

## Debunking Cat Myths

**CatChannel humorist Peter Gerstenzang blogs about famous feline myths - and a few you haven't heard of.**

*By Peter Gerstenzang*

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Every so often, I find myself wondering about various myths I've heard about cats. Hey, I never claimed to be a deep thinker! Still, there are many strange questions floating around about our feline friends. Let's look at some of the longest-lasting legends and see if anything new has been learned about them. **ARE CATS TELEPATHIC OR SIMPLY SENSITIVE?** There are many stories of a cat knowing its owner is about to come home, even if they're nowhere in sight. Does this mean cats have telepathy? Or are they hearing the high-pitched shriek of Mrs. Kowalski, who the owner nearly runs over every night? This debate about cats being psychic or merely sensitive rages on. How can you tell? If you say the words "Meow Mix," and kitty runs into the kitchen, she's probably just sensitive. If, however, you only think about Meow Mix and she drools, she's telepathic. If, however, you drool, you're not psychic but psychotic. And I'll be happy to make a referral.

**THE BONSAI KITTEN** Many people have written to ask me about the infamous Bonsai Kitten. Usually, I don't open these letters and have them returned immediately to the asylum. Still, the legend needs addressing. Apparently, a story persists about scientists being able to grow a kitty in a bottle, like a bonsai tree. The kitten breathes through a hole and expels through one, too. I don't know if this myth is real, but if it is, one thing is certain about this difficult gestation of the Bonsai Kitty: When she gets out, don't be there to greet her. And if you are, don't wear a scientist's lab coat. Or she'll take the whole thing out on you.

**BLACK CATS** Why is the black cat associated with bad luck? It seems to derive from the 13th century, when the French scapegoated cats and blamed them for their troubles. Several cats pointed out that the French should learn about taking personal responsibility. Which only freaked the French out more. This bad feeling culminated in Cat Wednesday, when many cats were hunted down and disposed of. Yes, history is pretty nightmarish. But things improve as people grow enlightened. In fact, in France now, Cat Wednesday means cats get in at any bar in town for half-price. Females drink for free.

**NINE LIVES** Then there's the nine lives myth. No, not the cat food. Apparently, a cat once ate nine fish dinners reserved for children, who then perished. The feline, subsequently, couldn't enter heaven until returning to Earth and living a good life &#151; nine times! So, if you've ever wondered why your cat seems so tired, this certainly explains it. The explanation for why people need such nutty stories? I'll let you know when I get it. If I were you, I wouldn't wait up.