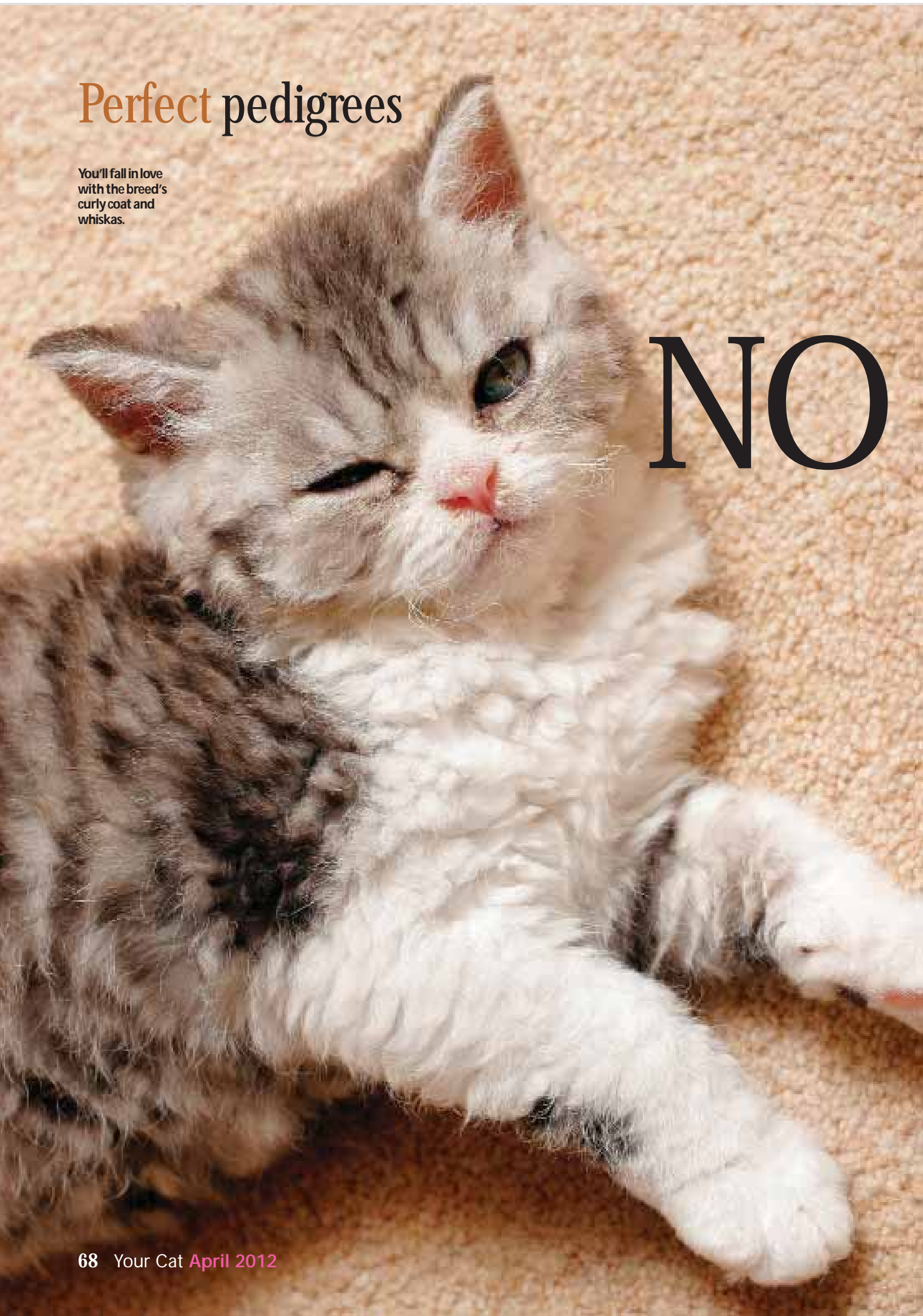


Perfect pedigrees

You'll fall in love with the breed's curly coat and whiskas.



NO

Let the curly see the wurly, as a certain TV host would say. The **Selkirk Rex** really does have the power in his paws, writes ANGELA LOWE.

LIKEY? NOT LIKELY!

Selkirk Rex have big 'owl' eyes.



The power to charm, captivate and make you fall head over heels that is!

'Paddyisms' aside, the Selkirk Rex is a real head turner – you can't help but be drawn in by his curly coat and whiskers, and big 'owl' eyes.

While we pride ourselves on the quality of our photographs here at *Your Cat*, and I am sure you will admit the Selkirk Rex cats on these pages are simply stunning, seeing really is believing with this breed!

If there's one thing you do this year, get yourself along to a cat show and experience the Selkirk Rex in all his curly-coated glory. They have so much to offer and so many good qualities it's hard to pinpoint exactly why they are so special; everyone has their own best bits!

For Zoe Amarilli, chairman of the Selkirk Rex Cat Club, it's their loving personality. In fact she recommends having more than one! "One of the most challenging aspects about the breed is leaving them as they love company – that and restricting yourself to just a couple."

Zoe says they are so addictive that if you have one Selkirk Rex you'll want to make room for more.

Photos: Neil Hepworth



"They love other cat company and can keep themselves entertained for hours. They especially need company if you're out all day at work."

While the shorthairs have a plush coat with tight curls and the longhairs have multiple kinks in the hairs, often with ringlets the side of the face, they are relatively low maintenance. A simple water spritz and scrunch will have the curls in his coat bouncing back to form. Zoe's tips for keeping Selkirks in tip-top condition include: "A good diet and baths! They cope well with regular grooming, which creates a great bond."

