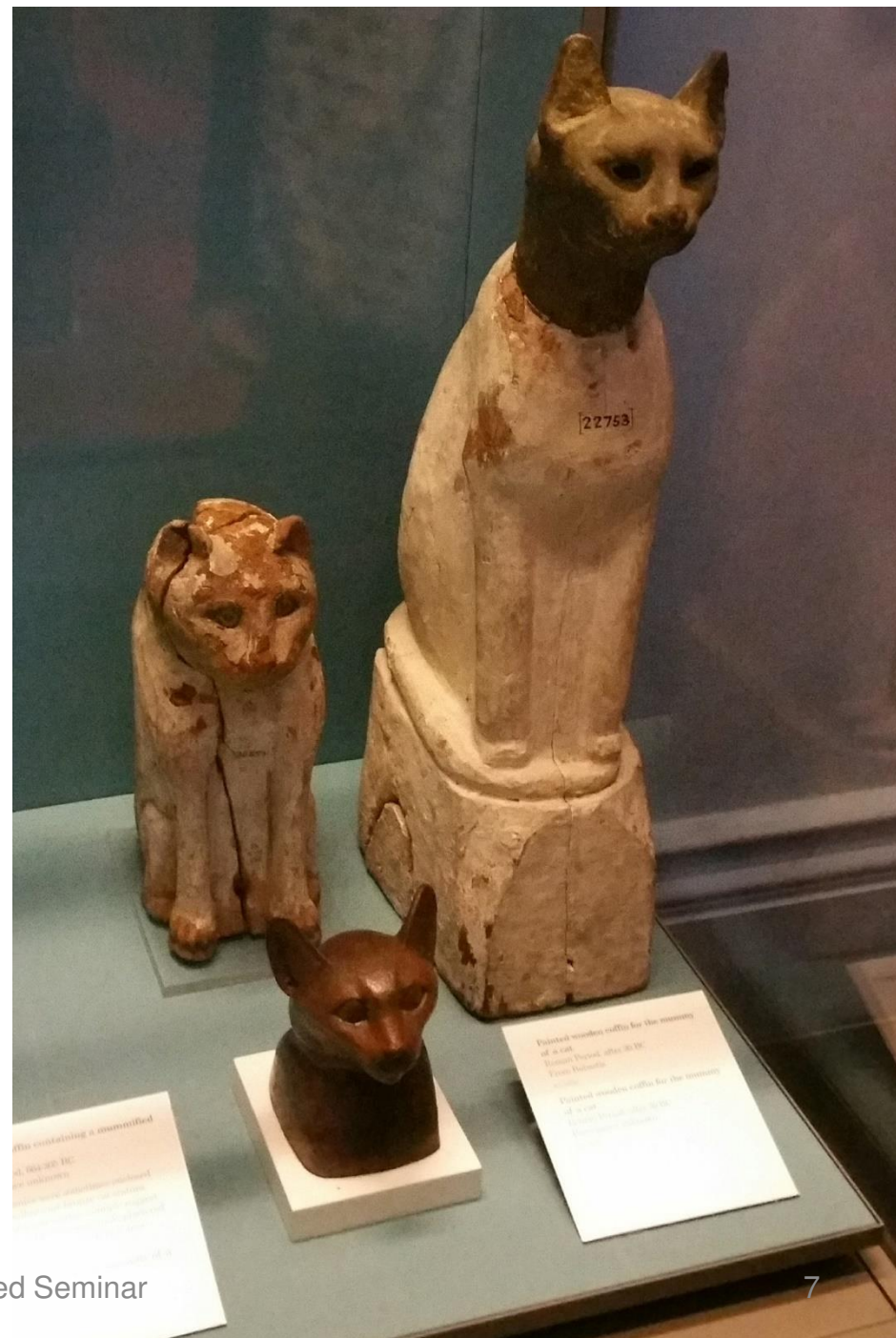


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*Brian Vesey-Fitzgerald in his book 'Cats', points out that by viewing Egyptian art, the idea that the Abyssinian may very well existed at that time is prevailing. Egyptian bronzes and paintings of cats in ancient Egyptian emphasize the liveness, elegance, graceful lines, large eyes, rounded contours, long tail with tabby stripes and alert ears which are distinguishing features that are seen in the Abyssinians of today.*

Aby Breed Seminar

*There are those who are of the belief that the idea of the Abyssinian being a direct descendant of the sacred cat of Ancient Egypt is only a romantic tale.*





# Journey from Abyssinia to Egypt

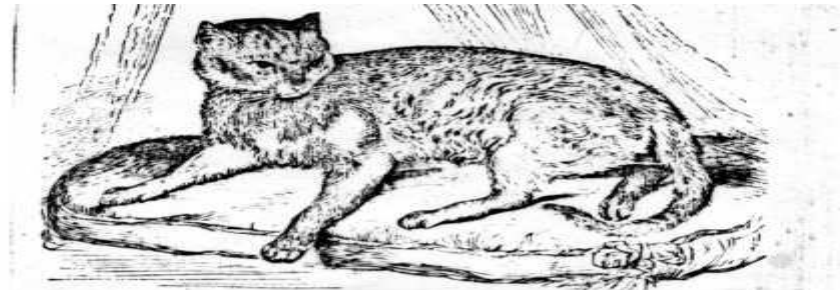
*Many believe there was a close link between Abyssinia and Egypt and the potential for the Abyssinian cat to be part of both cultures was very possible. Having the same ruler at times created a connection that allowed both countries to be influenced by one another. In the fourth century, Abyssinia accepted the Coptic Christian faith of Egypt and the head of the Ethiopian church was appointed by the patriarch of the Coptic church in Egypt. Another important fact is that the Nile river allowed for communication and trade. The Blue Nile in Abyssinia's Lake Tana, joining the White Nile flowing northward towards Egypt.*





# Zula

*Others believe that an Abyssinian named Zula was transported by British soldiers from Abyssinia (now Ethiopia) to England at the end of the Abyssinian war in 1868. Many believe Zula to be the foundation of the Abyssinian however, there is no documentation linking Zula to the Abyssinian breed lines.*



"Zula," the property of Mrs. Captain Barrett-Lennard. This cat was brought from Abyssinia at the conclusion of the war, fed on the way home on raw beef, and was long very wild. She is now very fond of her mistress, but has a great many eccentricities which other cats have not, and is altogether a wonderful specimen of cat-kind.

## ADDENDA.

PHOTOSTAT COPY OF COLOUR PLATE AND FIRST REFERENCE  
TO WHAT IS THOUGHT TO BE THE ORIGINAL ABYSSINIAN CAT  
FROM THE BOOK "CATS, THEIR POINTS AND CHARACTERISTICS  
WITH A CHAPTER ON FELINE AILMENTS" BY GORDON STABLES  
PUBLISHED BY DEAN AND SON BETWEEN 1872 and 1875

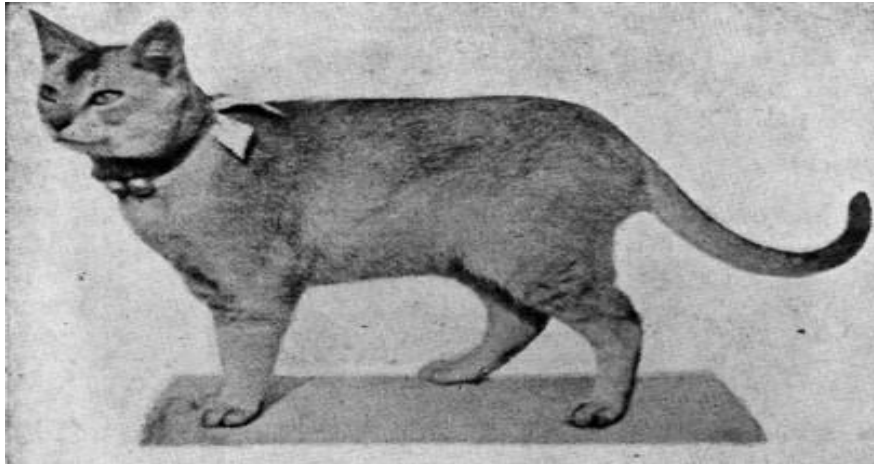
# Patrie: Leiden Zoological Museum

*More recent genetic studies have identified the potential forbearers of the Abyssinian may have come from the coast of the Indian Ocean and parts of Southeast Asia. Leiden Zoological Museum in Holland has on display a ruddy ticked feline taxidermy which was purchased in the mid 1830s, and labeled as Patrie, domestica India. This indicates the possibility that the breed may have been introduced into England from India by colonists or merchants who frequently traveled between England and the Indian subcontinent.*



# Bunny Cat

Some others believe that the English developed the Abyssinian by crossing silver and brown tabbies with the British ticked “Bunny” cats.



# Zula, the Abyssinian wins 3<sup>rd</sup> prize Crystal Palace, UK



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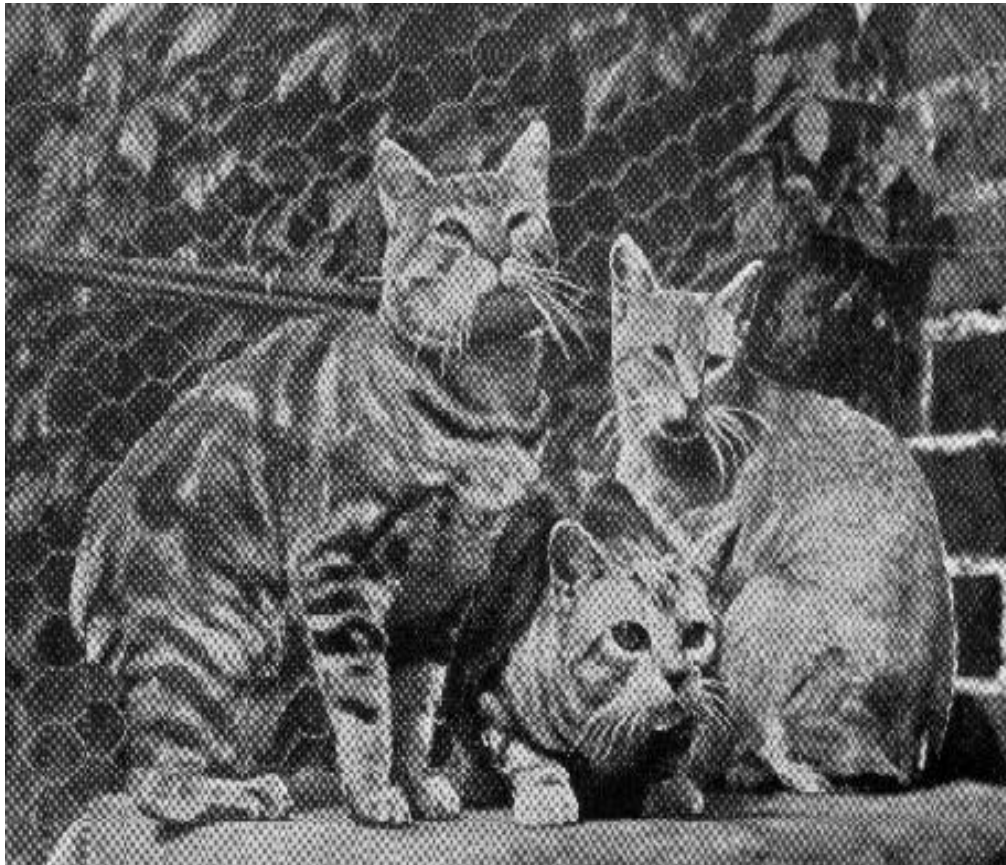
notice. As for the kittens, they appeared to be supremely happy, and rolled over and over in chase of the little spills of paper which lady visitors thrust into the cages for their delectation.

