

## Bristol Cats Study Newsletter - Autumn 2018

The 'Bristol Cats' study is a pioneering study of cat health, welfare and behaviour run by vets, behaviourists and epidemiologists at the University of Bristol. The aim is to improve knowledge of common diseases and behaviour problems of cats, for example (but not exclusively), unwanted elimination, obesity and hyperthyroidism. Findings from the study may be used by veterinary practitioners, cat breeders, owners and the cat community to improve the health and welfare of cats in the future.

### Welcome Anna!

Anna Garvey has recently started an MSc with the Bristol Cats study team. Anna graduated from Nottingham Vet School in 2015 and has been working as a small animal vet in a busy practice near London. Anna will be investigating gastrointestinal diseases in cats and what risk factors can affect this. It has been suggested that chronic gastrointestinal issues could be linked to 'stressful' events but this has never been examined scientifically. Therefore, we are particularly interested in whether stress in a cat's life contributes to them having persistent vomiting and diarrhoea. The project is funded by BSAVA Petsavers and we would love for your cat to be a part of this important new research project. Over the next few months Anna will be getting in touch with some 'Bristol Cat' owners that live close to the University of Bristol to arrange to meet some of the 'Bristol Cats' and conduct some behavioural and personality tests. If you would like to find out more please contact Anna at [anna.garvey@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:anna.garvey@bristol.ac.uk)



## COLOURING COMPETITION





Congratulations to all the entrants to our colouring competition! We are very pleased to announce that our two winners are:

***Tahlia Connors and Matthew Hickman***

Congratulations to you both, your prizes will be on the way soon!





### INSPIRE

Following the success of Emma's INSPIRE project last year (which you may remember reading about in the Autumn 2017 newsletter) we are offering another project looking at how often owners change their cats' food and what drives this change.



## Study updates:

### ***Owner-reported flea treatment measures and skin disease in cats***

This study, completed by Sophie Tyler, has now been published in the Journal of Feline Medicine and Surgery, and a summary is provided below. If owners would like a PDF copy of the full paper then please request it by emailing us at: [cat-study@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:cat-study@bristol.ac.uk).

#### ***Summary:***

This study assessed the use of flea treatments and owner-reported flea infestation and skin disease within the Bristol Cats study. Data from questionnaires 1 (kittens aged 2-4 months) and 5 (cats aged 2.5 years) were used. Owners were asked which brand of flea treatment, if any, was used at each time point. At 2.5 years, owners were asked if they had noted signs of skin disease or fleas on their cat within the previous 12 months and if they had sought veterinary attention for the skin disease or fleas.

#### ***Results:***

Of 1150 eligible cats, skin disease at age 2.5 years was reported by owners of 55/1150 (4.8%) cats. Many owners who reported skin disease (25/55) had not sought veterinary attention. There were 81/1150 (7.0%) cats with reported head shaking and/or ear scratching within the past 12 months. The majority of cats (204/286; 71.3%) received prescription flea treatments at both time points. Use of non-prescription flea treatment at 2.5 years old was more likely to be associated with owner-reported skin disease/flea infestation than those who used prescription flea treatment. There was a significant association between the reported presence of fleas and reported presence of skin disease at 2.5 years of age.

#### ***Conclusion:***

Use of non-prescription flea treatment was more likely to be associated with owner-reported skin disease/flea infestation than those who used prescription flea treatment and there was a significant association between the reported presence of fleas and reported presence of skin disease.

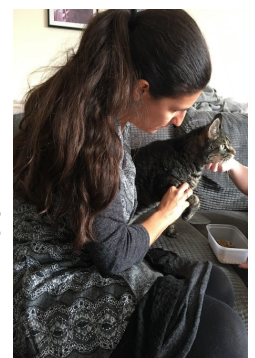
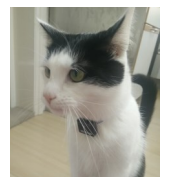
### ***Recruitment has started!***

After joining the Bristol Cats team as the Zoetis Feline Scholar in May, Evelyn is now starting recruitment for her study. She is studying the activity levels of our feline friends and is looking for Bristol Cats who live indoors to help her!

