

Housing conditions for domestic cats (*Felis catus*) and their behavioural reactions

Summary

Domestic cats, which have been companions for humans for many years, are the subject of an endless discussion – should they be let outdoors or kept indoors? On the one hand, cats outdoors have access to the natural environment, which positively influences their behaviour; on the other hand, they pose a potential threat to other animals or may end up in dangerous situations themselves. This paper assesses the effects of the way cats are kept on their behavioural reactions and also considers other factors that could influence their behaviour. A survey was conducted, to which 838 responses were obtained and then analysed statistically. The study revealed that indoor cats and those that go outside under their owners' supervision are more likely to develop a pica disorder. These same cats are more inclined to engage in play, while outdoor cats do so rarely. The main factors determining urine marking are the cat's sex and whether it has been spayed/neutered. The location of the litter box was not shown to be a cause of abnormal urination.

KEY WORDS: domestic cat, cat behaviour, indoor, outdoor, behavioural reactions