The first prize was won by a Persian she-cat of rare violet color, whose portrait is given on this page. The third prize was taken by the Abyssinian cat, shown in the lower right-hand corner of the illustration. She was captured in the late Abyssinian war, and was mostly remarkable for her woe-begone appearance, seemingly discontented at her sudden elevation into notoriety, and longing for her barbaric freedom in the good old days of King THEODORE. The animal that attracted most attention was "Tortoise-shell Tom." He stood alone in his glory.

The first mention of an Abyssinian was in the January 27, 1872 issue, Harper's Weekly where the 3rd prize in the December, 1871 Crystal Palace show was taken by the Abyssinian Cat ("captured in the late Abyssinian War"). This article is accompanied by an illustration of the Abyssinian Cat. The description reads: "Zula, the property of Mrs. Captain Barrett-Lennard. This cat was brought from Abyssinia at the conclusion of the war..."



# Sedgemere Bottle & Sedgemere Peaty Owned/Bred By Sam Woodiwiss



First Pair to gain fame in England were Bottle & Peaty. (Center & Right .. A Manx to Left) The first Abyssinian registrations occurred in 1896, and the stud book of the National Cat Club reveals that Sedgemere Bottle, born in 1892, and Sedgemere Peaty, born in 1894, were registered by Mr. Sam Woodiwiss.

# Largest Abyssinian Catteries in England

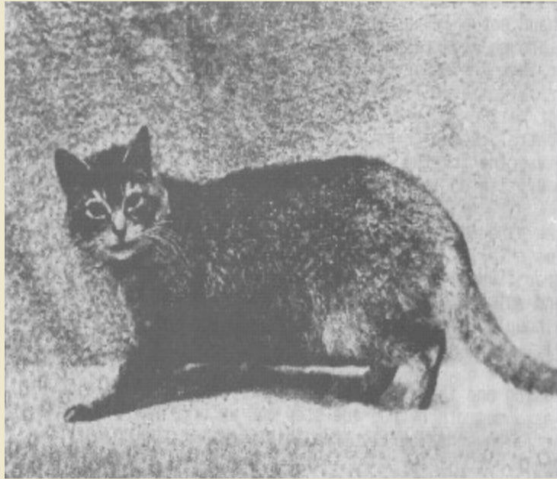
- *Woodrooffe Cattery: Major Sydney Woodiwiss*
- *Croham Cattery: Mrs. Clare Basnett*

*The foundation of the American Abyssinian as we know it came from these two catteries. During the Second World War, catteries struggled and became small due to the food shortages and the fear of being bombed. It is documented that only twelve Abyssinians survived World War Two, although there were imported Abyssinians already in the US. Through it all, the Abyssinian lines were able to move forward.*

# Aluminium II

*Aluminum II was born on September 2, 1907, and was acquired by Miss J.R. Cathcart of the United States. Miss Cathcart also obtained another cat, a female named Salt. According to Mrs. Zanetti (Zanetti, Dennis, and Hantzmon, 1906) Aluminum II and Salt were the first imports to the United States.*

## ALUMINIUM II (GBR-USA)



Breed: Abyssinian  
Color: SILVER  
Sex: M  
Born: 03/09/1907  
Reg.# ACA 00709  
Bred by: Mrs C. Carew-Cox  
Owned by: Miss J.R. Cathcart

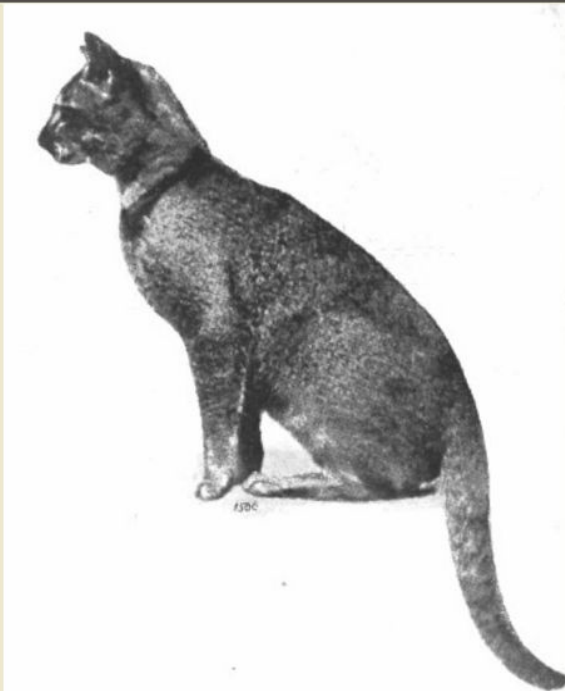
| Parents                                 | Grandparents                     | Great-Grandparents | Great-Great-Grandparents |
|---|----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| ALUMINIUM SILVER NCC 4463<br>15/07/1905 | RAS KASAR 23 NCC 4501 30/05/1900 | SPIDER             | Unknown Sire             |
|   |                                  | TINKER             | Unknown Dam              |
|   | ROCKSHAM SILVER /07/1900         | Unknown Sire       | Unknown Sire             |
|   |                                  | Unknown Dam        | Unknown Dam              |
| FANCY FREE SILVER NCC 4932<br>/07/1903  | Unknown Sire                     | Aby Breed Seminar  |                          |
|   | Unknown Dam                      |                    |                          |

# Ras Dashan: Son of Aluminium II & Linga

*Note the Color: 23 - Ruddy color.*

*Sire was a silver & the Dam was a ruddy ( 23)*

## RAS DASHAN



Breed: Abyssinian

Color: 23

Sex: M

Born: 25/04/1908

Reg.# NCC 7627

Bred by: Mrs C. Carew-Cox

Owned by: Mrs C. Carew-Cox

| Parents                                 | Grandparents                     | Great-Grandparents | Great-Great-Grandparents |
|---|----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| ALUMINIUM SILVER NCC 4463<br>15/07/1905 | RAS KASAR 23 NCC 4501 30/05/1900 | SPIDER             | Unknown Sire             |
|   |                                  | TINKER             | Unknown Dam              |
|   | ROCKSHAM SILVER /07/1900         | Unknown Sire       | Unknown Sire             |
|   |                                  | Unknown Dam        | Unknown Dam              |
| LINGA 23 /04/1902                       | Unknown Sire                     |                    |                          |
|   | Unknown Dam                      |                    |                          |

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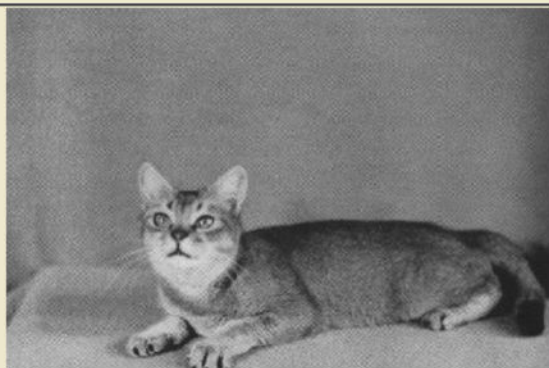
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# Woodrooffe Ena of Newton

*From 1920 until 1934 no trace of Abyssinians could be found in the US. Miss Mary Hantzmon of Washington DC, acquired Ena, a ruddy female and since there were no males available, in 1937 she imported a male stud from England named Ras Seyum.*

## WOODROOFFE ENA OF NEWTON (GBR-USA)



Breed: Abyssinian  
 Color: 23  
 Sex: F  
 Born: 26/05/1933  
 Reg.# GCCF 022740 v 19  
 Bred by: Major E. Sydney Woodiwiss  
 Owned by: Mrs Virginia R. Cobb

| Parents                                      | Grandparents                                   | Great-Grandparents                          | Great-Great-Grandparents    |
|--|--|---|-----------------------------|
| WOODROOFFE DANUS 23<br>13/04/1932            | WOODROOFFE RASTUS 23 GCCF 015010<br>31/05/1927 | RAS ISIS 23 GCCF 012077 29/04/1926          | RAS DJIBUTE 23 GCCF 000545  |
|  |  | EMPRESS ZAUDITU 23 GCCF 009994 17/07/1924   | SYMY 23 GCCF 000960         |
|  | WOODROOFFE BUNTY 23 GCCF 016068<br>09/04/1929  | WOODROOFFE BRUTUS 23 GCCF 015492 16/06/1927 | RAS DJIBUTE 23 GCCF 000545  |
|  |  | BRUTON BUNTY 23 GCCF 015789 / /1925         | GEISHA GIRL 23              |
|  |  |   | SAKA 23                     |
|  |  |   | BRUTON BUNTY 23 GCCF 015789 |
| WOODROOFFE AURA 23 GCCF<br>016730 04/09/1929 | RAS ISIS 23 GCCF 012077 29/04/1926             | RAS DJIBUTE 23 GCCF 000545 29/04/1916       | RAS DASHAN 23 NCC 7627      |
|  |  | SYMY 23 GCCF 000960 01/06/1924              | QUEEN OF SHEBA 23           |
|  | ALUNA (GBR-FRA) 23 27/03/1926                  | RAS DJIBUTE 23 GCCF 000545 29/04/1916       | Unknown Sire                |
|  |  | EMPRESS ZAUDITU 23 GCCF 009994 17/07/1924   | Unknown Dam                 |
|  |  |   | RAS DASHAN 23 NCC 7627      |
|  |  |   | QUEEN OF SHEBA 23           |