If you enrol on the study, Evelyn will visit you and your cat at home, to gently examine your cat's joints and place a cat "FitBit" on your cat. If your cat doesn't normally wear a collar that's ok.

For more information about this exciting study (and pictures of cats wearing "FitBits"! ), check <https://www.facebook.com/feline.activity.study/>. Please contact Evelyn via Facebook, e-mail ([cat-study@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:cat-study@bristol.ac.uk)) or phone (07827 981412) if you and your cat are interested in helping us!

🐾 Feline 🐾  
Activity Study

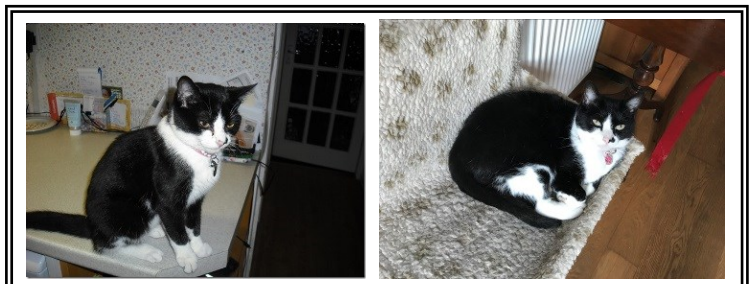
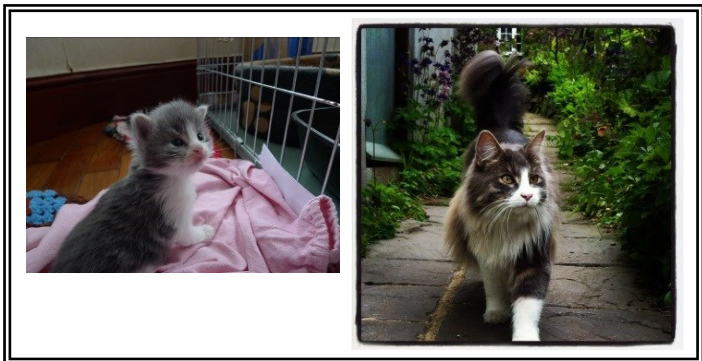
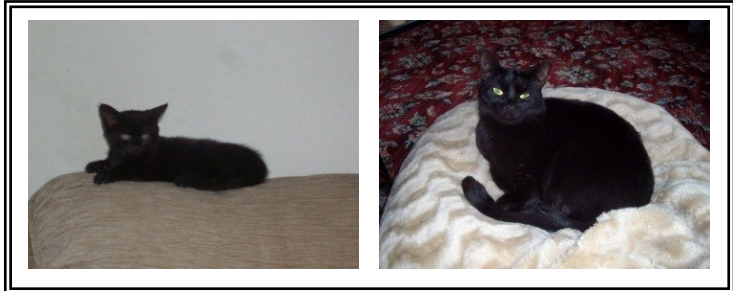
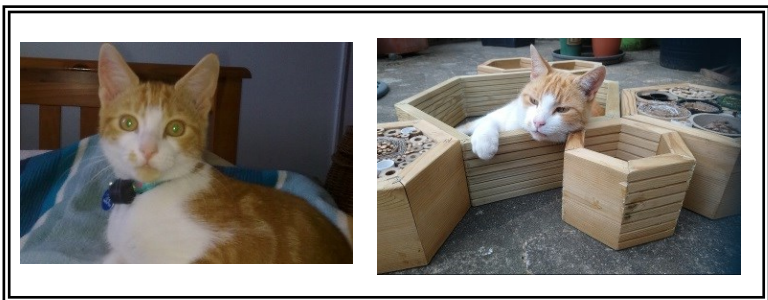
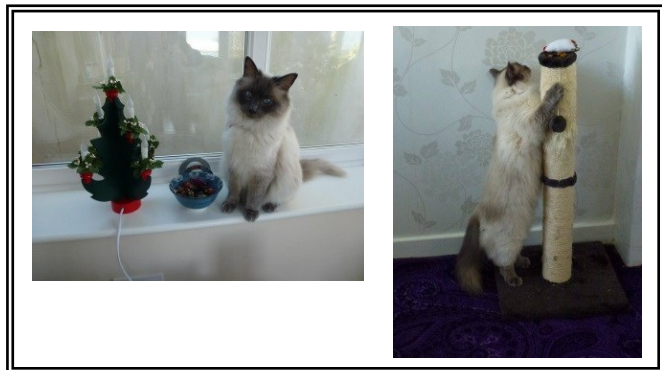
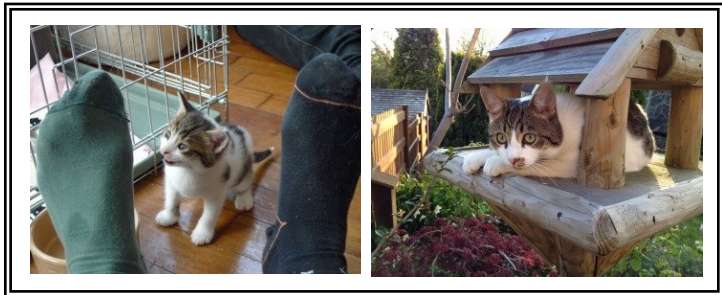
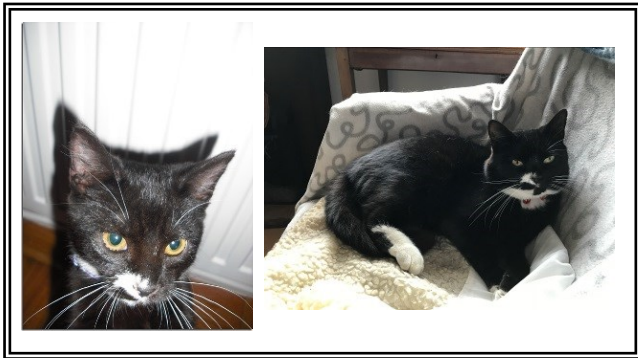
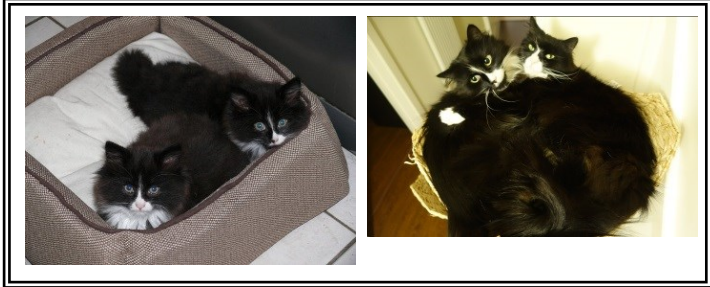


