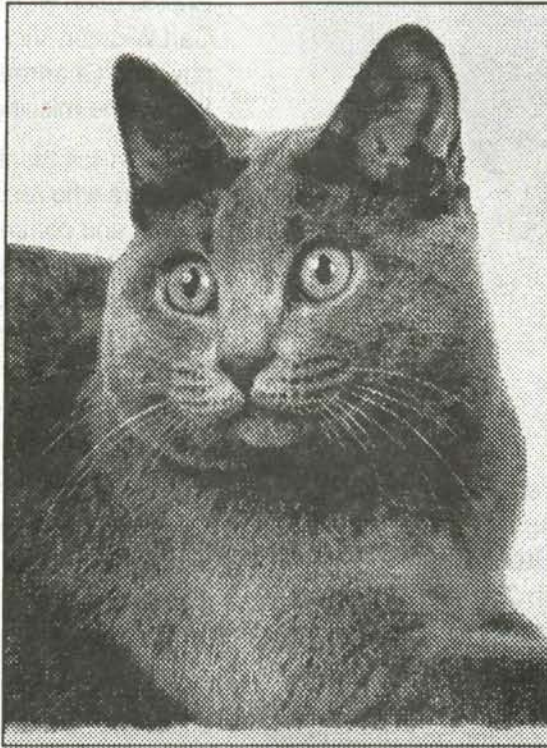


Judging the Chartreux: Interpretations of the Standard



Chartreux Breed Council
June 1991





Preface

This brochure has been prepared by the CFA Chartreux Breed Council for use in training CFA judges. It represents the Breed Council's first attempt at explaining how the Chartreux standard should be interpreted. The brochure was compiled in a relatively short time frame to make it available for the June 1991 Judges Breed Seminar. Breeders were asked to provide photos and remarks for use in preparing the brochure. As editor, I have attempted to present breeders' comments as fairly and objectively as possible and in a manner consistent with the current language in the standard. I have also attempted to note the range of aesthetic preferences or different interpretations, again within the bound of the current standard. All this said, however, the reader should be cautioned that the views presented in the brochure are not necessarily those of any individual breeder. Although Chartreux Breed Council members received a preliminary draft for comment, timing has not permitted review of the final version. I am hopeful, nevertheless, that this first edition of the brochure will provide a basis for constructive dialogue among Chartreux breeders and judges and can serve as a starting point for future updates and revisions.

The identities of the Chartreux pictured, as well as their breeders and owners, have been deliberately omitted, as was agreed upon in setting the ground rules for preparation of the brochure. The photos, however, represent Chartreux from many different breeders and pedigrees and include recently imported Chartreux as well as those descending from North American breeding programs. Many (but not all) are Grand Champions or Grand Premiers.

Photos used were taken by Chanan Photography, Carl Widmer, Vickie Jackson, Johnson Photography, and Chartreux breeders/owners. (Please forgive the missing credits on copyrighted photos.)

My heart-felt thanks to the numerous Chartreux breeders who responded so quickly and provided photos and comments. I also want to acknowledge some special contributions: Katherine Kisrow, Chartreux Breed Council Secretary, who, in addition to coordinating communications and arranging for printing, wrote the section on the history and origin of the Chartreux; and Orca Starbuck, who provided the drawings and contributed analyses of physical features.

As editor, I take credit--or blame--for the overall content, choice of words and photos, design, layout, and production of the brochure (including all the typos).

Last but not least, credit is due the two CFA-affiliated breed clubs--Chartreux East and Les Amis des Chartreux--both of which cofunded with CFA the costs of printing this brochure.

Jill J. Rasmussen
Jacqueline Chartreux

Introduction

Although still relatively few in number, the Chartreux is being bred and shown in all CFA regions in the contiguous 48 States. And its popularity is growing steadily. While still not a common show entry, more and more frequently several Chartreux are present in the same class—and there have been occasions when the Chartreux has ranked among the largest classes.

There is considerable depth nationwide in the quality of Chartreux. Chartreux Grands are coming from breeding programs located across the nation and have varying pedigrees. Many lines are successfully producing high quality Chartreux for exhibition. In only its fourth year of CFA Championship competition, Chartreux have ranked in the Top 25 Cats in several regions and, this year, a Chartreux is among the Top 25 National Winners.

Chartreux breeders do vary in their interpretations of the standard as well as in aesthetic preferences. And there are various "looks" emerging among Chartreux. However, from the judge's perspective, these differences must be evaluated in accordance with the Chartreux standard, which embodies the classic description of this historic cat.

The Chartreux is an ancient natural breed which modern-day breeders are seeking to preserve and perpetuate. Deriving from relatively few foundation cats and as a result of decades of very careful breeding, today's Chartreux remains quite similar in appearance to drawings and descriptions found in old historical and trade documents. Although Chartreux breeders do vary some in their aesthetic preferences, they are steadfast in their belief in the importance of preserving the classic, albeit primitive, look of the Chartreux.

While there may be need to clarify certain aspects of the standard, breeders struggle with how to word changes without compromising their dedication to protecting the breed's natural characteristics.