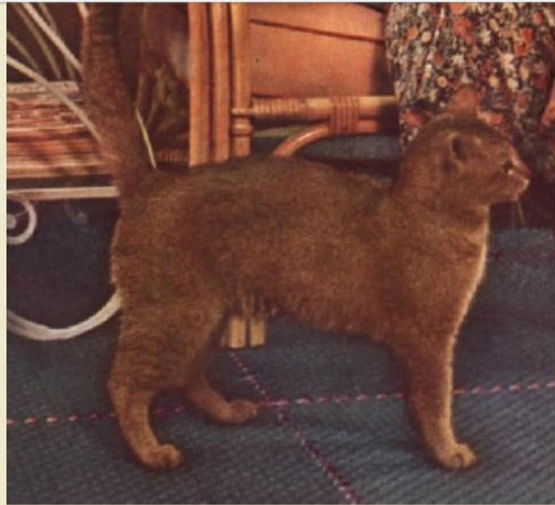
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# Ras Seyum

*Ras Seyum was known to be the most impressive Abyssinian to date. He was considered quite handsome, very well ticked, with a intense reddish brown color; lovely body and faultless head type.*



Breed: Abyssinian  
 Color: 23 +  
 Sex: M  
 Born: 21/09/1935  
 Reg.# GCCF 026485  
 Bred by: Major E. Sydney Woodiwiss  
 Owned by: Mrs H. Earl Nack

| Parents   | Grandparents                       | Great-Grandparents                    | Great-Great-Grandparents |
|---|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| TIM THE HARVESTER 23 * GCCF<br>017822 03/04/1930            | RAS BROUK 23A UNREGISTERED         | Unknown Sire                          |                          |
|   |                                    | Unknown Dam                           |                          |
|   | GOLD TICK 23 /04/1923              | SOUTHAMPTON RED RUST 23 07/09/1920    | RAS DASHAN 23 NCC 7627   |
|   |                                    | IMPORTED SOUTH AFRICAN WILD CAT       | QUEEN OF SHEBA 23        |
| August 2017<br>WOODROOFFE AURA 23 GCCF<br>015720 04/09/1930 | RAS ISIS 23 GCCF 012077 29/04/1926 | RAS DJIBUTE 23 GCCF 000545 29/04/1916 | RAS DASHAN 23 NCC 7627   |
|   |                                    |                                       | QUEEN OF SHEBA 23        |
|   |                                    | SYMY 23 GCCF 000960 01/06/1924        | Unknown Sire             |
|   |                                    |                                       | Unknown Dam              |

# Ras Seyum

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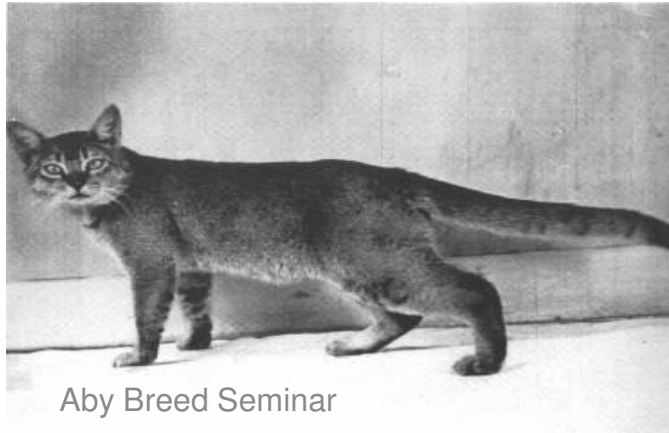
*A color picture of Ras Seyum appeared in the November 1938 Issue of National Geographic Magazine. At that time he was considered The Best Abyssinian in Great Britain. Many were disappointed that he was imported to the United States.*





# Original Abyssinian Cat Club of Great Britain

- *The first cat registry was the National Cat Club, established in 1887 in England.*
- *The first Abyssinian Club was founded in 1929 primarily to promote the pure breeding of the Abyssinian Cat. This club was also one of the first members of the Governing Council of the Cat Fancy ([GCCF](#))*





# 1889 Abyssinian Breed Standard Great Britain

## *Head (10 Points)*

*Small, broad across the eyes, rather long than short, nose medium length, all well-formed*

## *Eyes (15 Points)*

*Orange-yellow, slightly tinged with green, large, round, full, and bright*

## *Nose and Feet (10 Points)*

*Nose dark red, edged with black; tips and cushions of feet black, also the back of the hind-legs*

## *Fur (15 Points)*

*Soft, rather woolly hair, yet soft, silky, lustrous, and glossy, short, smooth, even, and dense*

## *Ears (10 Points)*

*The usual size of the ordinary English cat, but a little more rounded, with not much hair in the interior, black at the apex*

## *Colour (20 Points)*

*A rich, dun brown, ticked with black and orange, or darker on lighter colours, having a dark or black line along the back extending to the end of the tail, and slightly annulated with black or dark colour. As few other marks as possible. Inside of fore-legs and belly to be orange-brown. No white*

## *Size and Condition (10 Points)*

*Large; coat glossy and smooth, fitting close to the body; eyes bright and clear*

## *Carriage and Appearance (10 Points)*

*Graceful, lithe, elegant, alert and quick in all its movements, head carried up, tail trailing, in walk undulating*

*N.B. - The Abyssinian Silver Gray, or Chinchilla, is the same in all points, with the exception of the ground color being silver instead of brown. This is a new and beautiful variety.*

## First Abyssinians to be Shown in the USA



*In the USA, the 1899 Chicago Cat Club was formed, followed by the Beresford Cat Club (named after noted British breeder Lady Marcus Beresford). In 1906, the American Cat Association became the main registry and in 1908 this became the Cat Fanciers' Association Inc. (CFA).*

*There is evidence to believe that the first “recorded” Abyssinians that were shown in America were Silver in color. They were shown in Boston, Massachusetts in 1909 and were owned by Miss Jane Cathcart of Oradell, New Jersey.*

*The reason why it is believed that they were silver is by the very nature of the their names; Champion Aluminum and Salt.*

***In 1920, Boston Cat Club had a classification for Abyssinians.***

# Abyssinians in the USA

*Since 1937 when Woodroffe Ena and Ras Seyum arrived from England, so began the Abyssinian reign in the United States. Even though the Abyssinian had been seen in previous cat shows, many consider this to be the true beginning.*

*In the late 1930's Mr. Charles Johnson of Philadelphia acquired two imported kittens. Mrs. Blanche Warren of California imported several Abyssinians as well. In the 1940's Dr. and Mrs. Fairchild of California also bred the Abyssinian and became well known for promoting the breed.*



# *Abyssinians in TICA*

Abyssinians were one of the original breeds that was accepted in TICA at its inception on June 22nd of 1979. TICA's first show was "A Midsummer Night's Dream" held at Fort Lewis, near Tacoma, Washington, on July 28, 1979.



# Abyssinian Colour Standards

## Abyssinian Colour Standards:

### 23 – Usual Abyssinian

*Overall Appearance: Rich Golden brown ticked with black*

*Base Hair: Ruddy orange or apricot*

*Ticking Colour: Black*

*Nose leather: Brick red*

*Pads: Black*

### 23a – Sorrel Abyssinian

*Overall Appearance:- Lustrous copper ticked with chocolate*

*Base Hair: Bright apricot*

*Ticking Colour: Chocolate*

*Nose Leather: Pink*

*Pads: Pink.*

### 23c - Blue Abyssinian

*Overall Appearance:- Soft warm blue ticked with deeper blue-grey*

*Base Hair: Pinkish mushroom*

*Ticking colour: Blue-grey*

*Nose Leather: Dark pink*

*Pads: Mauvish-blue.*

### 23b – Chocolate Abyssinian

*Overall Appearance:- Rich copper brown ticked with dark chocolate*

*Base Hair: Rich apricot*

*Ticking Colour: Dark chocolate*

*Nose leather: Pinky-chocolate*

*Pads: Chocolate*

### 23d - Lilac Abyssinian

*Overall appearance:- Warm (pinkish) dove grey ticked with deeper dove grey*

*Base Hair: Pinkish-cream*

*Ticking Colour: pinkish-dove grey*

*Nose Leather: Mauvish-pink*

*Pads: Mauvish-pink*

### 23e – Fawn Abyssinian

*Overall appearance:- Warm fawn ticked with deeper fawn*

*Base Hair: Fawny cream*

*Ticking colour: Fawn*

*Nose Leather: Pink*

*Pads: Pink*

# Ruddy (Usual) & Red (Cinnamon)

*Breeding in England focused on the development of the ticked (Agouti) coat, and over time the undesirable tabby markings were bred out.*

*Records indicate that Abyssinians first bred in England were of a Silver or Yellow ticking color, as evidenced by Abyssinians pedigrees of Aluminium and Gold Tick in the early 1900's.*

*Breeding became focused on bringing out a warmer color, hence the Sorrel (red) and Ruddy (usual) of today.*

# Blue

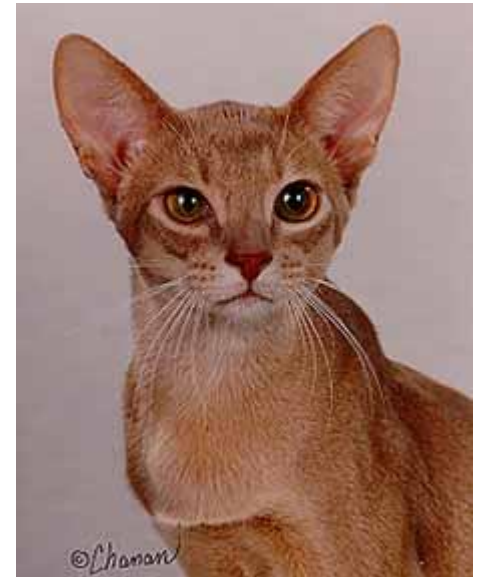
*In 1968 a blue Abyssinian kitten, Fairlie Mehesso, bred by Mrs. Stock, appeared at the West of England and South Wales Cat Society's show at Cirencester. The blue Abyssinians are produced by combining the diluting gene with a ruddy. Many believe that the diluting gene may have been present in the Abyssinian all along and that the gene was “hidden”. An Abyssinian male, Raby Ashanto, who was born in 1942, carried this gene because interbreeding with his descendents produced some of the earliest blues. Though the blue was present since 1968, the 1980's is where we start to see them become more prevalent.*



