

Seeing Spots

The playful Savannah cat brings charm to the living room and keeps owners on their toes.

By Elisa Jordan

Countless cat lovers have watched documentary footage of wildcats in their natural habitats and fantasized about having a wildcat of their very own. Owning these cats, however, should remain just that: a fantasy.

Fortunately, cat enthusiasts now can have a little piece of that fantasy. The Savannah, a hybrid of domestic cats and the African Serval, combines the exotic look and elegance of wildcats with the tame temperament of housecats. The spotted, long-legged, large-eared cat has won over many fans. The Serval ancestry, however, has led some to draw incorrect conclusions.

"I've had people ask, 'They're mean cats, aren't they?' because they have wildcat in their background," says Carol Streit of C and C Savannahs in Illinois. "These cats are like any domestic cat. Servals are not mean animals."

Some also confuse another hybrid breed, the Bengal, with the Savannah, but they are two very distinct breeds. "A common question is, 'What's the difference between a Savannah and a Bengal?'" says Brigitte Cowell of Kirembo Cattery in California. "The Savannah has a taller, leaner build. The Bengal is a little bit more compact. The face will be a lot more angular on the Savannah, the ears bigger and more upright."

****For the full article, pick up the June 2007 issue of CAT FANCY.****

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