A breed standard is a theoretical description of the technically "perfect" cat. Yet it is axiomatic that rarely, if ever, in nature is technical perfection realized. Unlike machines, animals are not

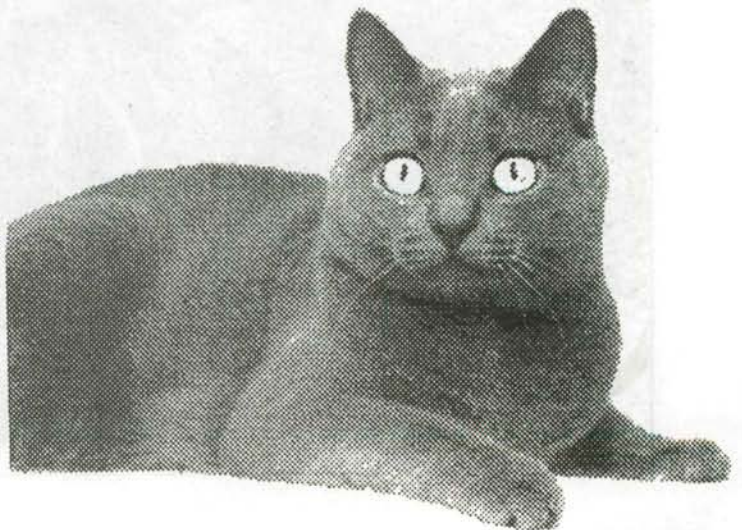
produced on assembly lines with standardized dimensions and parts. And cloning is not a technology available to cat breeders—yet.

Breeders strive for consistency and replication of the Chartreux's unique natural characteristics. But "beauty is in the eye of the beholder" and "there is no accounting for taste." Breeders—and judges—differ in their views on what is the proper interpretation of terms used in the standard as well as on what is aesthetic, or pleasing to the eye—and desirable according to the breed's standard.

Arguably, the Chartreux standard allows considerable room for interpretation. Descriptors are expressed in relative terms without an absolute as a basis of comparison. For example, terms such as medium, large, wide, small, and narrow are used repeatedly—without reference points. How wide is wide? Small compared to what?

Three basic approaches are used in answering such questions. In one approach, another breed serves as a basis for comparison. In a second, other features of the cat serve as reference points. In the third, comparison is made with other Chartreux. Chartreux breeders employ all three approaches in interpreting the standard.

This brochure addresses major aspects of the standard and provides pictures as examples. To provide an appreciation for the conditions under which the Chartreux has survived, a brief history of the breed is included. Also, the Chartreux standard is compared with that of the British Shorthair (BSH), Russian Blue, and Korat—blue cats with which the Chartreux is sometimes confused.