# Fawn

*The first Abyssinian to be proven to carry the blue gene was probably the English male Raby Ashanto, born in 1942. Almost all of today's blue and fawn Abyssinians can be traced back to him.*

*The fawn is a dilute version of the Cinnamon appearing as a dark cream and copper, oat warm rose-beige, ticked with light cocoa brown, the extreme outer tip to be the darkest, with blush beige undercoat. Tail tipped with light cocoa brown. The underside and inside of legs to be a tint to harmonize with the main color.*



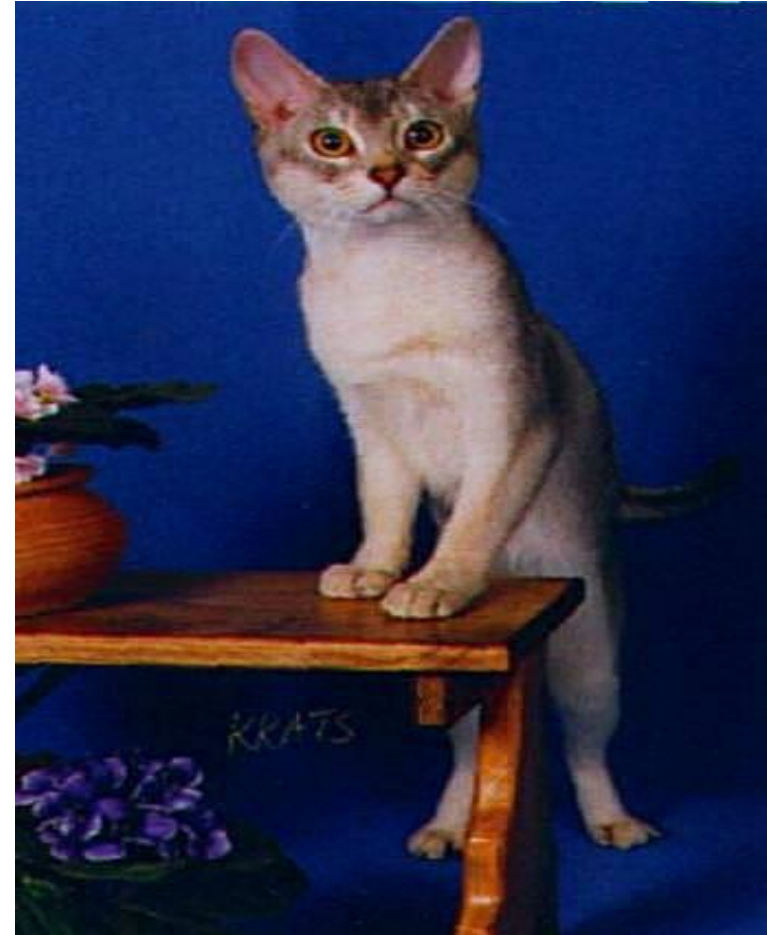


# Silver Abyssinians ~1900's

*Mr. H.C. Brooke, an early British Abyssinian breeders opposed the silver color and, in order "to get back the warmth of body color," used a cat he described as a "self red" in breeding program. In the beginning, Abyssinians were, indeed, silver cats accompanied by remnants of tabby markings. At a time when silver and brown tabbies were truly popular in England, breeders tried to produce a totally distinctive cat. They introduced a little red to warm up the coat as Mr. Brooke did, and they bred out the tabby markings.*

# Silvers

- *Since the early 1900's silver Abyssinians have been popular in the USA when two silver Abyssinians , Aluminum & Salt were imported from a British breeder. The silver gene is an inhibiting gene and makes the undercoat of an Abyssinian a silvery-white color.*
- *In 2001, TICA accepted all four silver colors into their championship division. In June of 2001, in Ft. Worth, TX, Sterlingsilver Daylily became the first blue silver female Abyssinian champion in the nation. Pictured here is Sterlingsilver Sir Christopher, a blue silver Abyssinian male.*



## Chocolate & Lilacs

*The first chocolate & lilac Abyssinian kittens were imported from the UK in early 2000. It is believed that all of today's chocolate and lilac Abyssinians are descended from a chocolate Abyssinian named Arboreal Chocolate Katrina who was produced from this outcross According to TICA's existing standard, the colors were accepted along with the ruddy, sorrel, blue and fawn. This was due to the addition of "eumelanic" in the standards.*

# Chocolate & Lilac

*The kittens pictured below were the first of the lilac and chocolate colors to hold a championship title in TICA in the US. The kittens were owned by Bruce Alexy, Alexy Abyssinians, Greensboro, NC.*



**CH Abychat Lilac Ambassador**  
Lilac Abyssinian

Sire: Abychat Kubla Khan, Ruddy Abyssinian  
Dam: Abychat Mamamia, Lilac Abyssinian



**CH Abychat Chocolat**  
Chocolate Abyssinian

Sire: Abychat Kubla Khan, Ruddy Abyssinian  
Dam: Abychat Mamamia, Lilac Abyssinian

**2003 TICA's Best Chocolate Abyssinian**



# Abyssinian Today

*Over the centuries, the Abyssinian has developed into one of America's favorite breeds. Aloof, mysterious, regal, lithe & graceful; known for their rather large ears and lustrous almond eyes. Their devotion and affection make them an ideal companion.*



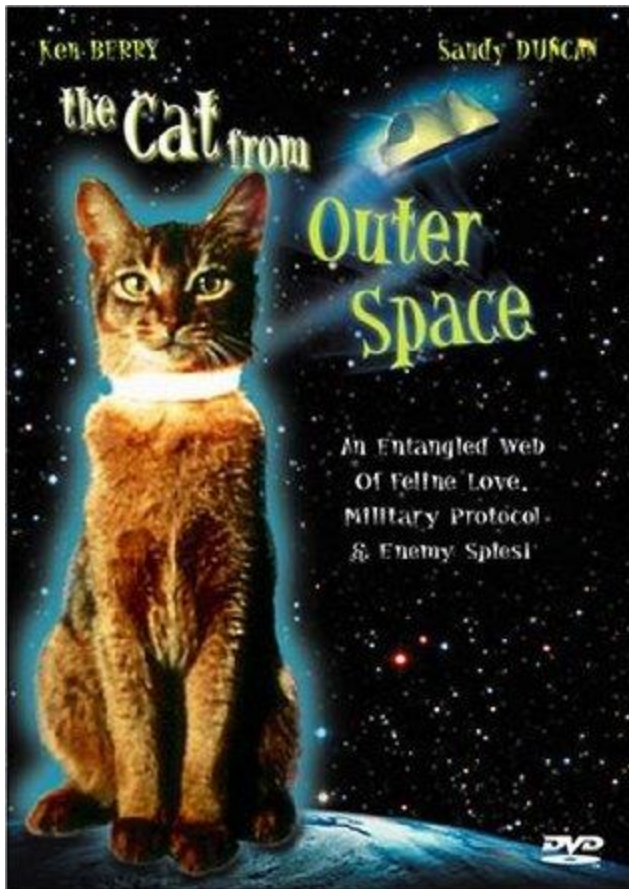
# Famous Abyssinians

- *Cinnamon, the first cat to have its entire genome published.*

- *Punkin, an Abyssinian cat belonging to radio talk show host Rush Limbaugh.*

- *Jackpot, an episode of "CSI" (season 4, episode 7) features a blue Abyssinian named Isis as a significant clue.*

- *Jake, The Cat From Outer Space (a 1970s Disney movie) Jake's role was played by the brother and sister Abyssinian cats Rumpler and Amber.*



*“All cats are smart, some of course are smarter than others and some are outstanding in intelligence, but for downright ability to outsmart a person every time, I give you the Abyssinian”.*

*Mrs. Fairchild, 1945*



# Interpretation of TICA Abyssinian Standard

## General Description

- *Coat, ticking, dramatic facial marking, like that of a cougar.*
- *Deep, intense color with apparent four to six colored bands of color*
- *Good resilient coat; medium in length, not too tight. Too tight of a coat will not allow for the bands of ticking that is essential to the breed.*
- *Total clarity in the coat; no visible barring on neck and legs ( including inside of legs)*
- *Ears are large but in proportion to the head; set as if listening.*
- *Ears should not be too low on the head like an oriental but not straight up; there should be an in between the two extremes.*
- *The head, including the ears should form a nice trapezoid.*
- *Muzzle should have depth; not be too long but yet not too short*
- *Gentle rounded curves; all transitions should be smooth*
- *Eyes are almond shaped, not round.*
- *Body should be medium in length, not tubular; nor oriental in shape*
- *Rib cage should have some depth*
- *Tail, legs and body should form a square.*
- *Gentle curves; elegant musculature; Dancer like form*
- **OVERALL BALANCE**



# Appearance of Abyssinians of Today Educational Viewpoint PART I

*The interpretation of the Abyssinian over the years has become misconstrued by both breeders and judges and the ideal Abyssinian has become vague. The TICA standard is presently being reviewed by the current TICA breed committee with the intent to review, clarify and propose better defined descriptions of the Abyssinian so that a more precise guideline can be utilized. One of the areas being reviewed is the ears as the description is too ambiguous and needs to have a more specific representation.*

*Over the years there have been a variety of Abyssinians shown that typically follow the written standard. Unfortunately there have abys in recent years shown in the show hall that do not portray the Abyssinian illustrated in the TICA standards.*

*For example, oriental type Abyssinians with extremely low ears, slanted or rounded eyes, tubular bodies, straight (ski slope) profiles or squared muzzles. Little or no bands of ticking due to the fact of a short, tight coat. Along with this, extremely low white below the chin as well as quite pronounced , obvious barring. Sadly, this “type” of Abyssinian has not only been seen but has been winning.*

