

try in the world, TICA. Highlander breeders accepted the challenge.

The foundation cats were carefully hand-picked for the qualities important to their development in producing the Highlander's unique "big cat" look. Domestic short hair and domestic long hairs are the only acceptable outcrosses. It is important to note that Highlanders have never used any other recognized breed as an outcross.

Breed Characteristics:

The Highlander breed group carefully selected each and every Highlander foundation cat by a combination of the unique Highlander profile that immediately draws attention to the long-sloping forehead, intense wide-set eyes separated by a wide nose with substantial nose leather that gives the Highlander a look of its own. The nose, muzzle, and chin form a blunt look, giving an overall boxy appearance in profile.

The Highlander has also maintained the loose curl that affects the top 1/3rd of the ear. It is not a tight curl like the American Curl, and Highlander breeders believe it came from a Canadian breed called the Hemingway Curl through the Highland Lynx. This gentle backward flare is reminiscent of the ears of some of the "big cat" breeds. The Highlander is a naturally short-tailed breed. The tail is short and thick with a bone length of at least 2 inches in adults with proportional length in kittens. The tail must not extend past the hock. Slight kinks and curls are allowed. These incredible features all tie together to create the unique "big cat" look of the Highlander breed in a domestic cat.

The Highlander cat comes in both long and short coats, with the long coat no longer than 2 inches in length. All colors are allowed except for bi-colors. The preferred colors are those that reflect the group's goal of a "big cat" look in a domestic feline. Distinctive spotted patterns in a variety of colors; along with solids and lynx points, often in a beautiful spotted lynx point pattern, have helped to achieve these goals. Ear furnishings,



most notably on the longhairs, further enhance the appearance of the "big cat" look.

Highlander breeding programs continue to selectively breed to protect and enhance this distinctive look as well as to enhance the bloodlines to keep them genetically different and pure from other breeds.

Although their look is one of power and fierceness, Highlanders are fun-loving, good-natured cats that constantly entertain their humans with zany antics. They enjoy being the center of attention.

Highlander Breed Group:

As of October 2007, the Highlander Breed group consists of 24 active breeders in 12 U.S. states and 1 Canadian province. They expect those numbers to continue to grow at a rapid pace as more people become aware of these delightful, easy-going cats.

Highlander Breed Group members have used Highlander cats and kittens for educational purposes as well as for therapy animals in nursing homes. Their outstanding, easygoing personalities make adaptation to

almost any environment an effortless transition. The group has developed and published a Highlander Breeders Group Website that can be found at www.highlanderbreeders.com. The site includes breeders' cattery information, pictures, breed standard, a Highlander Chat room, Highlander rescue, and information about the breed itself.

The group established the Highlander Rescue on March 15, 2006 for the protection of all Highlanders and preservation of the breed. It, too, is included on the breed group website. Foster homes are in place. To this point the group has not received any rescues into the program. Perhaps this speaks to the adaptability of the breed to any environment as well as the commitment of Highlander breeders to placing their kittens into good homes.

Of course we all know that no matter how carefully potential owners are screened, situations will arise that necessitate cats being rehomed. The group felt that it was their ethical responsibility to the breed to ensure that this mechanism was in place very early on in the

Photographs by Justine St. Arnaud.