The Natural Chartreux— Origin and History

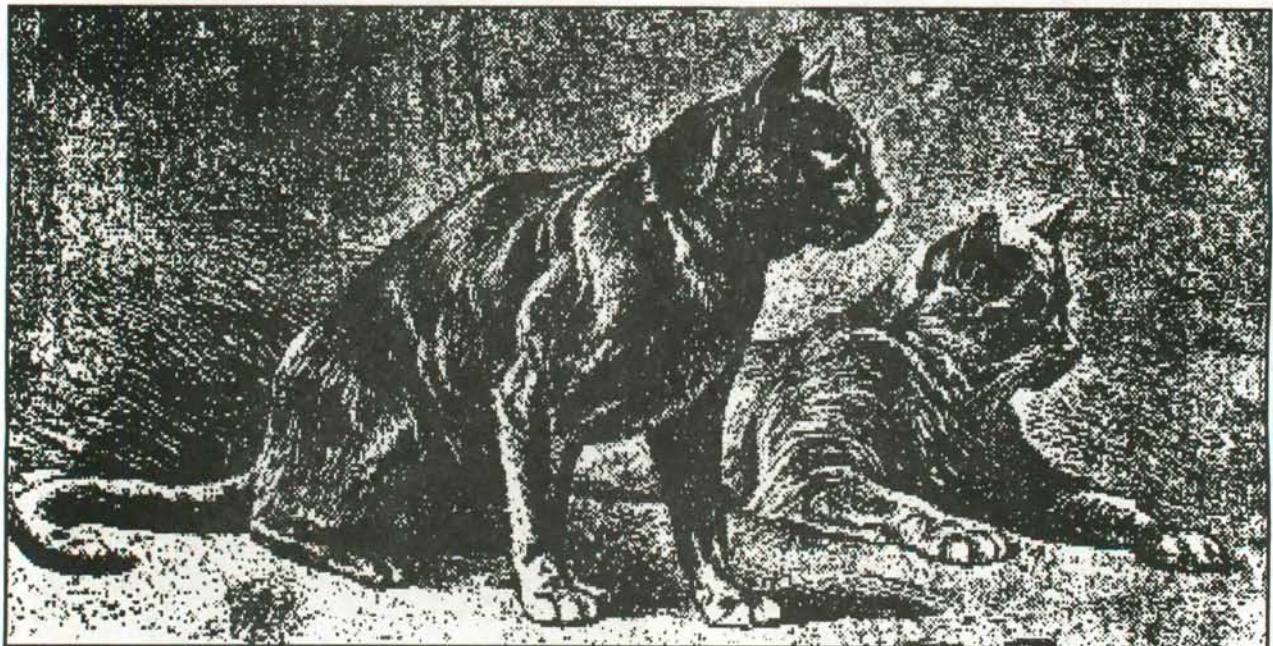


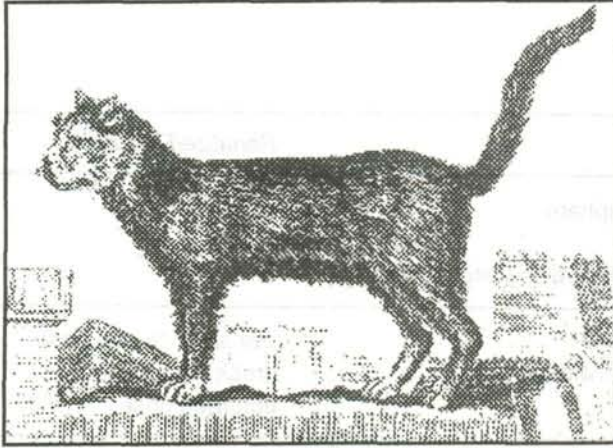
A group of Belle Ile Chartreux bred by the Leger sisters, 1935.

There exists a lovely old legend that the Chartreux lived with, and were named for, the Carthusian monks of France, and perhaps even shared a tippie or two of their famous Chartreuse liqueur! Recent research, however, indicates that because of the woolly character of their fur, they were given the same name as a well known Spanish wool of the early 18th century. Since this method of naming is common in animal husbandry, it is very likely the truth. Nevertheless, the presence of this natural breed of cat was noted in documents as early as the 16th century, and was acknowledged for its unique coat texture and color.

Their thick, woolly coats lend credence to the theory that the Chartreux must have originated in the mountainous regions of ancient Syria, then were probably brought to Europe by ship around the end of the Crusades (11th through 13th centuries). Documents confirm that Chartreux were maintained as ratters, traded by furriers, and even eaten as a by-product of the garment industry. In

Drawing of Chartreux used to illustrate a thesis presented by Jumeau at the University of Lyon in 1925. Very evident are the Chartreux's woolly coat, robust physique, and straight nose.





This drawing of the Chartreux appeared in print as early as 1756 when the French natural historian, Buffon, described the Chat des Chartreux and compared it with the Angora and domestic cat. The straight nose, powerful jaw, high-set ears, short neck, woolly coat, medium-long body, and relatively fine-boned legs are clearly depicted.

spite of an arduous, rugged existence, they managed to survive and were known to the French as an indigenous race. Repeated references to the Chartreux can be found in works of French history, natural science, and prose. Never harbored by kings or nobles like breeds such as the Angora, they were recognized by the common people, the class in whose midst they lived. Known as "Monastery Cats," "the Rooftop Cats of Paris," and "the Hospital Cats of Belle Ile," only fairly recently have they come to be known as the "Beautiful Blue Cats of France."

The first cats to appear at a cat show under the name Chartreux were exhibited in Paris in 1931 by Mlle. Leger who, with her sister, began a breeding program in the late 1920s which served to forever alter the status of this French working cat. The foundation cats came from the Brittany island of Belle-Ile-sur-Mer, where a colony of Chartreux had remained relatively pure due to their isolation. Other breeders joined in the effort, and over the succeeding years, new lines were begun from both purebred and natural stock. At last, the Chartreux was celebrated for its beauty and worth as a companion animal!

By the early 1960s, the lines had grown rather inbred, and a coterie of new breeders sought to "quick fix" the situation by using the British Shorthair as an outcross. An excessive number of cross-breedings were made, which resulted in

Chartreux that looked like British Blues. The breed's saving grace was a small number of French breeders who remained dedicated to breeding only genuine Chartreux, and Mrs. Helen Gamon, who imported pure Chartreux into the United States in 1970 and began the first North American breeding program.

For a short time (1970-1977), the Federation Feline Internationale assimilated the Chartreux and British Blue, judging both by the same standard. Once this error was corrected, again due to the insistence of a few tenacious breeders, the future of the Chartreux was back on track, and today looks brighter than ever. In the United States, efforts to gain full acceptance by the world's largest registry, the CFA, were initiated in 1979, and finally reached fruition in 1987. The breed's endearing qualities have generated tremendous public appeal, which continues to grow as more and more Chartreux appear on exhibit. As new breeders enter the ranks, it is hoped they will adhere to the current tenet, which is preservation of one of Mère Nature's finest creations.