# Appearance of Abyssinians of Today Educational Viewpoint, PART II

*An Abyssinian should not be oriental in type in any way. The head should be a modified wedge with rounded contours with a muzzle following gently contours and a profile without any flat planes. There should be no pinch in the muzzle, “foxy” look or be square at the end. Eyes should be almond in shape; not slanted or round.*

*Ears should be large, alert and set forward in a 45 degree angle, as if listening. They should be in balance with the head. They should not be too large, flared or have the look of “fly away ears”.*

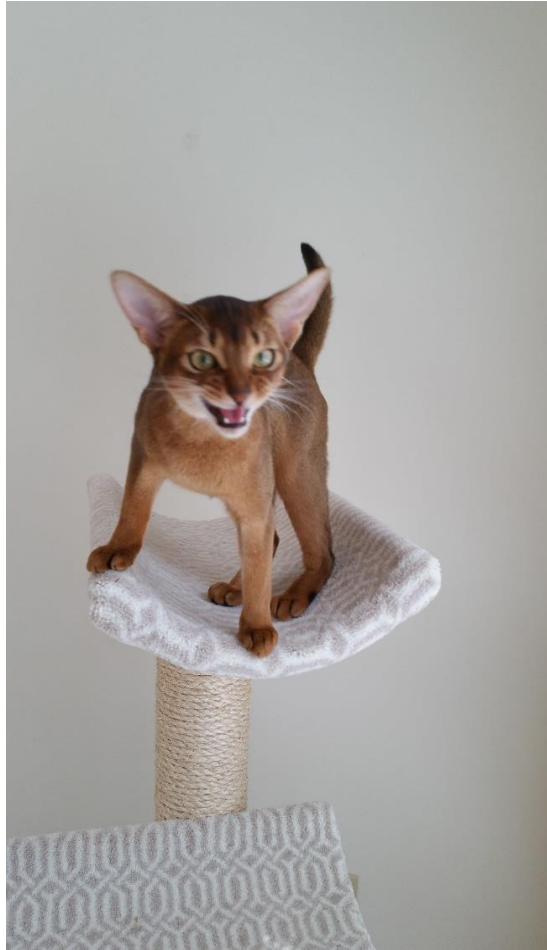
*The body should be medium long, definitely not long and tubular. The aby should be elegant, graceful and muscular. Tail should be long and tapering, not whippy.*

*The legs should be svelte, long and muscular but not fine boned.*

*The coat should be medium in length, resilient and fine in texture. The coat should neither be tight or too short. The coat needs to have enough length to show the four to six bands of color. Too short of a coat will neither be resilient or show enough ticking. No barring is allowed.*

*Very important: An Abyssinian should be well balanced!*

# The Abyssinian Breed



## Contributors:

**Marylou Anderson, Jean Hannum, Resa Bauer-DeMeyer, Brenda Russo**

**Presentation: Brenda Russo, TICA Breed Committee Chair  
Jean Hannum, TICA Breed Committee**

# General Description

- Alert & Active
- Medium-sized
- Well-muscled
- “Mini Cougar”
- Iridescent ticked coat
- Graceful
- Radiant, Regal
- Feral appearing but gentle & playful





# Breed Standard

- The breed standard outlines the esthetic ideal toward which breeders strive to achieve.



# Breed Standard

## Point Breakdown in the Standard

|                        |    |
|------------------------|----|
| ❖ Head -               | 35 |
| ❖ Body -               | 35 |
| ❖ Coat/color/pattern - | 30 |

100 points = 100%

# Breed Standard

## Head - 35 Total Points

|           |    |
|-----------|----|
| Shape     | 10 |
| Ears      | 5  |
| Eye Shape | 5  |
| Eye Color | 5  |
| Muzzle    | 5  |
| Profile   | 5  |



# Breed Standard

- **Shape** (10 points)
  - Modified wedge with rounded contours
  - Not extreme or excessive
  - Rise from bridge of nose to forehead without evidence of a break
  - Gently curved forehead over the skull flowing into an arched neck
  - Roundness between the ears (not domed)

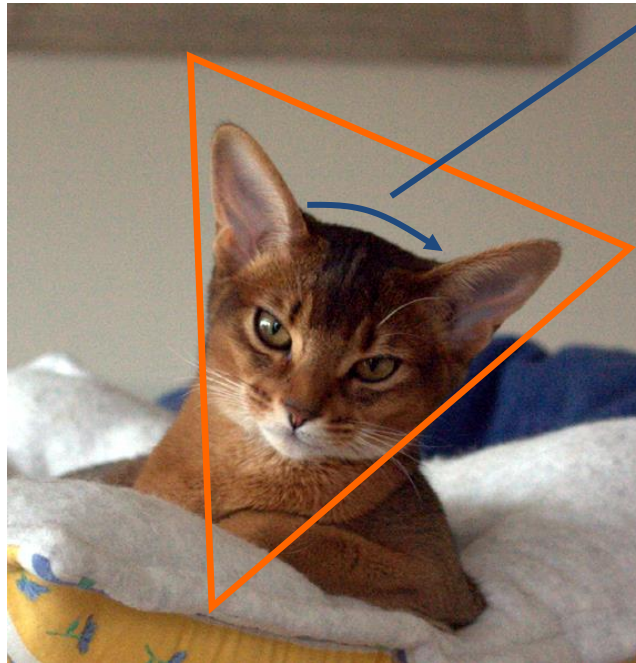
# Head Shape





# Head Shape

The Top of the Head must also be slightly curved – **not flat** and **not domed**.



The Abyssinian should have no sharp edges; everything must be curved, softened and rounded. The basic shape under the contours must be a modified wedge. A trapezoid with an oval transposition on top.

# Shape

Curved transition from the  
forehead over the skull  
flowing into an arched neck

Insert picture

# Good Chin

Strong, not protruding or receding



# The Chin - viewed from the front



The chin can be viewed as an oval or almond in shape.

# Breed Standard

- **Ears** ( 5 points)
  - Large
  - Alert
  - Moderately pointed
  - Cupped at base & arched forward as if listening
  - May be able to discern a thumbprint marking on the back depending on color

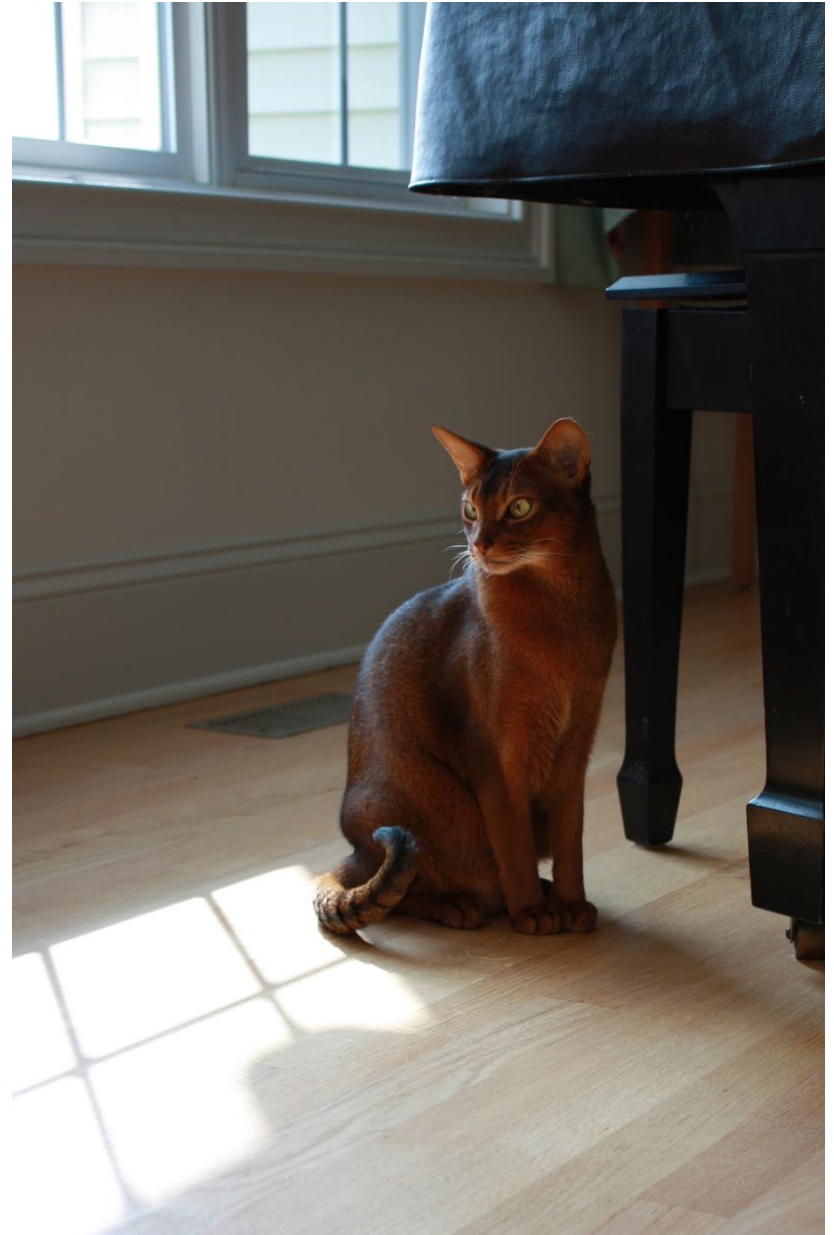


# Ears



- The Standard does **not** address ear placement, but if it gives the appearance of an Oriental, it is not preferable.

# EARS





# Ears



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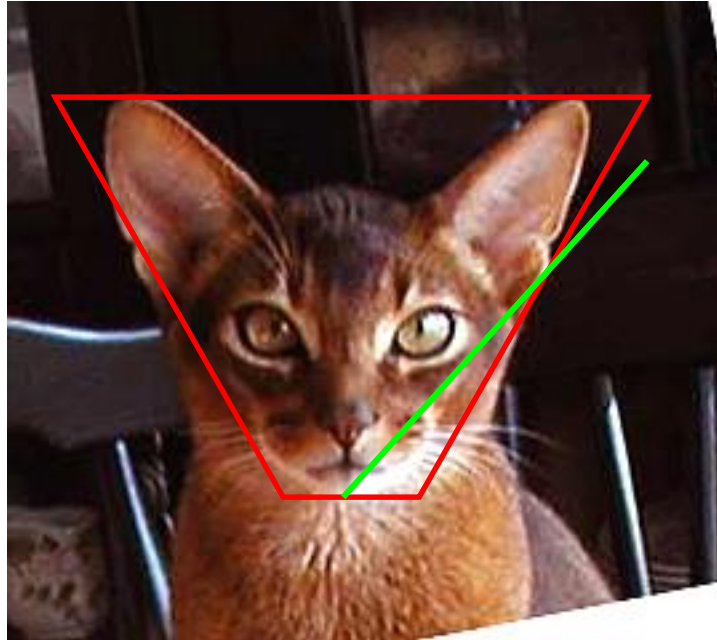
53

# EARS

Ears are only **5 points** on the Aby Standard, and yet they are an important part of the look. The ear must have a wide base and be cupped. The ear in profile should be tipped slightly forward - “as though listening.”

