

Top 10 Facts About Maine Coon Cats

A great American breed of cat, Main Coon Cats are rich in history. To learn more, keep reading the top 10 facts about Maine Coons...

1. Maine Coon cats are the stuff of legends. Some tales have it that this breed is a mix of cat and raccoon, hence the bushy tail and brown striped coat. Another legend proposes that Marie Antoinette sent the progenitors of the breed to Maine in preparation for her flight from France. What is more likely is that they are a mixture of pre-existing short hair cats and longhaired varieties introduced to America by sailors or even Vikings.
2. Maine Coon cats are well suited for the harsh climates of New England. They have thick, glossy coats that are water-resistant, which makes them the perfect cat for cold and snow. And, although their fur is long, it requires very little maintenance. A weekly combing is generally enough.
3. Maine Coon cats are great companions for humans. They tend to be good-natured goofs, who love to be with "their people." It's not that they demand a lot of attention; they just like to hang out with their owners. They're relaxed and easy-going and retain their kittenish, clown-like playfulness most of their lives. They're probably as close to a dog's personality as a cat can get and still retain its dignity!
4. Maine Coon cats are not your average cat, when it comes to appearance. Besides their long coats, this breed is also large and muscular, with a broad chest and long tail. Females grow to about 9 to 12 pounds and males are 13 to 18 pounds, on average. The tufting on their heads and ears gives them a similar appearance to a lynx at times. Their eyes are large, round, and expressive, and set at a slightly oblique angle.
5. Maine Coons are easy to train. Some will even accept walking on a leash, with practice. They train easily as long as they associate the activity with something they enjoy, such as spending time with you.
6. Maine Coon cats come in all the colours of the rainbow. OK, that is a bit of an exaggeration, but they can be found in most colours except chocolate, lavender, ticked tabby, and the point-restricted Siamese pattern.
7. Maine Coons use their front paws extensively. They can curl their paws around objects to pick them up and even like to play in their water bowls with their toys at times. They can easily learn to open cabinet doors and turn on water faucets with their flexible paws.
8. Maine Coon breeders can be found throughout the world. Attending local cat shows is a great way to find one in your area. You can also contact the national breed organization, the Maine Coon Breeders and Fanciers Association (MCBFA) at <http://www.mcbfa.org>. Or, look in the ads in the back of Cat or Cat Fancy magazines for breeders.
9. A great way to learn about Maine Coons is the book, *That Yankee Cat, The Maine Coon*, by Marilis Hornidge. It has great sections on breed stories, the history of Maine Coons, genetics, breed health care, and contains many photographs.
10. Maine Coons' popularity has waxed and waned through history. In the 1800s, it was a very popular breed and won quite a few honours at shows. But, as Persians became more common in the New World, the Maine Coon lost many of its supporters. Starting in the 1950s, though, it has been steadily regaining its popularity. An intelligent, loving cat, it gets along well with children and dogs and is the ideal family pet.

So, there you have it--the top 10 interesting facts about Maine Coon cats!