

## Hybrid Cat Acts Like A Dog

Savannah cats are as big as many dogs and they often act like them, too, according to Joyce Sroufe, a leading developer of the new breed. With their 20-year life span, owning a Savannah is a long term commitment, she says.

"They are very dog-like," says Sroufe. "They trot along behind you like a dog and they like to play fetch and romp in the water. They can learn to shake paws and they like to walk on a harness."

The cats, which can get up to 25 lbs. and 30 in. or more in length, are a cross between an exotic wild cat breed called "servals," and domestic cats. The combination of a distinctive spotting pattern and their gentle disposition has made them a popular alternative for people who want an exotic pet.

"Not everyone can deal with a true wild cat like a bobcat or a lynx," explains Sroufe. "And in the last ten years, a lot of states have passed laws making it impossible to own a full blooded wild cat. Hybrid cats like the Savannah can fill the need."

Even if owning wild or even half wild cats is legal in your state, breeding the cats is anything but easy. For a first generation cross, a wild male serval has to be raised from a kitten with the domestic cats he will be bred to. The initial cross has to be male serval and female domestic, as 90 percent of domestic males don't recognize when a female serval is in heat. Even those that do are usually too small to mount the larger females. A successful breeding does not ensure live births.

"We get a lot of premature births, as domestic females don't carry their kittens as long as a serval," says Sroufe. "It took me four years to get my first live litter. In the first generation cross, you may get only two litters a year and then only get one to two kittens that survive."

Once a first generation Savannah female has been produced, it can be bred back to a serval or a domestic. Savannah males are infertile until the fifth generation of Savannah/domestic breeding. It is only then that they can be shown at cat shows as a true breed.

The difficulty in breeding the hybrid cats adds to their attraction for many people. It also adds to their price. Sroufe says first generation Savannahs bring as much as \$8,000, while a sterile first generation male may fetch \$4,000. Fertile fifth generation males sell for \$5,000 on up. She emphasizes that even at these prices, this is no get-rich-quick scheme.



Like dogs, Savannahs fetch, romp in water, shake paws and walk on a harness.



They grow to 30 in. long, weigh about 25 lbs. and live for 20 years. However, a first generation cat sells for almost \$8,000.

Unfortunately, the high cost has brought out the con men. "There are people who will sell regular pound cats or domestic breeds with spots for a little under what a true breeder will charge," warns Sroufe. "People need to know who they are dealing with."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Joyce Sroufe, 7750 W. Riverview, Ponca City, Okla. 74601 (ph 580 765-6907; joyce@exoticcats.com).

**FARM SHOW**



Colt's owner says the "3" is getting larger as the young horse grows.

## Colt Has A "3" On His Forehead

You've never seen anything like this colt, born on Friday, May 13<sup>th</sup> with a no. 3 on its forehead.

"The only thing that's different about the colt is that he has a number on his head," says the Amish farmer who owns the colt. He wishes to remain anonymous for religious reasons. At first, many think it's a hoax or that the mark is painted on. "It's for real and will grow with the colt as he gets older," he says.

A few Dale Earnhardt fans expressed an interest in getting the colt into a racecar magazine. Earnhardt, one of NASCAR's most suc-

cessful drivers ever, drove a No. 3 black Chevrolet.

He's received letters offering to buy the colt although no one's named a price yet.

Although the farmer plans to eventually sell the colt, born from a Standardbred mare and Haflinger sire, he's not in any hurry. "A lot of people say 'let me know before you sell him.'"

"He's going to be more of a collector's item than a horse," the farmer says.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Blue Creek Workshop, 4373 E. 100 South, Monroe, Ind. 46772.

## Shoe Protectors Made From Bias-Ply Tires

They may not win any fashion contests, but the shoe protectors designed by Jerry Vander Wal of Manteca, Calif., are an innovative solution to a situation he found himself in.

"I do lathe and mill work in the shop on our ranch. The problem is that metal shavings become embedded in the soles of my shoes, which can be very hard on floor coverings in the house," Vander Wal says. "When my wife had new floor coverings installed in our house last year, the installer told me that my shoes would have to be banned if I wanted the linoleum and carpets to last."

This presented him with a problem, since Vander Wal finds lace-up shoes to be the most comfortable and he didn't like the nuisance of having to untie and tie them up again every time he came into the house to use the bathroom or get a cup of coffee. He concluded that he needed something to slip over his shop shoes.

"After some thought, I went through my collection of tires and found an old bias ply tire. I cut off two sections of tire, just a little longer than my shoe size. I used a hack saw

to cut through the bead, and a utility knife to cut through the rubber," Vander Wal explains.

"Next, I drilled a couple 3/8-in. holes about 1 in. back from each side of one end, just under the bead wire. I wound a piece of baling wire through the hole to bring the sides together."

He keeps the tire shoes at the bottom step by the back door so he can quickly slip into them with a slight kick as he heads into the house. He goes in, does his business, and then kicks them off again at the back steps, all without ever having to reach down and touch them.

"I found the shoes to be a little uncomfortable around the ankles, so I used a utility knife to trim the rubber smooth just inside the bead where the ankles are. After putting on a layer or two of duct tape, they were even more comfortable," Vander Wal says. "I can see these indoor tire overshoes could be useful for gardeners and farmers who need to briefly come into the house, but prefer lace-up shoes. The biggest drawback with these tire clogs is my teenage children. They have come up



Jerry Vander Wal slips into his shoe protectors before heading into the house and kicks them off on the back steps as he leaves.

to me and said, 'dad, you aren't going to wear those things around the house when my friends are over, are you?'"

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Jerry Vander Wal, 7701 Lathrop Rd., Manteca, Calif. 95336 (ph 209 823-1915; elevenvws@juno.com).