The ear set viewed head on is not described in the Aby standard. This is something that the breeders need to agree on and add to the standard. However, in keeping with the modified wedge, I like the outside edge of the ear to follow the wedge and neither be too high (above the line of the wedge) nor too low (below the line of the wedge.)

# Ear Set



The line of the modified wedge follows from the chin to just under the cheek bone to catch the outside border of the ear.



# Ears “set as though listening...”

Ears are arched forward and set as though listening.



Aby ears seem to grow smaller  
as the kitten grows into  
adulthood.

Adult ears can be the same size as a kitten's ears, but on the kitten - the ears look larger because the head is smaller. Aby kitten ears can never be too large.

# Breed Standard

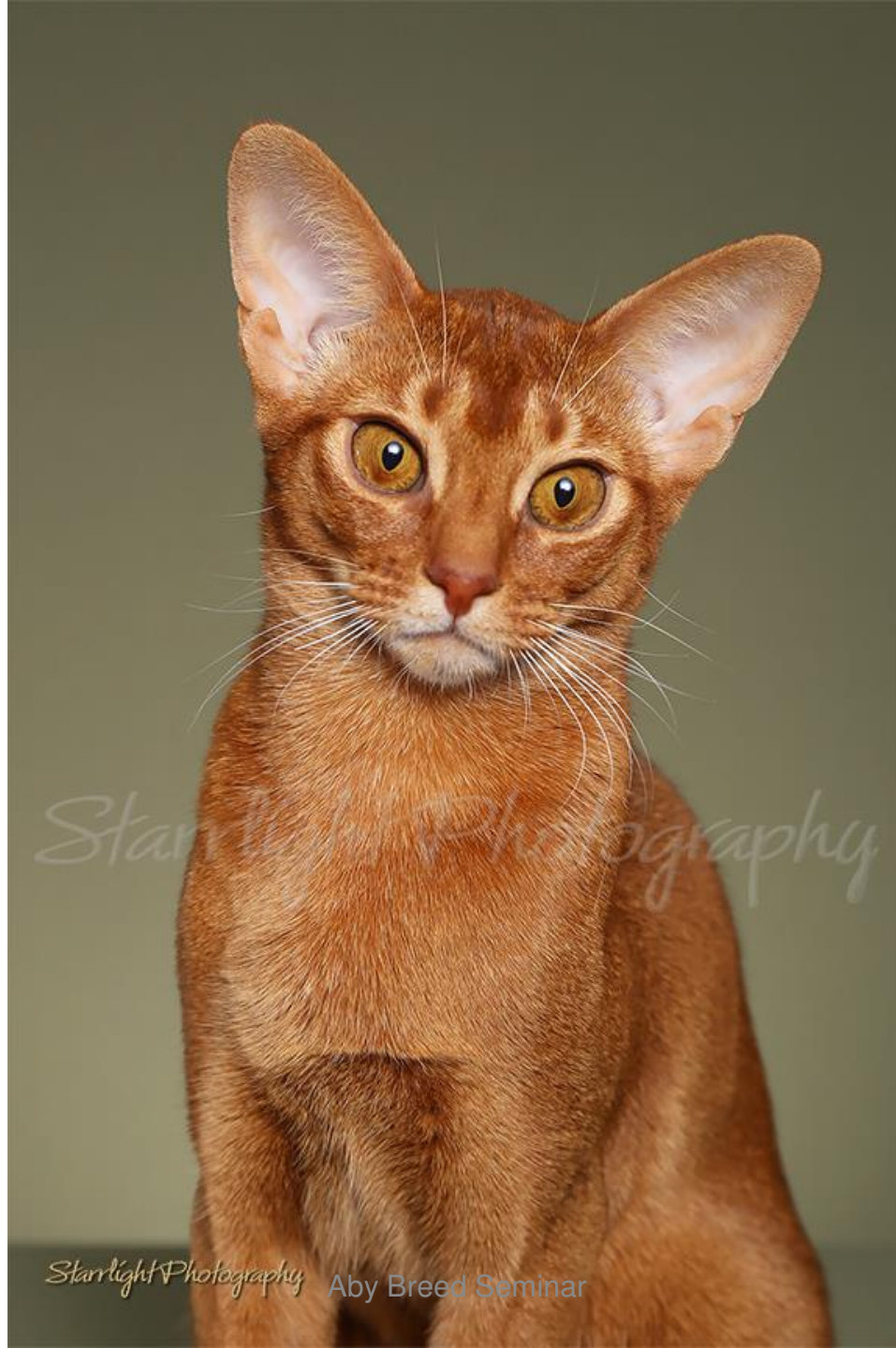
- **Eyes** (Shape 5 points / Color 5 points)
  - Large
  - Almond-shaped
  - Brilliant & expressive
  - Eye color: gold, copper, green or hazel
  - Richness of color rewarded
  - No relation to coat color
  - Accented by ring of dark coloration on eyelids (eyeliner) surrounded by lighter colored area.

# Aby Eyes: ALMOND *not* Round



Vivid facial markings highlight the dramatic look of well-shaped almond eyes. Also should not look oriental.

# Eyes





## Eye Color:

Eye color to be “gold, copper, green or hazel.” Green eyes are seen in both the rufused and non-rufused/Silver Abys.

# Breed Standard

- **Muzzle** (5 points)
  - Rounded contours
  - Full chin
  - Perpendicular with nose
  - **No** pointiness, snippiness, foxiness
  - **No** whisker pinch
  - **Not** squared like the ASH

# The Muzzle:

No evidence of  
snippiness, foxy  
appearance or  
whisker pinch



5 points

# Muzzle



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# Breed Standard

- **Profile**

- Gentle curved transition between brow, nose and muzzle.
- **No** flat planes



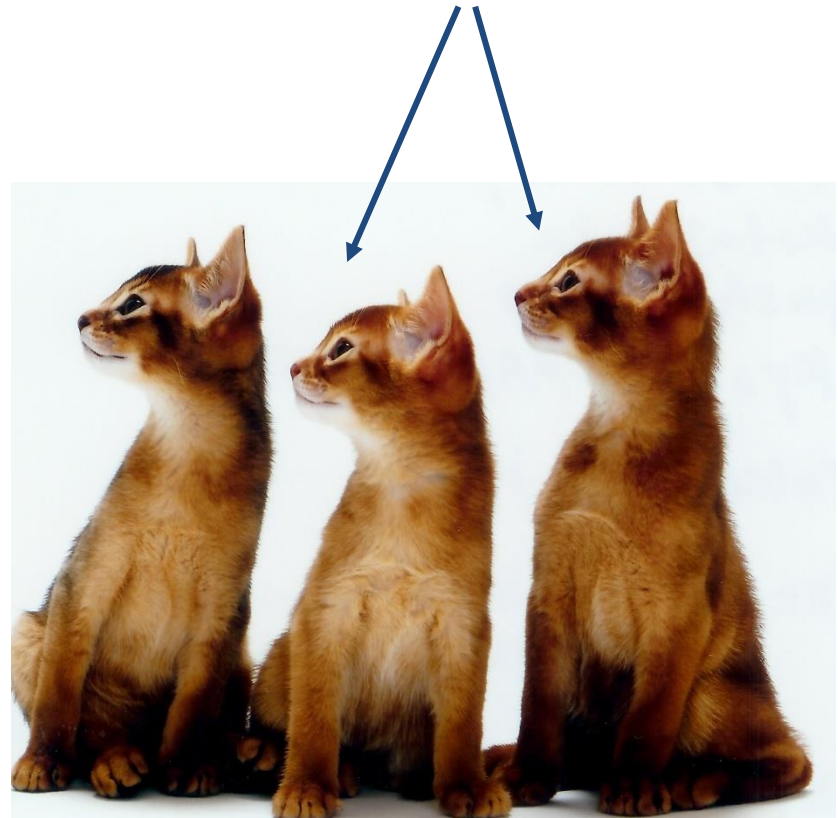


# The Aby profile:

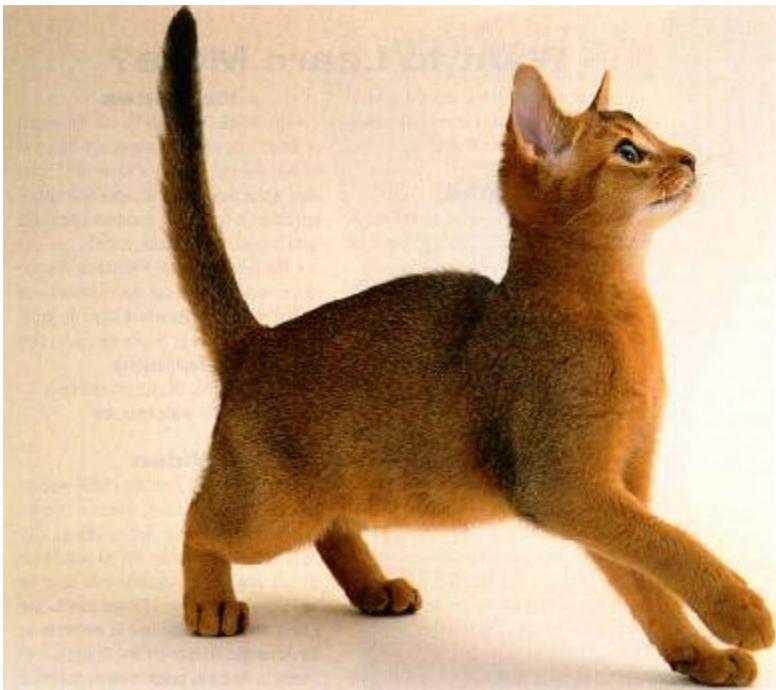
No flat planes...