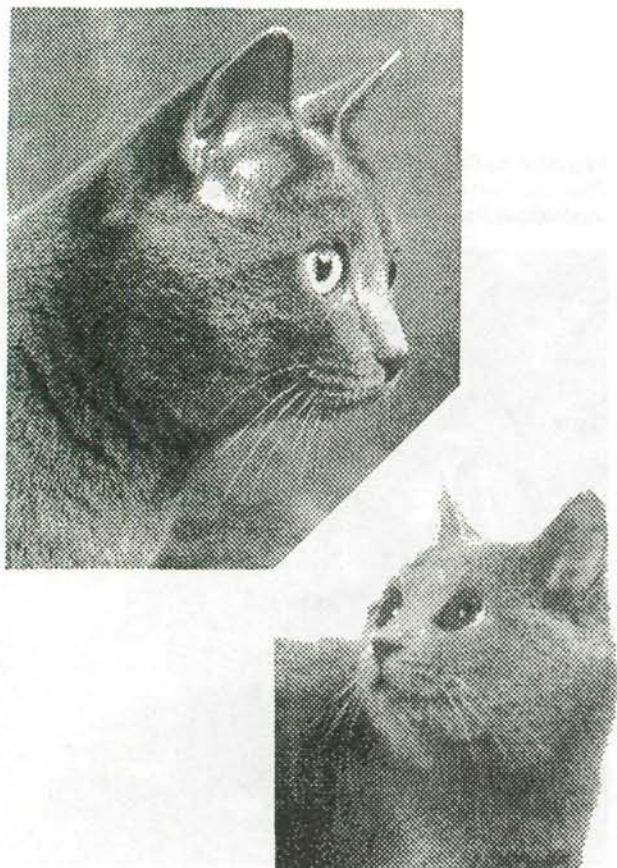
Mignonne de Guerveur, owned by Mlle. C. Leger. International Champion and winner of the Coupe-Challenge beige and the prix d'esthétique Paris 1933.



The Head (35 points)

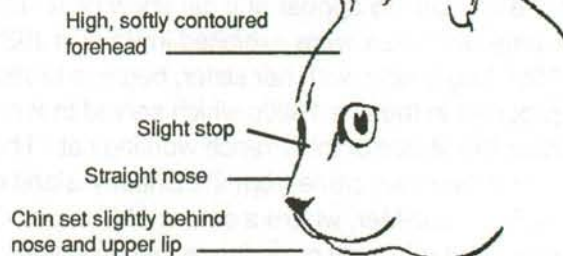
Chartreux Standard

Feature	Points	Description	Penalize/Disqualify
Head shape & size	7	Rounded & broad but not a sphere Powerful jaw Full cheeks, with mature males having larger jowls	
Profile/Nose	5	High, softly contoured forehead Nose straight; medium length/width Slight stop at eye level	<i>Penalize:</i> severe nose break, snubbed, or upturned nose
Muzzle	3	Comparatively small muzzle Narrow and tapered with slight pads Sweet, smiling expression	<i>Penalize:</i> Broad, heavy muzzle
Ears	10		
Shape & size	5	Medium in height & width	
Placement	5	Set fairly high on head. Very erect posture	
Eyes— Shape & size	6	Rounded and open Alert and expressive	<i>Penalize:</i> Eyes too close together giving angry look
Neck	4	Neck short and heavy set	



Chartreux Profile

Correct Profile—
Straight nose with slight stop between eyes. Sometimes hair creates eyebrow which accentuates appearance of stop, but straightness can be verified by running a finger up the nose to the forehead.



Incorrect profile—
Upward rotation of nose and muzzle creates improper nose break between eyes.



The Head: Comparison of the Chartreux and the British Shorthair

The Chartreux skull is rounded, but not as round as that of the British Shorthair (BSH). The Chartreux head receives much of the contour from exaggerated facial features. The jaw is broader and cheeks very full. The forehead is higher and softly contoured. The muzzle, in contrast to the BSH, is relatively small, narrow, and tapered; the pads slight. The nose is straight, not as broad as the BSH, and extends lower on the muzzle; it is never upturned nor foreshortened as seen in many BSH. The Chartreux profile shows a slight stop between the eyes, but there should never be a break.

The Chartreux's nose and chin should be well defined without a flattened look nor a heavy whisker break. The nose and upper lip extend very slightly beyond the chin, as shown in the profile drawings (on previous page). The standard has never specified a strong chin, and the classic Chartreux smile does not appear on a cat with a jutting chin. (Extremism in the nose-to-chin line is undesirable, however, to avoid malalignment of the jaws and bite.)

The neck is short and muscular, much like that of a professional football player. (It is nearly impossible to secure a firm hold on a mature male by attempting to grasp the nape of his neck.)

Wide cheeks are more evident on females and alters, neither having jowls. Jowls in the mature Chartreux stud can be awesome, meeting or exceeding chest and shoulder width.

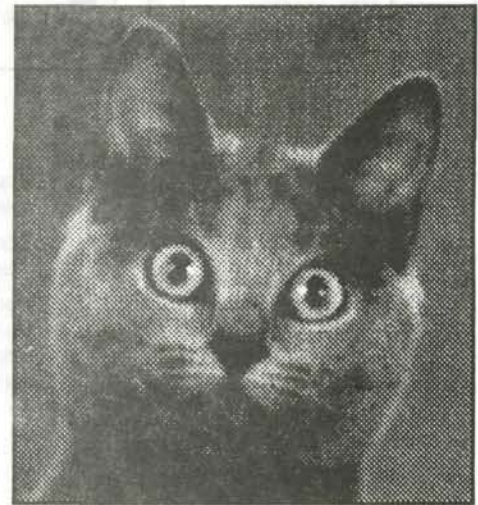
The Chartreux expression is unique. The high ear set coupled with large, rounded eyes conveys a somewhat "startled" look. Females usually have a sweeter expression, while males, with their wide jowls, may appear almost comical.



