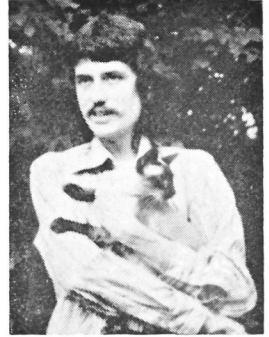


## THE EGYPTIAN MAU

Wain Harding

Four years ago when I decided to breed and show cats I did not follow one of the basic rules for the novice. I did not start with an established breed. I went in search of my first purebred kitten with the best intentions. I had read every book about cats that I could get my hands on and had decided to breed chocolate point Siamese. What could better qualify as a well established breed than Siamese? One weekend when I was in New York I decided to take a look at some grand champion sired Siamese kittens advertised in the newspaper. It was while looking at these kittens that I saw my first Egyptian Mau. I can not remember anything about the Siamese but I still have a clear mental picture of that young mini-panther called the Egyptian Mau.



Mr. Harding

I immediately asked if she was for sale. Her owner did not wish to part with the cat but she sensed my enthusiasm about the breed and sent me to another breeder in New York who had kittens for sale. To make a long story short, I bought one of these kittens, a silver female that I called Aswan's Alpha of Bastis, and have bred Egyptian Mau ever since.

I soon found that Mau stock was very rare and basically confined to the New York City area. Bob Chorneau became very interested in the breed and he and I decided to purchase enough stock to set up our own breeding program in Virginia. We started Bastis (Bast) Cattery and have had some success with our silver and bronze Mau and our ruddy Abyssinians.

Soon after obtaining Alpha I purchased a male, Fatima's Nikita from Princess Troubetsky. I felt that it was very important to have a stud as several breeders lost males to illness and there were dangerously few males left. I learned that Mrs. Ann Cahill had good stock in her cattery on Long Island. I arranged to visit her and found her to be very friendly and helpful. She gave me much sound advice on breeding Mau. I found Mrs. Cahill's Kattiwycke



Bastis Ici. A bronze female.



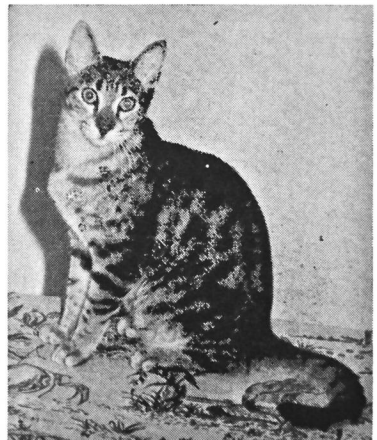
Bastis Gizeh showing dorsal stripe and spots.

cats beautiful and from her I bought Kattiwycke's Umm Usada of Bastis and K.'s Pash of Bastis. Both cats are full sisters of the AA Mau of 1970 and 1971, Kattiwycke's Shu of IBam-Lak. I also purchased a beautiful young male, Kattiwycke's Abu of Bastis who was a half brother of Kattiwycke's Pharoh Seti (AA Mau 1969). Abu proved to be an invaluable stud and most of my best kittens have him in their pedigree. I purchased several more breeding quality females from various catteries to round out my program.

Now that I had sufficient breeding stock in my cattery I found that detailed research was in order. I have done research into the genetics of spotted cats. I have also studied the small wild and domestic cats of North Africa and the history of the cat in ancient Egypt. I have collected reference material on these subjects.

The modern history of the Egyptian Mau goes back to Europe prior to World War II. Marcel Reney in *Los Amis Les Chats* published in France in 1940 gives us a clear description of the Egyptian Mau. The French cat fancy recognized the foreign short hair cats, except Siamese, with one body type.

Included in this class were the Russian Blues, the French foreigners, and the Egyptians. Reney states that the body standard for this group of breeds was based on the conformation of the spotted Egyptian and that he would like to see more emphasis put on the breeding of the spotted cats. The French standard for the Egyptian called for a tall, slim cat, with a modified long head and a resilient coat. This is an accurate description of the Mau today. This standard, like our present standard, calls for the markings to be made up of num-

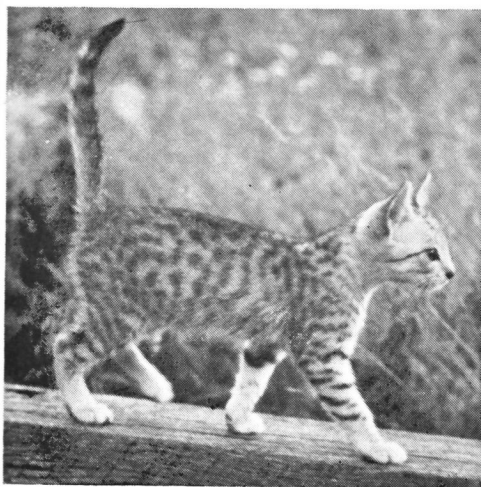


Author's Cat

erous spots. Spots were to be round or oblong, clearly outlined, and must not form lines. These Egyptian cats had been imported from the Middle East and were bred in France, Italy, and Switzerland.