Gently curving...

Curved transition  
between brow, nose  
and muzzle...



# Profile



# Breed Standard

## Body - 35 Total Points

|             |    |
|-------------|----|
| Torso       | 10 |
| Legs/Feet   | 10 |
| Tail        | 5  |
| Boning      | 5  |
| Musculature | 5  |

# Breed Standard

- **Torso** (10 points)
  - Medium long – Foreign-type
  - Lithe & graceful balanced with the muscular strength of a fine-motor skilled athlete
  - Solid
  - Curved rib cage (not round)
  - Slight arch to back (more noticeable sitting)
  - Level flank
  - Proportion & balance preferred over size

# Torso: It's Hip to be square...

Medium long

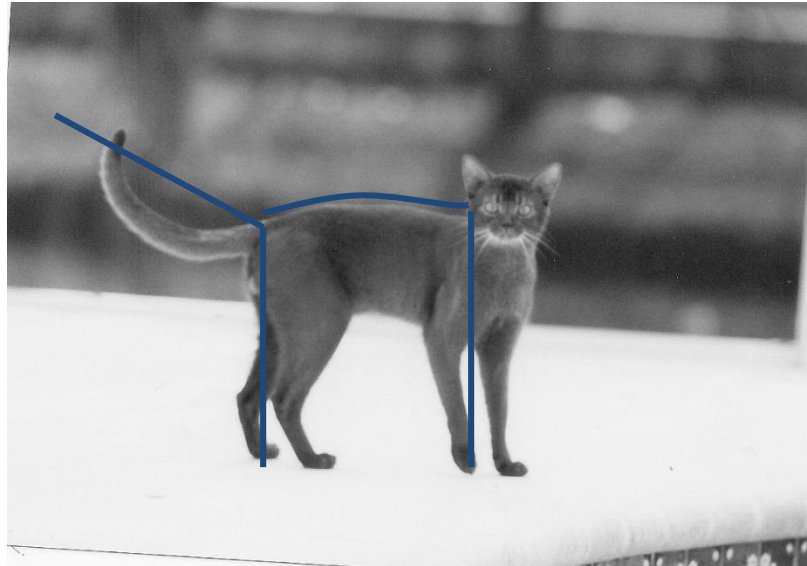
Lithe and graceful

Curved (oval) rib cage

Back -slightly arched

No tuck-up - almost level

Balanced



10 points

Balance in the Abyssinian means that the tail, legs and back should come close to being equal in length very much like a square.



# Legs, Feet *and* Boning

Proportionately slim

Long

Well-muscled

Solid to the Feet

Feet Oval and on “tippy-toes”



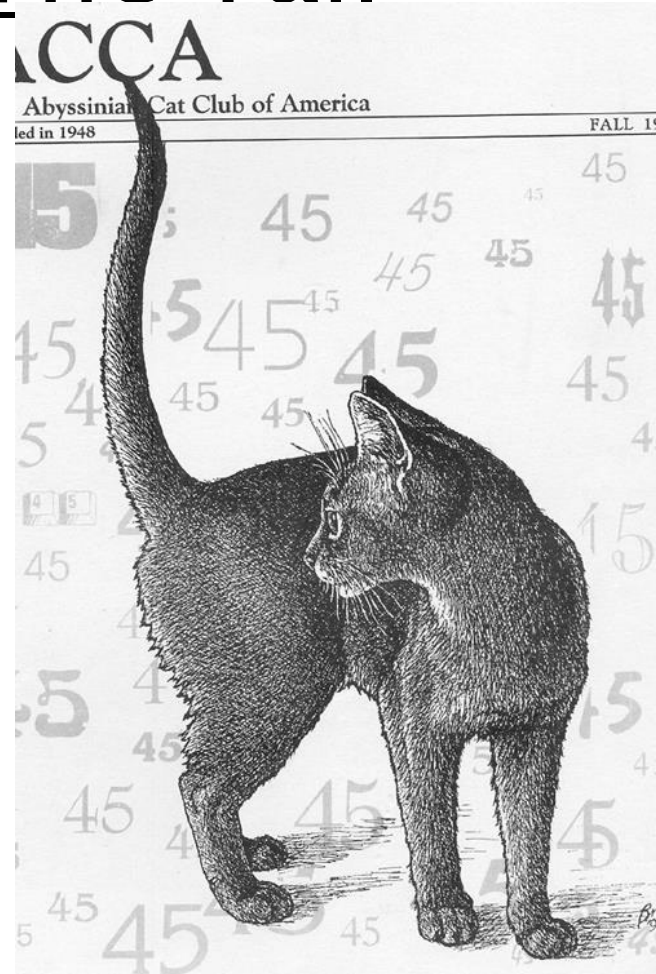
15 points

# The Tail

5 pts

*‘Long and tapering’ - in balance with the rest of the cat.*

I would be hard pressed to find an Aby with a tail that was too long.



# Torso

- Happy medium between the extremes of cobby and the svelte long Oriental.



# Torso



# Breed Standard

- **Legs/Feet** (10 pts)
  - Slim, not refined
  - Long
  - Well-muscled
  - Oval & compact feet – appear as if standing on “tippy-toe”.





# Breed Standard

- **Tail**
  - Long
  - Medium at base and tapering
  - Not thin or whippy



# Breed Standard

- **Musculature**
  - Well-developed strength without looking gross or coarse
  - Solidly built
  - Skin is minimally loose to allow for stretch jumping & climbing



# Breed Standard

## Coat/Color/Pattern

### 30 Total Points

|         |    |
|---------|----|
| Texture | 10 |
| Pattern | 10 |
| Color   | 10 |

# Breed Standard

- **Abyssinian**

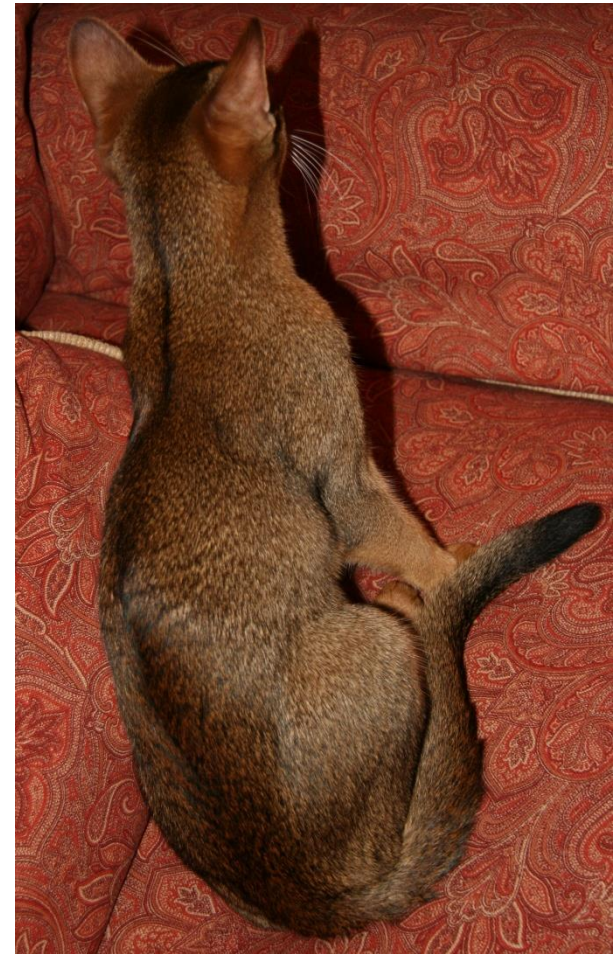
- Resilient – “snap back”
- Lustrous sheen
- Fine texture – soft
- Medium length – long enough to accommodate 4-6 bands of ticking
- Lies fairly close to body but without slickness
- Longest along the spine line

# Breed Standard

- **Color**

- Tabby Division

- Warmth, rufousing, intensity
    - White only from very upper throat, chin to around nostrils & lips
    - Preference to good even ticking
    - Intensity of color should not diminish the ability to see the ticking
    - Ticking should not be sacrificed for depth of color





# Breed Standard

- **Color/Ticking**



# Breed Standard

## Traditional Category

1. Tabby Division
2. Silver/Smoke Division

Colors limited to the eumelanistic colors & agouti pattern only.

(Homozygous ticked tabby Ta/Ta)

# Championship Divisions-Colors

## Traditional Category

1. Tabby Division
2. Silver/Smoke Division

Colors limited to the Eumelanistic colors & Agouti pattern only.  
(Homozygous ticked tabby)

### Tabby Colors

Ruddy  
Chocolate  
Cinnamon  
Blue  
Lilac  
Fawn

### Silver/Smoke Colors

Black Silver  
Chocolate Silver  
Cinnamon Silver  
Blue Silver  
Lilac Silver  
Fawn Silver

# Color

10 pts

*“The colors of the Abyssinian in the Tabby Division should reflect warmth of color, giving the impression of a colorful cat.*

The more color, the more rufusing - the better!! The “hotter” the undercoat color and the more intense the color of the color bands - the better. A dyed (“intent to deceive”) will not demonstrate the various “tones” in rufusing - the entire coat will show the same tone. In addition, a well colored (rufused) Abyssinian will enhance the ticking of the cat. Intense color should NEVER overcome the darker bands of ticking.

*The colors of the Abyssinian in the Silver Division*

The Silver Abyssinian ideally reflects NO warmth of color! The less rufusing – the better (Tarnishing). The exact opposite of the rufused Aby.

