

The form and temperament of the cat's body perfectly correspond with his disposition. He is handsome, light, adroit, cleanly, and voluptuous; he loves ease, and searches out the softest places for rest and repose. The cat is very amorous, and what is uncommon among animals, the female appears more ardent than the male; she seeks for and invites him, and by her loud cries announces the fury of her desires or rather the pressure of her wants; if he flies from or disdains her, she pursues, tears, and though their approaches are always accompanied with acute pain, she forces him to comply with her desires. This passion of the female continues nine or ten days, and commonly happens only twice a year in the spring and autumn, but sometimes three and even four times. They go with young 55 or 56 days, and they usually have from four to six at a litter. As the males are apt to devour their progeny, the females commonly conceal themselves when they litter, and if suspicious of a discovery, they carry their young ones away in their mouths and hide them in holes or inaccessible places. After suckling them a few weeks, the old one takes them mice or small birds, to accustom them to eat flesh; but by an unaccountable caprice, these very mothers so tender and careful, become sometimes so cruel
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