Pictured is Taquin, one of the foundation stud Chartreux imported in 1970. The clown-like expression contrasts his muscular build and awesome jowls, which are as wide as his chest and shoulders. Ears are set high and close together but angle outward rather than sitting erect. His muzzle is very refined, nicely tapered, and narrow.



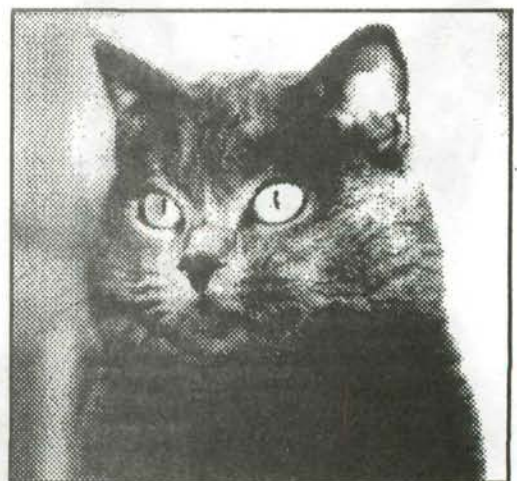
Left: Ears set too wide, angling outward.



Right: Very erect ears of medium height and width.



Left: Ears too tall.



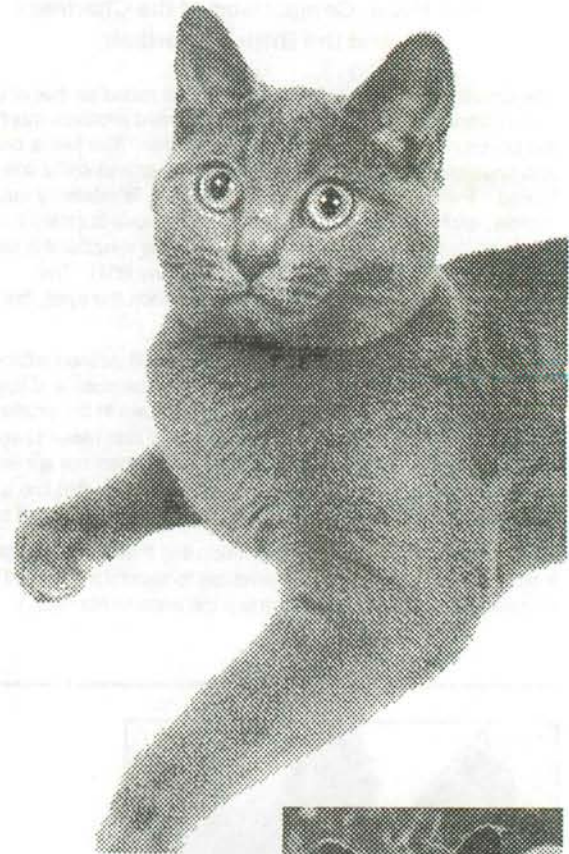
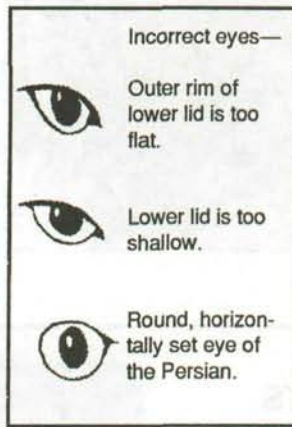
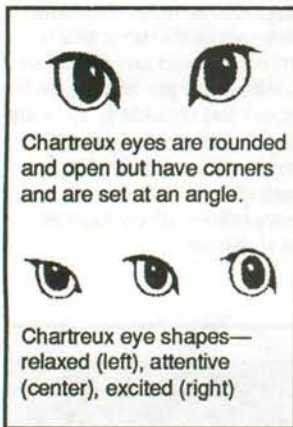
Right: Ears too small.

Ears

Eyes

Chartreux eyes are "rounded and open" but are not round like the Persian's eyes. Chartreux eyes have distinct corners and are set at a slight angle, which is clearly evident when the eyes are closed. An imaginary line drawn from the eye's inner corner through the outer corner extends slightly upward to a point just above the base of the outer edge of the ear.

Breeders generally select *against* small eyes (relative to the face) and very slanted, narrow eyes. Some breeders are attempting to select for the roundest eyes possible.



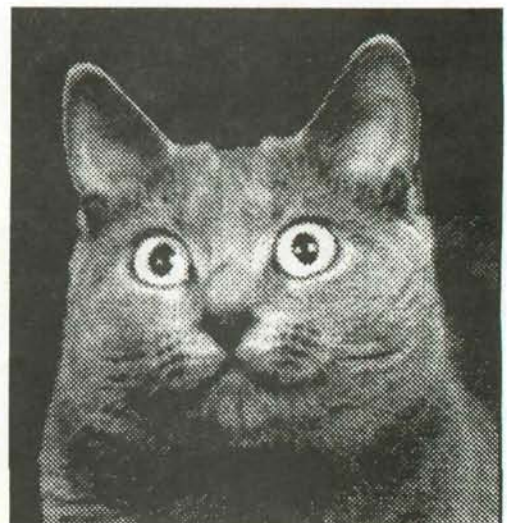
Top right: Female kitten with rounded, but not round, eyes and open expression.