World War II nearly put an end to the cat fancy in Europe. The rare breeds such as the Sacred Cat of Burma, the Russian Blue, and the Egyptian Mau suffered the most. The end of the war found stock reduced greatly and spread over the continent. Fortunately in the case of these three breeds French, Italian, and Scandinavian breeders came to their rescue. Most of the Birman stock went to France, the Russian Blues to Norway and Sweden, and the Egyptians to Italy. The famous cat geneticist, Mr. A. C. Jude, became interested in the Egyptian and gave the Italian breeders advice on setting up their breeding programs.

Princess Nathalie Troubetskoy was one of the Mau breeders in Italy. Princess Troubetskoy became alarmed at the amount of inbreeding



Bastis Onion. A future stud.

that was necessary to keep the breed pure so she set out to import new stock. Princess Troubetskoy, a White Russian Princess, like so much European royalty was living in exile in Rome at this time and had many friends among the foreign ambassadors to Italy. It was through the Syrian ambassador that she was able to import several spotted Egyptian cats. One of these imports was Jo-Jo of Fatima who later accompanied Princess Troubetskoy when she moved to the United States. It was in 1953 that Princess Troubetskoy came to this country and brought her Mau stock with her. The cats had been registered with the FFI

in Italy and their registrations were transferred to CFF in this country.

The Egyptian Mau gained championship status in CFF and Baba of Fatima, a silver female, became the first champion in America. Several years later the Canadian Cat Association accepted the breed. Ch. Kattiwycke's Chale of Hellgate, a bronze male, became the first Canadian champion and the first bronze Mau to become a champion in America.

The most important feature of a show quality Mau is the spotted pattern. The ticked Abyssinian coat pattern and the spotted coat pattern are considered by most experts to be the oldest varieties of domestic cats. Both of these cats were well represented in the art of ancient Egypt. The Egyptian Mau and the Aby can be considered first cousins. Further evidence of their kinship was brought to light

when Mrs. Whitman Daly produced spotted offspring by crossing an Abyssinian with a Siamese. Mrs. Daly calls these cats Oicats. The Egyptians referred to the spotted variety as fishing or fowling cats. The Papyrus of Hunefer and the Papyrus of Ani have examples of spotted cats. Pet cats were taken to Rome and several mosaics that have been unearthed in Pompei show that they had spotted Egyptian cats as pets.

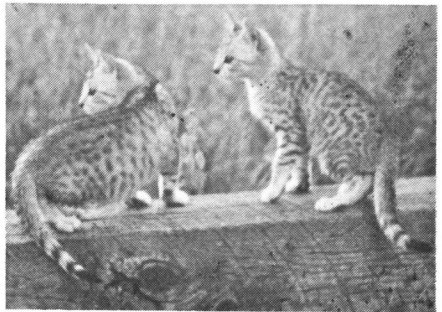
The sacred cats of Egypt are depicted with long legs and tail, a narrow chest and an elongated body. The shoulder blades show prominently over the back giving the cat a gait more like a cheetah than that of the American or European domestic cat. All of these are characteristics of the Egyptian Mau and of its spotted wild ancestor, *Felis lybica ocreata*. The Mau is one of the few domestic cats that can be traced back to its wild ancestor. The Ocreata was brought to Egypt from the highlands of Ethiopia and domesticated. The spotted *Felis lybica* that one sees in zoos look almost identical to our Egyptian Mau.

The Egyptian Mau seems to have a very strong appeal to men. Owning one is like having a wild cat with a domestic personality. The Mau is very affectionate with the people that it knows but is often aloof with strangers. My cats often teach themselves mechanical tricks such as opening doors, turning on faucets, and tripping locks. The cats are very agile but can be easily trained to stay off of forbidden furniture. I have had great success in training mine to walk on a leash.

The Egyptian is a very gentle cat but many breeders and judges have told me that they consider the Mau to be the strongest cat that they have ever handled. A Mau in good condition is all muscle. They can literally turn around in their skin.

Egyptian Mau make loving parents and it is during the time that a mother is nursing her kittens that the quiet melodic voice possessed by the breed is used the most. Litters are usually small, three to four, and predominately male. My queens bear their kittens easily and never need help. Both parents care for the kittens. Mau kittens develop slowly and nurse longer than other breeds.

A Mau kitten's pattern is evident from birth. A show quality Mau has banded legs and tail, typical tabby markings on the face and a randomly spotted body. The spots can come in many shapes and sizes but should never run together to form vertical lines. Elizabeth Freret, the famous Aby breeder, related an interesting observation about the Mau to the CFA Board when they were considering the breed for registration purposes. She observed that the Mau spotting pattern was different from that of the other spotted domestic cats



**Bastis Oreo and Bastis Onion. Three month old Mau kittens.**



Two Silver Egyptian Females.

has been impractical to do the bronze to bronze breeding that is necessary to improve the bronze color. A good bronze should have a tawny brown ground color with darker brown markings. There should be no traces of silver to spoil the color.

