

Cat Behavior More Oddities

In my previous article on cat behavior, we discussed some interesting and unusual behavior displayed by the family of cats that live on my farm. That was only the beginning. These cats seem to delight in unexpected behavior. I thought I would share a few more gems with you.

There are three female cats on my farm. They consist of matriarch, Patch, and two of her daughters. There have been other female cats on the farm, but I have been able to find new homes for all of them. Cats, being solitary hunters, are not expected to show any kind of social hierarchy. My three female cats do have a definite hierarchy. The top cat is, of course, Patch. It's the two daughters that have been interesting. The older daughter, Calico, is from Patch's first litter she had on the farm. She is a sturdy, healthy calico that has not had any real problems. The second daughter is Little Girl. Little girl is a couple of years younger than Calico. She is the smallest cat on the farm. A black cat with flashy white markings, little girl is active and elegant.

Since her birth, Calico has been Patch's favorite daughter. Calico and patch hung out together much of the time. Patch even allowed Calico to help her with her kittens. When Patch wanted to go do something, Calico was right there to baby sit. Even when Patch was there, Calico was often right there with her. She could often be seen washing a kitten or even just providing a nice warm place for the little guy to sleep. When Little Girl arrived things continued quite awhile in the same way. Little Girl grew up and had her first litter of kittens. Calico, as occasionally happens with calico cats has turned out to be sterile. She has never had any kittens. Because of that, when little Girl had

her kittens,
Calico lost her favorite daughter status. With Little Girl's kittens, Patch became the
doting grandmother. She was always helping Little Girl with her kittens. The two
of them
could often be seen lying together, bathing the kittens or watching them play.
Calico was
banished. She wasn't allowed anywhere near those kittens or any other litter
since.

Calico didn't just lose kitten privileges. She wasn't even allowed to
hang out with
Patch anymore the way she used to. Poor Calico, she was very upset. She knew
exactly
who to blame for her predicament. Little Girl. Calico and Little Girl fought
several times.
Unfortunately for Calico, Patch would sometimes jump in on Little Girl's side
and run
her off. Calico was banished to hanging out with her brothers. It's been a
couple of years
since then. Little Girl is still favorite daughter. Calico's position has eased
somewhat.
Last summer, Little Girl allowed Calico to help her with her kittens once in
awhile. Patch
has allowed Calico to hang out with her again from time to time. Who knows? One
day
Calico may just be able to work herself back into her mother's good graces.
Little Girl
seems to think so. She watches Calico very carefully. If she thinks things are
going too
well for Calico, Little Girl will start a fight with her. Oh well, Life goes on.

It isn't only the girls showing some interesting behavior. This past
year two
brown kittens were born. Thomas, a handsome cinnamon brown with lots of flashy
white,
was born in the spring. Pudge is solid brown without any white at all and was
late
summer. What is interesting about these two is that they are both fascinated by
horses.
We have three horses and every day you can find Thomas or Pudge (or both)
strategically
positioned to watch them. When I call the horses out of their pasture, often I

find Thomas

trotting in along with them. If I throw hay into their mangers I have to check before I

throw. Quite often Thomas or Pudge will be sitting in the manger, ready for a close up

study of the horse. When the horses are grazing, Thomas will creep along, nose to the

ground until he's almost nose to nose with the horse. He will stay there for a few

moments until the horse gently swings his nose at the kitten to push him out of the way.

Pudge has recently developed a fascination with horse's tails. He will come right in

behind the horse's heels and start playing with the tail. Fortunately for him, the horses

have refrained from launching him into orbit.

Cats are funny and entertaining creatures aren't they. You just never seem to

know what they are going to do next.