Center right: Adult male whose eyes are too small. Also note heavy muzzle.

Bottom right: This young adult has a very expressive face. Eyes show upward angle of an imaginary line extended from the inner corner through the outer corner and to the base of the outer ear.



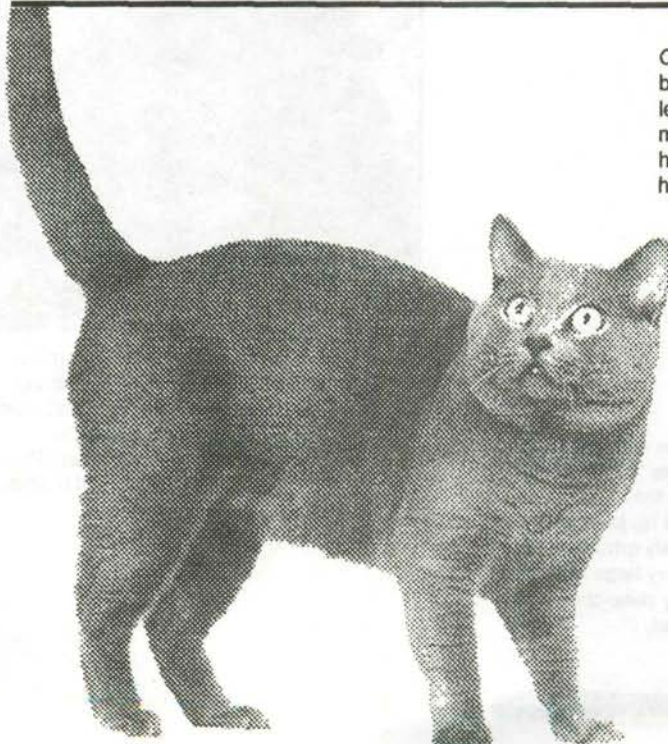
Below: The large eyes of this young female are extraordinarily round for a Chartreux. The outside corners of the eyes are not apparent.



The Body (32 Points)

Chartreux Standard

Feature	Points	Description	Penalize/Disqualify
Shape & size	10	Medium-long body Broad shoulders Deep chest Females—medium size Males—large (much larger than females) Primitive type (not classic or cobby); refined, never coarse nor clumsy	
Boning	5	Strong boning Legs comparatively fine-boned, straight	
Musculature	5	Robust physique, husky Muscle mass solid and dense Extremely supple and agile Amplly built	
Legs & feet	8	Legs of medium length Straight and sturdy Feet round and medium in size Feet may appear almost dainty compared to body mass	
Tail	4	Moderate length Heavy at base Tapering to oval tip Lively and flexible	Penalize: Palpable tail defect Disqualify: Visible tail kink



Chartreux legs, in comparison to the body, are relatively fine-boned and not as heavy as in the BSH. They are of moderate length, but may appear slightly short relative to the Chartreux's medium-long body length. Properly proportioned, the Chartreux has a rectangular appearance. The rear legs tend to be slightly higher than the forelegs (according to an early Chartreux breeder, this characteristic was deliberately omitted from the standard for fear of extremism). Chartreux feet are small and almost dainty in comparison to the robust body. *The Chartreux should not stand high on its legs and should never appear to be on tiptoes.*

The photo and the drawing (traced from a photo) illustrate the spectrum of medium length legs. The drawing (right) depicts a cat with medium-shortish legs while the cat pictured on the left has medium-longish legs. Note the characteristically longer back legs in the photo.

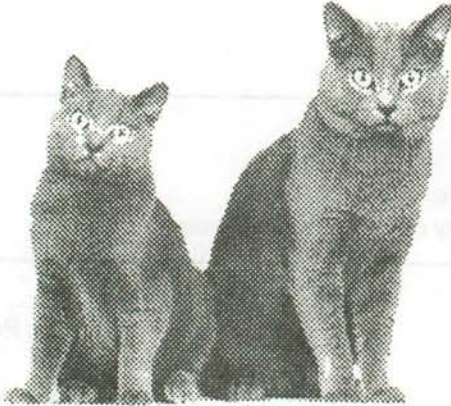




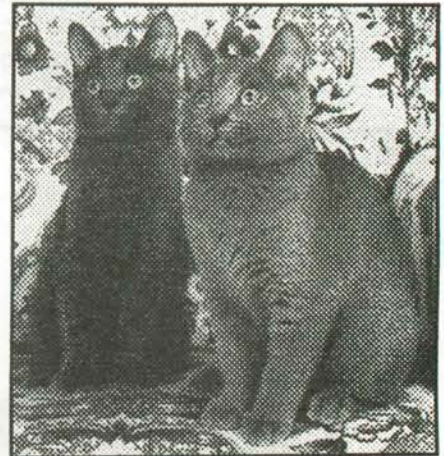
Growth and Development

Often slender, lanky, and leggy as adolescents, Chartreux mature into robust adults. This is true for both males and females, although males tend to be slower to mature, being so much larger than females. Bone growth continues in the Chartreux for about 15 months. A female reaches mature dimensions by about 1 1/2 years of age. Males continue to develop muscle and body mass for several years, reaching full maturity at 3-5 years.

