

Animal Crackers

Of "Ligers" and "Tigons"

A "liger" is the result of breeding a male lion with a female tiger. It often has a mane like a lion, and stripes and spots. The spots are inherited from its lion father, even though adult lions are not visibly spotted. Ligers make the sound of both a lion and a tiger, although their roar tends to sound more like a lion's.

The liger is probably the largest cat in the world, usually bigger than either of its parent species. At an average weight of 900 pounds, ligers can be twice the size of male Siberian tigers, the largest non-extinct naturally occurring member of the cat family.

Rarely, a "tigon" will be born to a tiger father and a lion mother. Tigons look similar to ligers, but are not nearly as large. The lifespans of ligers and tigons, like most hybrids, are shorter than those of naturally occurring species. All known instances of tiger-lion interbreeding have been in captivity: the two species naturally overlap only near the Gir Preserve in Bangladesh, and even then the big cats would be unlikely to mingle.

AKC Registration Numbers

The Labrador retriever, for the fifteenth consecutive year, is the most popular breed of dog registered with the American Kennel Club (AKC). In 2004, 146,692 Labradors were registered, followed by golden retrievers (52,550), German shepherds (46,046), beagles (44,555), Yorkshire terriers (43,522), dachshunds (40,770), boxers (37,741), poodles (32,671), shi tzus (28,958), and Chihuahuas (24,850).

The least-registered breed is again the English foxhound with 17 registrations, followed by the otterhound (23), American foxhound (42), Sussex spaniel (45), and harrier (53).

Over the past ten years, the popularity of



Dr. Bhagavan Antle and "Hercules" the Liger (12 ft., 900 lbs.). From T.I.G.E.R.S. Preservation Stations, Barefoot Landing, Myrtle Beach, S.C. and Parrot Jungle Island, Miami, Fla.

small dogs has steadily risen. According to AKC, the most significant increases since 1994 occurred mostly in small dogs: French bulldog (252%), Brussels griffon (234%), Chinese crested (134%), Staffordshire bull terrier (120%), and papillon (122%). The most dramatic decreases in registration for the same period were experienced by Dalmatians (-98%), chow chows (-93%), Rottweilers (-83%), and akitas (-72%), all breeds that had experienced a rapid rise in registrations prior to 1994.

To look up registration numbers for the 153 different breeds registered with the AKC, see www.akc.org.

In the United Kingdom, the top breed registered with the Kennel Club is also the Labrador retriever, followed by the English cocker spaniel. The next eight breeds are: English springer

spaniel, German shepherd, Staffordshire bull terrier, Cavalier King Charles spaniel, golden retriever, West Highland white terrier, boxer, and border terrier.

All about Cats

The Cat Fanciers' Association (CFA), through Harper Resource, has published *The Complete Cat Book*, edited by Mordecai Siegal. Patterned after the AKC's *Complete Dog Book*, it is a comprehensive volume on all things pertaining to owning, breeding, and showing cats. The book provides descriptions, personality traits, grooming requirements, origins, and histories, as well as CFA show standards for the 41 breeds recognized by the organization. There are black-and-white and color photographs of each breed of cat and numerous drawings of the various coat patterns.

While the book discusses showing and breeding in detail, there are extensive sections on selecting a cat as a companion, feline behavior, nutrition, and a home veterinary guide. The latter two sections could be separate books; they are quite inclusive.

There is also a history of the CFA and of cat shows in this country. The first major cat show was held in 1895 at Madison Square Garden, with 176 cats entered. The first cat club was founded in 1899 in Chicago, and the CFA came into being in 1906.

The Complete Cat Book is not just for the cat breeder and exhibitor; it is a wonderful resource for anyone who wants to learn about cats. The book's retail price is \$29.95. ■

Errata

Dr. Bernd Driessen, chief of Anesthesia Service at New Bolton Center, was incorrectly identified in *Bellwether* 61.

Dr. Pamela Wilkins was not correctly identified as the presenter of a research abstract, "Measurement of endothelin-1 concentration in oxygen dependent and non-oxygen dependent clone calves, their surrogate dams and their fetal fluids, at birth," at the Veterinary Emergency and Critical Care Society Annual Meeting, San Diego, September 2004. Also, Dr. Wilkins's research abstract, "Treatment of a premature elephant calf," appeared in the

Proceedings of the International Elephant Research Symposium, Dallas, December 2004, and she presented the following papers: "Gastric and duodenal ulceration in the critical neonate," "So what now? Problems commonly seen in foals following dystocia," and "It's not over yet. The bleeding mare: Case presentations and discussion" at the International Veterinary Emergency and Critical Care Society, San Diego, September 2004; and "Treatment of a premature Asian elephant calf" at the International Elephant Research Symposium, Fort Worth, Texas, December 2004.