

## THE BRONZE EGYPTIAN MAU



The Ancestors of the Bronze Egyptian Mau have a history dating back over 5000 years. Their look has not changed significantly as evidenced by ancient artwork.

These cats were used to control vermin and for hunting and fishing in ancient Egypt where cats are thought to have been first domesticated. As trade between nations developed the mau spread far and wide from Italy to India and Iran .Like people, they developed different characteristics and colours as they adjusted to their new environment. Some became pale bronze, when living in Desert conditions whilst others developed a Coppery Bronze Colour. This warm coppery colour, favoured by most show judges developed in India, warm Bronze Mau's are often referred to as "Indian Line" Mau's.

In 1952 a Bronze Egyptian Mau Boy named Jojo was presented for show. He was shown in his country of birth, Italy From there he was transported, together with other Mau's to The United States of America and The Fatima Cattery came into being

In the 1980s Cathie Rowan of Rocat succeeded in bringing 13 maus into America (I am not sure how many of these were bronze) and in the 1990s Len Davidson brought four more maus from Egypt, These were all bronze. Since then two bronze cats of Egyptian Mau Type., Maslama and Sahoure, were imported from Egypt to France other similar bronzes have been imported from Egypt to the U.S.A.and Canada.

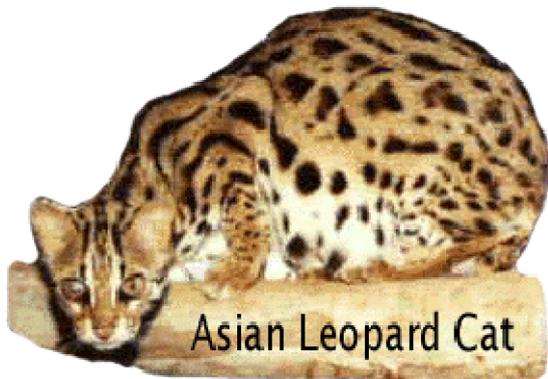
Bronze Mau Breeders have had a continuing problem with stolen identity involving the Brown Spotted Bengal .These difficulties can be extremely frustrating.

The problem seems to have originated when domesticated cats of Egyptian Mau type were imported from India by Jean Mill and registered with the CFA as a Egyptian Mau's with the names "Millwood Toby", a bronze male, and Millwood Tashi, a bronze female. Toby was registered with TICA with the name Millwood Tory and was used in the subsequent Bengal breeding program with the Asian Leopard cat "felis Begalensis" from which the name Bengal was derived

The Asian Leopard Cat does not naturally breed with domestic cats, the original cross between a domesticated cat and The Asian Leopard Cat was done intentionally as part of a University of California research programme ...Apparently Dr Willard Centrewall was seeking a cure for Leukaemia in Feline and other species including humans , Researchers crossed The Leopard Cat with other domestic cats in order to study the genome difference in the offspring, It is thought this research continues. Asian Leopard Cats, crossed with a domestic cat, born and tested in the University were acquired by Jean Mill.

Bonnie Wydro (Matiki) said:" We heard that Jean Mill of W.Covina, C.A had obtained two Mau's from the Delhi Zoo in India..Presumably they were brought there from Italy by a caretaker. She was breeding them with regular old US Bronzes to try to get better colour. We visited her there and saw Toby and Tashi..they were considerably bigger than any Mau's we had seen before and then she said

she was getting out of the Mau's to develop her own breed which she was going to call "Leopardettes" . By then..As we understand it..She had acquired an Asian Leopard Cat. I am not sure if it was just one or more “.



Extract from Jean Milks Memoirs;

On a trip to India in 1982,the curator of The New Delhi Zoo took us to a small shed to see a beautifully spotted, but untouchable. Little tailless domestic kitten under a sick Rhinoceros. The turbaned caretaker insisted that it had originally had a tail, but. As Rhinos are neither sharp eyed nor light footed the tail had been squashed. It arrived at the Los Angeles Airport in a mahogany box from the zoo curator with the words “SAID TO BE A DOMESTIC CAT” written below the tiny air holes. It was several days before documented ancestry. CFA registered him as a transfer Mau from ACA. I offered him at stud to both the Ocicat and Egyptian Mau breeders who needed better spotting. But the Ocicat people didn't want his blood, nor did a few Mau breeders who fought viciously to keep him and me out. A few visionary Mau breeders, however, welcomed his beautiful Indian Mau genes to improve the weak...inbred, Poor tempered...Poor producing Egyptian Mau bloodlines.



Millwood Toby

The Egyptian Mau has been extensively used in the development of the Bengal Hybrid with over one hundred and twelve different Egyptian Mau's listed in The Bengal Breed database and so it is not surprising that a Brown Spotted Bengal can be mistaken for a Bronze Egyptian Mau and vice a versa.

Didier Hallepee wrote; “The intensive utilisation of the Egyptian Maun to create a breed has, at times, led to cats whose appearance reminded one very much of The Egyptian Mau. Such cats are still met with in breeding farms where quality production is not the main concern. The good quality Bengal does not look like an Egyptian Mau anymore”

The problem has been exacerbated by the difference in withholding faults for the bronze. The CFA says “Withhold points for lack of Gray undercoat in the bronze” (EMBS2008) revised in 2009 to

accept a warm bronze ground colour .The GCCF says “Withhold points for lack of warmth in the bronze”(EMSBS 2010) The LOOF says “withhold points for lack of ticking in the bronze”(EMBS 2007) and TICA says: “Withhold points for lack of gray undercoat “.. Any wonder that the international Bronze Mau community have problems choosing breeding stock! The International Bronze Mau community have had, and continue to have, problems interpreting this conflicting information..

Egyptian Mau’s are the most athletic of cats. Their legs are slightly shorter at the front than at the back and a skin fold under the belly, like the Cheetah, assists in running by allowing the legs to stretch further apart, Mau’s have been clocked at speeds in excess of 30 miles per hour. Both the Cheetah and the Egyptian Mau are naturally spotted cats but a rare genetic mutation can cause the Classic coat pattern to be produced in both species.

When talking about Mau’s people often refer to Silver Mau’s as having the dominant gene and assume therefore that bronze cannot have been the original colour of the Mau. The following statement can be read on any one of a number of websites (“Dominant negative mutations have an altered gene product that acts antagonistically to the wild type allele” ) This may give credence to Sabine Harding’s statement “Silver and Smoke on the other hand are artificial fur colours which emerged due to occasional mutations followed by selective breeding” .Extract from Sabine Harding’s “Purebred vs Native Egyptian Mau’s” .

Some long time ago, because of import restrictions at the time, there were attempts by British Breeders to re-create Egyptian Mau’s by cross breeding Abyssinian..Siamese and Tabbies. However the offspring did not resemble the true Mau. I understand that these cats are now referred to as the Oriental Spotted Tabby. Some old books still refer to the Egyptian Mau as having descended from the Siamese..

At the time of writing The Bronze Mau continues to be plagued by the different descriptions stipulated by the different registration bodies.

Both the Cold and Warm Bronze are part of the Egyptian Mau heritage and, in my opinion, should be given equal consideration

The importance of “New Blood” and the avoidance of indiscriminate inbreeding cannot over emphasised

.The Bronze Egyptian Mau is a Beautiful, Intelligent, and Elegant wonder of nature. It is our Privilege and duty to care for its Future.



African Wildcat

“Things exist either because they have recently come into existence or because they have qualities that made them unlikely to be destroyed in the past.”

— Richard Dawkins, *The Blind Watchmaker*

- Peter H. Chamberlain Lamb 2013