

Foraging Fun

Make toys that feed your cat's hunting instinct.

By Kelly L. Stone

Cats in the wild forage many hours and eat 10 to 20 small meals throughout the day, according to the American Association of Feline Practitioners (AAFP). "In the case of the domestic cat, foraging means hunting for live prey," says Julia Albright, a veterinarian and resident at Cornell University Hospital for Animals in Ithaca, N.Y. "By providing commercially available food, humans have removed the need for housecats to hunt for survival."

Housecats need foraging opportunities, because many of them spend as much time eating as they would foraging and eating in the wild, says Ilona Rodan, a veterinarian and co-chair of the AAFP panel that authored the organization's Feline Behavior Guidelines. "This has led to an obesity epidemic in pet cats," she says. "Many of these cats eat out of boredom, and foraging allows them the activity and the entertainment of 'the hunt.'"

****For the full article, pick up the January issue of CAT FANCY.****

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