Selkirks are also renowned for their dog-like temperaments and are said to be the next best thing for commitment and loyalty. They are stocky, placid cats who are not fazed by much. So if you're looking for the perfect match – and have a good vacuum cleaner as they tend to shed a bit of fur – it could be a Selkirk Rex you're taking home!

"If you have one Selkirk Rex you'll want to make room for more"

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Perfect pedigrees

Dream team

If you like solid cats the British Shorthair is said to be compatible with Selkirks. Zoe advises: "Selkirks get on well with any gentle, sedate breed. They can easily be bullied by more intelligent breeds that establish feline hierarchies in a home."

The British Shorthair fits this description perfectly, being very laid back and placid. They are chunky cats with gentle natures, much like Selkirks. Expect to pay around £425 for a kitten and be spoiled for choice when it comes to colours!



Pedigree profile
Breed number: long 79l and short 79s.
Average lifespan: 14 years+
Temperament: home loving, friendly and affectionate, intelligent, loyal and devoted, playful into adulthood, good with children and other pets.
Availability: quite rare.
Weight: 3.5 to 7kg.
Colours: available in any coat colour and pattern.



Where in the world?

Persian breeder Jeri Newman discovered the first Selkirk Rex just in time! A friend who ran a rescue shelter in Montana US called to say she'd taken in a cat with an unusual coat and asked if Jeri would like to see her before she was 'signed over to the shelter' and spayed. Jeri named the young cat Miss DePesto after a character with curly hair in the 80s TV series 'Moonlighting'. 'Pest' was mated to Jeri's Persian stud, and her first litter was born in 1988. She produced three curly-coated kittens and so a breeding programme began. Jeri searched for an area name for her new breed and came up with the Selkirk Mountains in Canada, about 100 miles from her home. The Selkirk Rex (the name Rex being synonymous with the curly coat) was officially accepted for recognition by America's Cat Fancy Association in 1992. The Selkirk Rex achieved full Championship status by The International Cat Association in 1994, the Cat Fanciers' Association in 2000 and Governing Council of the Cat Fancy in the UK in 2009.

Kitten time

If you're looking for a kitten or two, you've come to the right place – just take a look at the Your Kitten section towards the back of this magazine to help you find a Selkirk Rex breeder.

If you'd like to see them at a show, keep an eye on our show dates column for details of the next Selkirk Rex cat show.

Expect to pay around £400 for a pet quality kitten and around



£300 for a straight-coated kitten. Kittens are curly coated at birth but may lose their curls and develop a curly coat again at about eight to ten months. The coat continues to develop until the cat is around two years of age.

At home with

With cream variant Simba

Simba may be a Selkirk Rex Variant, which means he's straight-coated and can't be shown, but he makes the perfect pet, according to owner Kelvin Frost.

"The breeder said what a wonderful temperament they have, well that's a real understatement. You couldn't want a more affectionate,

loving yet utterly mischievous cat."

Enjoying a cuddle at every opportunity, two-year-old Simba has his own special way of showing his gratitude... "With a deep rich purr and a head bonk," says Kelvin of Salhouse, Norfolk. "As a kitten he would follow us everywhere and was very vocal. If you stood still for too long, you could expect to have a kitten on your shoulder, a habit he still remembers sometimes!"

However, some things never change and Simba is still as playful as ever. "He has toys in every room and loves it when you play with him. Mousie is his favourite and when he was younger he took it everywhere. These days he leaves it where he can find it again, always in front of the fire in the lounge. The routine with mousie, is to wash it, give it a good licking, wash it again

then fall asleep resting his head on it. Poor Mousie recently underwent surgery to re-attach his head!"

Like many cats Simba likes routine, but with some unusual rituals. "He spends a lot of time outside in all weathers. If he comes home wet he sits by the airing cupboard door waiting for me to get a towel and dry him before he flops down somewhere for a snooze. "He's very manipulative and I can read him like a book, but most of all he is loving and loves to be loved and we wouldn't be without him. I would recommend a Selkirk to anyone."

With silver shaded Shaydee and silver shaded and white

Thimbles

For sewing enthusiast Linda Hutchison, of Wincanton, Somerset, it was her hobby that led her to the breed.

She explains: "Whilst browsing the Internet for cat featured fabric for a sewing project, I came across a breeder who lived not too far away and bred Selkirk Rex.

"I went to have a look, fell in love with them and now have two, plus a lovely friend who is their breeder."

Funnily enough one-year-old Thimbles lives up to her name and loves to play with Linda's sewing. "She especially likes opening the box I keep my sewing threads in and pinching them. She is also fascinated with my sewing machine and tries to sit on the top of it while I am trying to sew."

While two-year-old Shaydee is a big fan of a laser toy, he's more of a lover than a player! "Shaydee is the most lovable cat ever, but he thinks he is the boss of the household.

"Every morning as soon as I open my eyes, he gives me head butts and kisses and then cries for his breakfast. He sleeps on the bed with me and purrs the night away. During the day he will sit beside



Linda says Shaydee is the most loveable cat ever.

me with his head on my lap giving me 'love eyes'.

"But if he doesn't want to do something, like having his claws clipped, he will let you know! Also, if he has set his mind on having something he will use devious ways of succeeding.

"If I have to tell him off for being

naughty he will hide his head either under the duvet or in his giant fish – he looks so funny with his big bottom half sticking out but I am sure he is convinced that I can't see him!

"I am so glad I accidentally discovered the world of the Selkirk Rex – life would be so boring without my two."

Simba's owner says he makes the perfect pet.