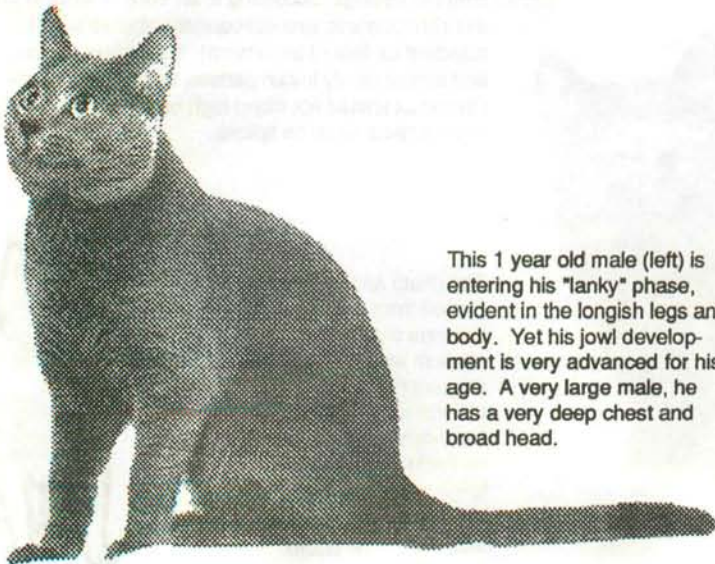
Pictured is the same female at 1 year old (left) and 4 years old (right). Her robust adult body contrasts well with her relatively fine leg bones.



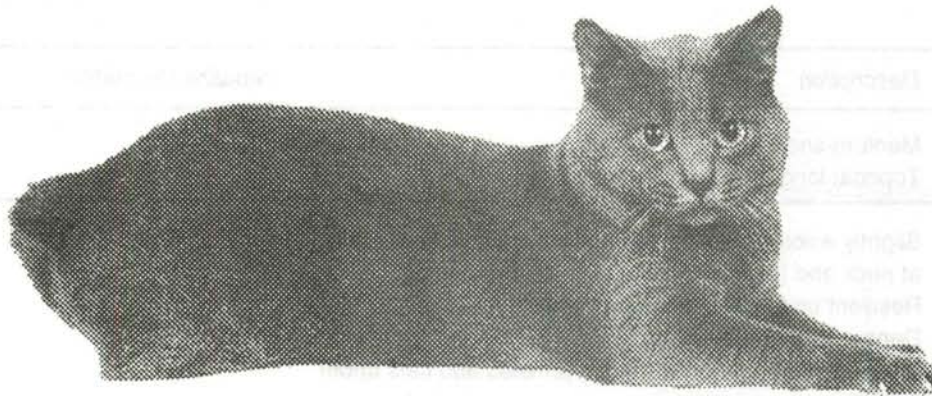
Left are father and son. The smaller son (far left) is about 8 months old. The larger sire ((near left) is about 3 years old. Both have very broad chests and short, heavy set necks. Legs look quite refined compared to their massive bodies.



Pictured above are two male kittens about 4 months of age. The male on the right has much better body type, with his broader body, chest, and face, than his narrower built brother (left).



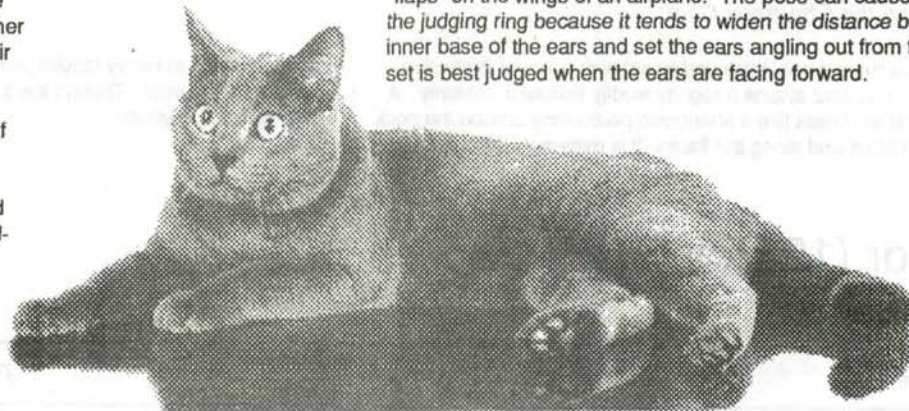
This 1 year old male (left) is entering his "lanky" phase, evident in the longish legs and body. Yet his jaw development is very advanced for his age. A very large male, he has a very deep chest and broad head.



The medium-long Chartreux body is muscular, yet deceptively yielding when handled. It is robust and solid, yet supple and agile; it does not have the firm hardness of a fit Siamese.

A Chartreux's hips typically are narrower than its chest (visible in the reclining male below), although the narrowness should not be extreme and there should be no weakness in the rear legs or haunches. The powerful shoulders account, in part, for the breed's extraordinary climbing ability.

Pictured are two males, one age 3 years (above), the other age 1 year (right). Note their medium-long bodies and medium length legs. The almost dainty appearance of the feet contrast with the robust bodies. The Chartreux's large body mass and comparatively small appendages (ears, legs, feet, tail) conserves body heat and reduces risks of frostbite, making these cats well adapted to harsh, cold (but not snow-packed) climates.



