

American Cats, Dogs Honored for Fourth of July

Cat Fanciers Association, American Kennel Club celebrate homegrown breeds.

Posted: July 3, 2009, 3 a.m. EDT

The Fourth of July holiday is a great time to celebrate cat breeds born in the USA. For years, cat and dog enthusiasts in the United States have enjoyed the company of many four-legged companions of different nationalities. But some forget that scores of dog and cat breeds have 100-percent American heritage. What better time to show off your feline and canine patriotism than the Fourth of July? In conjunction with announcing the Meet the Breeds showcase of over 200 dog and cat breeds this fall in New York City, the AKC and CFA are commemorating national dog and cat breeds.

American Cat Breeds: American Curl: In 1981, a stray cat was taken in by a family in Lakewood, Calif. This cat with its arched back and curled ears is the originator of the pedigree in which selective breeding began in 1983. American Shorthair :This breed, used by early settlers to hunt rats, is believed to have even been onboard the Mayflower. He is one of the first five registered CFA breeds. Maine Coon: With a long coat, and intelligent, sweet disposition, the state cat of Maine is a sturdy breed and was renowned for its mousing abilities. Ragdoll: One of the most affectionate breeds, the Ragdoll is well suited for a domestic lifestyle and loves to be with its owners. Their silky coat requires minimal grooming.

American Dog Breeds: American Foxhound: George Washington bred and owned this unique and rare breed that originated in the 1700's on the East Coast. American Eskimo Dog: Commonly mistaken to be descended from working sled dogs, the Eskie was popular with German immigrants during the 19th century. American Water Spaniel: As the name implies, the AWS was bred to hunt from boats and was developed mainly in the Great Lakes region. He is also Wisconsin's state dog. American Staffordshire Terrier: Known for his versatility, this muscular breed is believed to have been a cross between a game terrier and Bulldog. Boston Terrier: This breed is prized for his tuxedo-colored coat and friendly disposition. He descends from the English Bulldog and white English Terrier and is Massachusetts' state dog. Chesapeake Bay Retriever : Renown for his ability to retrieve game in icy waters, this state dog of Maryland is thought to descend from two puppies rescued from a shipwreck off the coast of Maryland in 1807. Plott: This courageous breed is sought after for his capacity to hunt large and small game. Used today primarily for coonhunting, the Plott is also the state dog of North Carolina.