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Facebook ([www.facebook.com/bristolcats.study](http://www.facebook.com/bristolcats.study)) or on our website,  
([www.bristol.ac.uk/vetscience/cats](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/vetscience/cats)).**



# Meow and Then

In our Spring newsletter we asked you to send us photos of your 'Bristol Cats' as a kitten and how they look now. Here are some of the photos we've received so far! Please keep sending them in, and we will share more in the next newsletter.





# Christmas is coming!!

**Have you moved house?** To ensure that your Christmas card reaches you, please let us know your new address by visiting:

<https://smvsfa.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/info>

You can also let us know about any other changes using this link.

Alternatively you can get in touch using our contact details below:

Tel/text: 07827 981412

Email: [cat-study@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:cat-study@bristol.ac.uk)

Freepost: RSHR-AGRJ-UABZ Bristol Cats, Dr Emily Blackwell

University of Bristol Langford House BRISTOL BS40 5DU

## Call for photos for our Christmas Card!

If you would like a photo of your cat(s) to feature on our 2018 'Bristol Cats' Christmas Card then please email us **ONE** photo by **Monday 5th November** to [cat-study@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:cat-study@bristol.ac.uk). We try to feature as many cats as possible, but space is limited! Please send in clear photos of a high resolution to increase the chance of your cat featuring on the card.

Thank you, and we look forward to seeing all of your photos!



Thank you for your help — the Bristol Cat owners and cats are helping to make a difference to our knowledge of factors affecting feline welfare.



We would also like to thank **WALTHAM<sup>®</sup> Centre for Pet Nutrition** and **Cats Protection** for funding the study.