Flaps down—Both of these cats are striking a characteristic Chartreux pose—one which causes exhibitors much frustration! The cats are rotating their ears out and downward, giving them the appearance of "flaps" on the wings of an airplane. The pose can cause problems in the judging ring because it tends to widen the distance between the inner base of the ears and set the ears angling out from the head. Ear set is best judged when the ears are facing forward.

Sexual Dimorphism

Sexual dimorphism is very pronounced in the Chartreux. The male is a walking fortress. Broad chested, bull-necked, narrow-hipped, his is the Arnold Schwarzenegger of the felines. The smaller female Chartreux is a much scaled down version, more refined but nonetheless robust and Ruberianesque.

Males may be more than twice the size of females. This difference is naturally occurring and inherent in the breed's

aesthetic appeal. The standard calls for males to be large and females medium-sized.

Appropriate allowances for the Chartreux's extreme sexual dimorphism should be made in judging. The relatively smaller size and more delicate appearance of the female should *not* be penalized, nor should the larger size and more massive musculature of the male be given undue preference over the female's relative daintiness and refinement.



Coat (14 Points)

Chartreux Standard

Feature	Points	Description	Penalize/Disqualify
Length	4	Medium-short Topcoat longer than undercoat	
Texture	10	Slightly woolly in texture (should break like a sheepskin at neck and flanks) Resilient undercoat; protective topcoat Dense, water repellent fur Silkier thinner coat permitted on females and cats under two years Degree of woolliness depends on age, sex, and habitat, mature males exhibiting the heaviest coat	

Notes on the Chartreux Coat:

Chartreux have a very thick undercoat with a longer protective topcoat. The coat attains a slightly woolly texture at maturity. A good coat will break like a sheepskin particularly around the neck and shoulders and along the flanks; it is extremely difficult to

shampoo owing to heavy lanolin production which renders the coat quite waterproof. Though the topcoat augments with age, it is slightly open in youth.

Color (19 Points)

Chartreux Standard

Feature	Points	Description	Penalize/Disqualify
Coat color	15	Any shade of blue-gray from ash to slate Tips lightly brushed with silver Emphasis on color clarity & uniformity rather than shade Preferred tone—bright, unblemished blue with an overall iridescent sheen Allowance made for ghost barring in kittens and for tail rings in juveniles under two years of age Nose leather slate gray; lips blue; paw pads rose-taupe	Disqualify: White locket
Eye color	4	Range is copper to gold Preferred—deep, brilliant orange	Disqualify: Green eyes

Coat Color

Because the Chartreux's coat color is variable with age, sexual activity, climate, and habitat, breeders do not specify a preference in the depth of coat color. Breeders seek to conserve the elasticity of coat color in the same manner they preserve the full range of eye color. Improvements are sought in perfecting the evenness of tone and elimination of coat imperfections such as salting with white hairs or dark areas along the spine and tail. Unlike the BSH, whose coat color is sound to the root, the Chartreux coat is light-dark-light, with silver tipping and an undercoat somewhat lighter than the topcoat. The play of light (particularly sunlight) on the coat's tonal variation, along with the silver tipping, creates the unusual iridescent sheen characteristic of the Chartreux coat.

Eye Color

A wide color range is allowable—gold to copper, with the brilliant orange preferred. Breeders seek to preserve the full array of eye color, however. In natural sunlight, the highly reflective, bright orange eyes are stunning even yards away! Yet the metallic glow of gold or copper eyes lends interesting variations when coupled with the coat's color range of ash to slate.

According to notes of early Chartreux breeders, the indigenous Chartreux of Belle Ile had pure gold eyes, but deeper, coppery shades asserted themselves in the third and fourth generations of the Leger sisters' breedings. The polygenes for the deep tones were obviously present in the breed and not the result of outcrossing.

Comparison of Chartreux with British Blue, Russian Blue, and Korat

	Chartreux	British Blue (BSH)	Russian Blue	Korat
Head	rounded, broad not a sphere	round	medium wedge	heart-shaped
profile	nose straight slight stop	gentle dip	nose straight no stop or break	slight stop between forehead and nose; lion-like downward curve just above leather
ears	medium, narrow at base high set	medium, broad base set well apart	large ears set well apart	large ears high set
muzzle	tapered medium nose	well developed broad, short nose	wedge nose of medium length	
Body	robust, medium-long	compact, cobby	long, fine-boned	semi-cobby
Legs	medium length comparatively fine-boned	medium to short medium to heavy boning	long, fine-boned	front legs slightly shorter
Eyes	open, rounded	large, round	rounded	oversized, well rounded when open, slanted when closed
color	gold to copper, brilliant orange preferred	gold or copper	vivid green	luminous green
Coat	medium, slightly woolly	short, dense; not double- coated or woolly	short, dense, fine, plush, double coat; soft, silky	single, short, close lying, fine
color	any shade of blue-gray light tipping iridescent sheen	light to medium blue lighter shade preferred sound to root	lighter shade preferred silver tipping silvery sheen	silver blue much silver tipping
Paw pads	rose-taupe	blue	lavendar pink or mauve	dark blue to pinkish lavendar