

## Spotted Cat Breeds

Are you looking to get a new cat soon? Great! You may want to consider a purebred cat. There are many breeds that can be found in this country, each with its own characteristic appearance and temperament and history. Think carefully about what you would like to see in your new companion. Perhaps you would care to consider something a little bit different:

### Ocicat

The Ocicat were named after the Ocelot wildcat that is found from southwestern Texas south to northern Argentina. The Ocicat, however, does not have any Ocelot blood in them. They are entirely domestic bred. The first Ocicat was produced as a happy accident in the early 1960s by breeder Virginia Daly who was trying to breed a Siamese cat with Abyssinian colored points. She did reach her goal, but in her second litter she found a cream colored male with golden spots and copper colored eyes. She named him Tonga. Her daughter called him Ocicat because he reminded her of a baby Ocelot. Tonga was later sold as a pet and neutered.

Fortunately, the same breeding pair that produced Tonga later produced a second spotted male. His name was Dalai Dotson who became the foundation for the Ocicat breed. The first Ocicat, Tonga, was exhibited at a cat show in 1965. The Ocicat registry was established in 1966. The Ocicat was so striking and unique that other breeders were attracted and joined Daley in establishing this beautiful breed. The breeder continued to focus on Abyssinians and Siamese for their foundation stock, but some American Shorthair was introduced as well. The American Shorthair bloodlines introduced a beautiful silver color to the ocicat.

Ocicats are very lively and intelligent. They are also great talkers. They

are loyal and loving and tend to bond strongly to one person. Ocicats are very intelligent and will make up new tricks to entertain themselves. Most of them know how to fetch. Ocicats are another breed that doesn't like to be alone for long. Again, a feline companion will be ideal for keeping your Ocicat happy.

### The Bengal

Unlike the Ocicat, the Bengal has wild ancestry. The Bengal was produced by crossing the Asian Leopard Cat, a small wildcat with domestic shorthaired cats. The name Bengal was derived from the Asian Leopard Cats Latin name, *Felis bengalensis*. It took the original breeder Jean Mill, several generations to produce a beautiful cat with domestic and predictable personalities.

In 1985 Mill showed her cats for the first time. There was some controversy over the new cats. Some people felt it was unwise cross wild cats with domestics since many wildcats are threatened species. Most people, however, were very taken with the beautiful new cats. Mill was able to recreate a number of new Bengal breeders.

The modern Bengal is a wildly beautiful cat with an affectionate personality and great energy. Bengals form strong bonds with their owners and become faithful and affectionate companions for life. Bengals love to climb and will do so given any opportunity. You will routinely find them on top of bookcases, doors and dressers. They are very curious and will rearrange the contents of any drawer they find open. Bengals are playful well into old age and will pounce on anything that moves. From their Asian ancestors, these cats inherited a love of water. Some will even join you for a swim in the pool or hot tub.

These very unusual cats are not everyone's' cup of tea. Give these very different cats a closer look. Their unique appearances and lively personalities might just make a great pet. These cats may be exactly what you are looking for in a new companion.