The last few years have seen the Egyptian Mau's popularity move to a national level. When I acquired my first cats the breed was confined to our North Eastern states. Today the cats are bred through out the country. Some of the major catteries working for the general acceptance of the Mau are Ta-Mera in Ca., Almidar in Mo., Tawnee in Fl., Trillum in Canada, Hellgate in R.I., Kattiwycke, Polkadots, and Fatima in N.Y., and Bastis (Bast) in Va.

Last year Bob Chorneau and I founded The Egyptian Mau Breeders and Fanciers Association, a non-affiliated club, for the advancement of the Mau. The Mau breeders are working through the club for the general recognition of our breed. We were recently granted registration privileges in CFA and hope to move to Provisional status as soon as the requirements are met.

I have exhibited my Mau at numerous CFA shows on the East Coast. Many breeders and judges have shown a keen interest in the breed. The foreign body type and the striking spotted pattern lend an exotic beauty to the breed which is seldom found outside of zoos. With the Egyptian Mau becoming so popular in this country and Canada the Mau breeders hope that our cats will become a welcome addition to the recognized breeds of CFA in the near future.

in that the spots could often be traced into horizontal lines rather than the vertical broken lines of a mackerel tabby.

The Mau is recognized in two colors, silver and bronze. The silver must have a clear ground color with black markings. The contrast on a perfectly colored silver should be as great as that of a silver classic tabby ASH. The bronze Mau is the rarer of the two colors and is somewhat less perfected. Until recently it



Egyptian Mau with unusually fine marking.

(All pictures are by Mr. Chorneau. The cats are owned by author Wain Harding and partner Robert Chorneau.)



## EGYPTIAN MAU — PROPOSED STANDARD

### POINTS

- BODY** 20 Medium long and graceful, showing well developed muscular strength. Very high on the legs. Conformation strikes a medium between cobby and svelte, lengthy type. Feet oval, compact.
- TAIL** 10 Fairly long, thick at base and tapering.
- HEAD** 15 A modified wedge without flat planes. Showing a gentle curved transition between brow, nose and muzzle when viewed in profile. A rise from the bridge of the nose to the forehead without evidence of a sharp break. Forehead of good size with width between the ears, flowing into an arched neck without a break. Head shall be of good length in balance with the rest of the cat. Chin shall be strong, having a rounded appearance neither projecting or receding. Muzzle not sharply pointed — no evidence of snipiness, foxy appearance or wisker pinch. Allowance for stud jowls in males.
- EARS** 5 Alert, large and moderately pointed, broad at base and arched forward. Hair on ears short and close lying. Ears may be tufted.
- EYES** 5 Very large, Egyptian slanting cut, almond shaped. Color green or gold with preference given to green.
- COAT** 5 Silky and fine in texture but dense and resilient to the touch with a lustrous sheen. Medium in length.
- COLOR** 15 **Silver:** Ground color pale clear silver. Chin, upper throat and nose thrills lightest in color. Underside pale silver. Markings sloe-black — proportionately darker than the ground color. Good contrast between pale ground color and deeper markings. Paw pads black. Nose leather brick red. Eyes, nose and lips outlined in black.
- Bronze:** Ground color light, warm bronze. Markings to be contrasting dark brown. Good contrast between light ground color and deeper markings. Color lightens in the same areas as the Silvers. Paw pad dark brown or black. Nose leather brick red. Eyes, nose and lips outlined in dark brown.
- PATTERN** 25 **Spotted:** Markings on the body to be spotted. May vary in size and shape with preference given to round evenly distributed spots. Spots should not run

together in a broken Mackerel pattern. A dorsal stripe runs the length of the body to the tip of the tail. Ideally the dorsal stripe is composed of spots. The markings of the face and forehead shall be typically tabby markings. Underside of body to have "vest buttons". Hind legs barred. Upper front legs barred breaking into spots as they reach the extremities. Tail shall be banded with a dark tip.

**PENALIZE** Cobby body. Short or whip tail. Small, round or oriental eyes. Small ears. Short or round head.

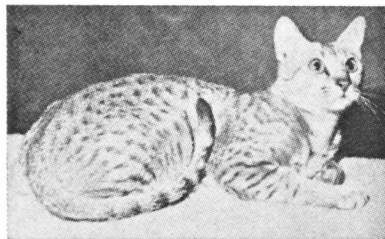
**DISQUALIFY** Lack of spots.

Total pts. \_\_\_\_\_  
100

### BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Mr. Harding is a commercial artist working in Charlottesville, Virginia. He has been breeding cats since the age of nineteen, and now co-owns Bastis (Bast) Cattery with Robert Chorneau. He has written cat articles for several publications in the U. S. and abroad, including an article for British "CATS", and also does research on the genetics of the domestic spotted cats. Mr. Harding and his partner are now breeding Egyptian Mau and Abyssinians.

Wain Harding, P. O. Box 5034, Charlottesville, VA 22903



Oicat, Breeder V. Daly



Spotted Cats Courtesy Dandelion