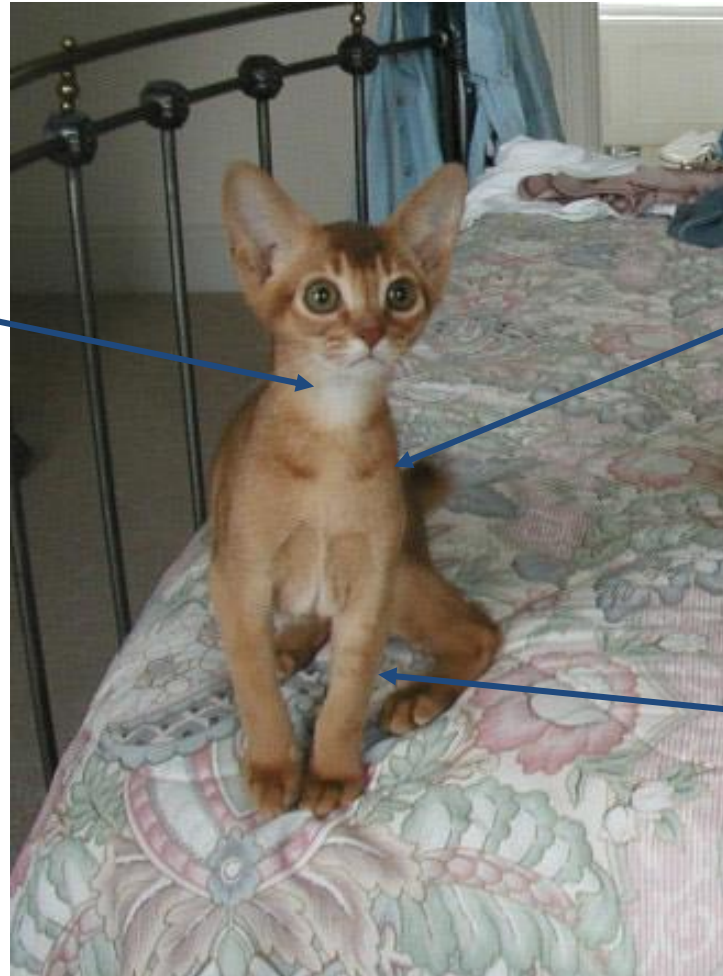
# Penalize:

- Color faults: Mouse (grey) down coat, broken necklaces, leg bars, uneven color in non-ticked areas, tabby stripes or bars, slick coat, plushy coat, incorrect paw pad color
- Ticking/Pattern faults: Uneven ticking, lack of desired markings on head
- Condition: Lack of condition, flabbiness of body (muscle tone), lack of coat luster, eye color, evidence of illness, emaciation and lack of muscle tone.



# Ruddy kitten demonstrating coat/color issues

Low  
white



Smudges  
or  
ghost  
marks

Ghost  
marks  
on the  
leg

“Mouse” or grey down undercoat is found next to the skin and most often found on the neck, elbows and outside rear legs.

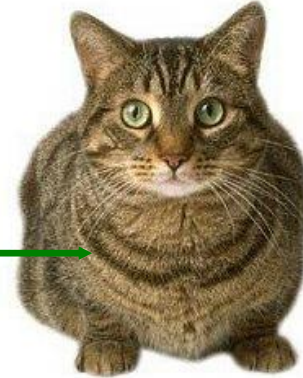


# Broken necklace



# Withhold All Awards - Disqualify

- Unbroken necklace



- Reversed ticking

- White locket





# Colors

## Traditional Division

### Full Colors

**Ruddy**

**Chocolate**

**Cinnamon**

### Dilute Colors

**Blue**

**Lilac**

**Fawn**

## Silver Division

### Silver Full Colors

**Black Silver**

**Chocolate Silver**

**Cinnamon Silver**

### Silver Dilute Colors

**Blue Silver**

**Lilac Silver**

**Fawn Silver**



Cinnamon Mom  
kittenswith Ruddy  
and Blue



# Colors - Ruddy

- Ruddy  
(traditional/usual)
  - Rich brown with black ticking, apricot undercolor, brick red nose leather and black paw pads



# Colors

- Cinnamon (previously sorrel/red but not sex-linked)
  - Coppery red with chocolate ticking, pink nose leather and pink paw pads.



# Colors

- Blue
  - Warm blue-grey with steel blue ticking
  - Dark pink nose leather
  - Mauve pink paw pads



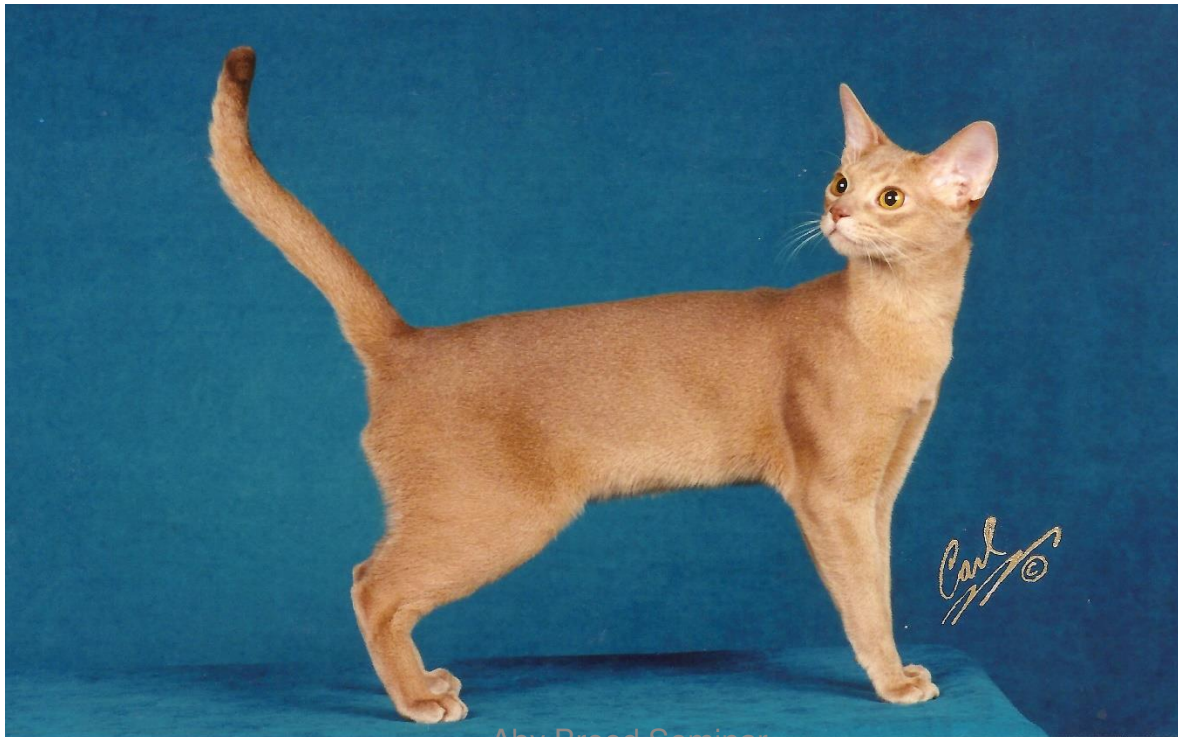


# Colors - Blue



# Colors - Fawn

- Warm rose beige w/ pale cocoa ticking
- Pinkish salmon nose leather
- Pink paw pads





# Colors

- Silver
  - Not a new color
  - Seen back in the 1900s
  - Icy white closest to the skin followed by ticking of the appropriate eumelanistic color.
  - Lack of rufousing is more desirable

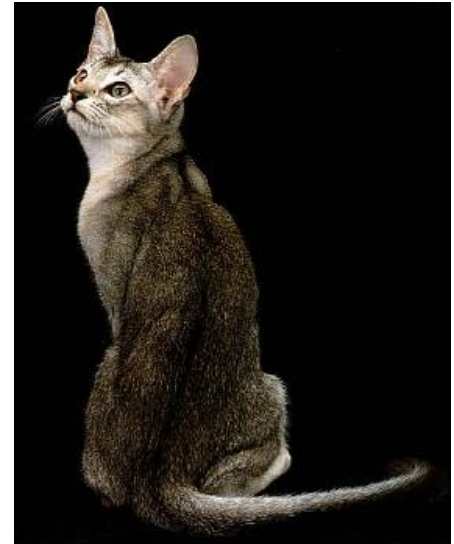
# Breed Standard

- **Color**

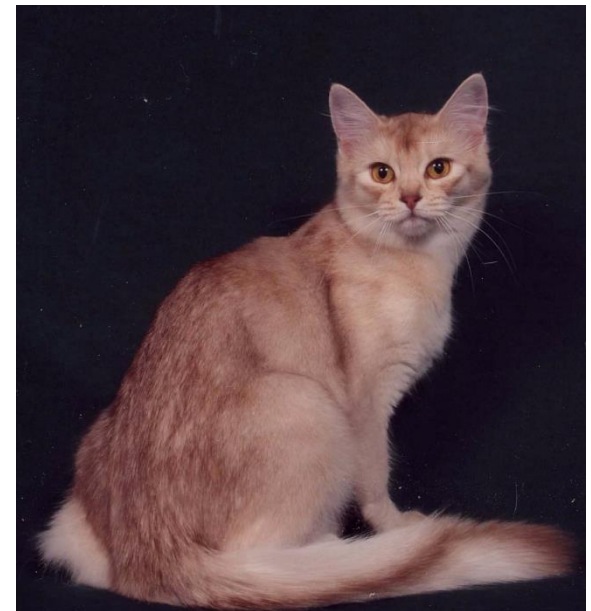
- Silver Division

- Icy white coat color closest to the skin accompanied by eumelanistic color ticking
    - Minor patches of rufousing are not considered a fault if the overall impression is that of a silver cat
    - Some rufousing may be seen along the spine & in areas of ticking – lack of rufousing is preferred

# Colors – Black Silver



# Colors – Cinnamon Silver



# Penalties





# Clarity



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# Penalties

- Color & Pattern Faults
  - “Mouse Coat” - Cold or gray coloration next to the skin
  - Distinct broken necklaces
  - Leg barring
  - Chest splotches, stripes or barring
  - Uneven ticking

# Penalties

- Condition
  - Flabbiness of body
  - Lack of coat luster
  - Emaciation / lack of muscle
  - Other: Pale eye color, round eyes

# Withholds

- Unbroken necklace
- Reverse ticking – lacks the final dark tipping that is most easily seen in the absence of the dark spine line
- White locket or white anywhere other than upper throat, chin, around nostrils & lips

# Judging Techniques

- Feather – the toy of choice, but rabbit fur teasers can compete. Actually anything will do!
- Use the teaser to help you see them without manhandling too much
- Feet on the table
- Firm handling but not restrictive or they will fight to get away
- Allow to climb the sisel poles
- They are to be interactive with the environment – but they may not pay attention to you with all that goes on in the showhall.



# Conclusion

As with any breed, the more educated and familiar you become with the breed, the more subtleties you will begin to notice.

