

# PASSION *for* PETS

## Russian Blue - Information Sheet



**ORIGIN** - The Russian Blue is a natural breed and not the result of selective matings with other breeds as are many other newer breeds of cat. Originally known as the Archangel Cat because it arrived in Europe aboard ships from the Russian port of that name. However, there is some confusion regarding the origins of the Russian Blue. It has also been known as the Spanish Cat and the Maltese Cat particularly in the US where the later name persisted until the beginning of the century but there is strong evidence linking the cat with Russia. Large numbers of cats with similar coat colours are found in Scandinavia and their dense coat is indicative of living in a northern climate. During World War II the breed declined and breeders tried to boost the numbers by crossing it with the British Blue and the Siamese but those attempts led to its virtual disappearance and the resultant cats resembled blue Siamese. A concentrated effort by breeders in the US and Britain in the late 1960's resulted in a return to the original type.

**DESCRIPTION** - The Russian Blue is a medium to large cat with an elegant, graceful body. The head is wedged shaped and is short from the tip of the nose to the eyes. The distance from the eyes to the ears is at least as long as from the tip of nose to the eyes. The head between the ears is flat. The Russian Blue has prominent whisker pads which give the head a broad end. The forehead in profile is straight to the upper edge of the eye. The shallow concave curve from the upper eye to the tip of the nose appears almost straight and creates a distinctive angle level with the upper eye. In profile there must be no stop, break, nose bump or straight line from top of head to nose tip. The chin is strong and deep and forms a straight line with the nose tip in the same vertical plane. The ears are large and slightly pointed. They are placed so that the outer line of the ear continues the line of the upper part of the face. The skin of the ear is thin and is covered with very fine fur and in certain lights the ear is almost transparent. The eyes are set wide apart and are almond shaped. The eye colour is vivid green. The legs are long and the feet are small and neat and the cat walks as if on tip toes. The tail is long and tapering.

**COLOUR** - Although named the Russian Blue, black and white Russians do appear but these are rare and have not attracted a great following. In the most popular blue variety the coat colour is a clear even blue with a silvery sheen. The roots of the coat may be slightly paler but there must be no banding or silver tipping. The coat itself is double with a very dense undercoat and feels fine, short and soft. In texture the coat of the Russian Blue is very different from any other breed and is the truest measure of the breed. The nose leather and paw pads are blue.

**COAT LENGTH** – Short

**AGE EXPECTANCY** - Russian Blues are quite long lived and often live well into their late teens.

**WEIGHT / HEIGHT RANGE** – 4 - 8kgs

**AILMENTS** - The Russian Blue is a healthy breed and they are capable of living into their late teens. They don't have any health problems specific to the breed but from the age of about eight it is wise to have an annual health check including teeth cleaning and blood tests for liver and kidney function.

**PERSONALITY** - Russian Blue cats are quiet and sensitive, sometimes shy and reserved but are also tremendously loyal to their chosen human being. They may be cautious of strangers and take time to develop a friendship with humans but it is often worthwhile as Russian Blues can become devoted pets. Once settled in a loving environment they love to play with toys and enjoy jumping, climbing and racing around and are extremely agile and light footed. They love human attention and can appear to be quite hurt when rejected. Russian Blues are quite content to be house cats as long as they have the company of their human friends.

**ENERGY** – High

**NOISE** – Low

**CHILD SUITABILITY** – Medium

**COMPATABILITY WITH CATS** – Medium

**OTHER ANIMAL COMPATIBILITY** - Medium

#### **FEEDING & GROOMING**

**FEEDING** – The Russian Blue will require approximately 80 Kcals per kg of bodyweight per day of food as it is an active medium size cat. They can be good eaters and can be prone to weight gain so it may be a good idea to measure their rations.

**UPKEEP** - Like most shorthair breeds the Russian Blue does not require much grooming to keep the coat healthy but they do love attention and brushing with a soft brush will be enjoyed.

**SHEDDING** - Little