

# CHARTREUX

## Historic Blue Cat of France



The Chartreux is the natural, historic breed of France, known for centuries for its woolly coat texture and blue color.

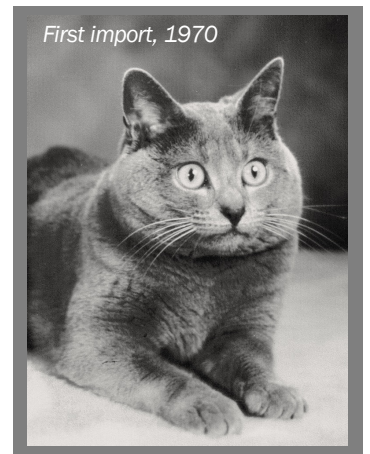
The origins of this breed are shrouded in legend, although references to the blue cats of France appear in literature as early as the 16th century, The great 18th century naturalists, Linnaeus and Buffon, identified the Chartreux as one of the four known cat breeds of their time.

There is a lovely old story that Chartreux cats lived as companions of the Carthusian monks of France; according to legend, these cats are quiet because they took the vow of silence with the monks!



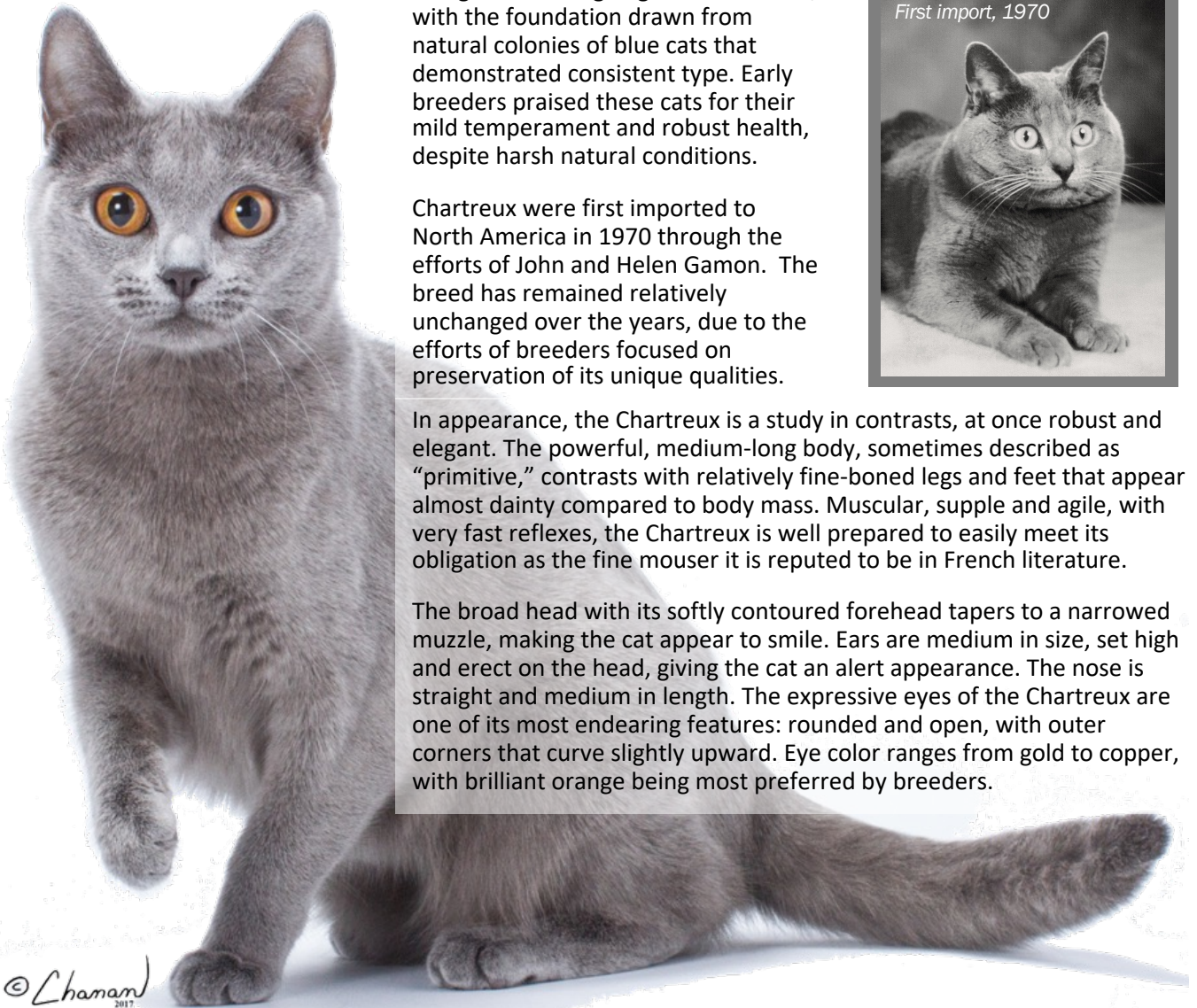
Pedigree breeding began in the 1920s, with the foundation drawn from natural colonies of blue cats that demonstrated consistent type. Early breeders praised these cats for their mild temperament and robust health, despite harsh natural conditions.

Chartreux were first imported to North America in 1970 through the efforts of John and Helen Gamon. The breed has remained relatively unchanged over the years, due to the efforts of breeders focused on preservation of its unique qualities.



In appearance, the Chartreux is a study in contrasts, at once robust and elegant. The powerful, medium-long body, sometimes described as “primitive,” contrasts with relatively fine-boned legs and feet that appear almost dainty compared to body mass. Muscular, supple and agile, with very fast reflexes, the Chartreux is well prepared to easily meet its obligation as the fine mouser it is reputed to be in French literature.

The broad head with its softly contoured forehead tapers to a narrowed muzzle, making the cat appear to smile. Ears are medium in size, set high and erect on the head, giving the cat an alert appearance. The nose is straight and medium in length. The expressive eyes of the Chartreux are one of its most endearing features: rounded and open, with outer corners that curve slightly upward. Eye color ranges from gold to copper, with brilliant orange being most preferred by breeders.



# Chartreux

(continued)

Last but certainly not least, the Chartreux is known for its blue coat, which may be any shade of blue-gray from lightest ash to deepest slate. The coat is medium-short in length and slightly woolly in texture; when fully mature, the coat “breaks” at the neck, chest, and flanks. A dense undercoat gives it resistance to the elements and a feeling of sheep’s wool. This double coat tends to shed seasonally; during shedding season, a wide-spaced metal comb can be helpful to remove dead hair.

This slow-maturing breed can take three to four years to reach physical maturity, often with a stage between kitten and adulthood that puts one in mind of a gawky, adolescent youngster. Then, almost overnight, they put it all together, with stunning results.



In temperament, Chartreux cats are quiet, calm and friendly; affectionate without being demanding. Many Chartreux enjoy fetching toys, and may respond to their names. They tend to develop rituals and routines with their owners, often following their owners from room to room. These gentle cats appreciate being treated kindly, and reward your kindness with loyal affection.

Chartreux kittens are generally available by reservation only, as demand for these endearing cats outstrips availability. Pricing of Chartreux kittens may reflect the expense involved in working with a rare breed. Breeders in the United States strive to preserve genetic diversity, exchanging cats with other breeders worldwide.

Chartreux breeders in North America follow the French naming tradition, in which kittens born in a given year are named beginning with a specific letter for that year. Breeders use only 20 letters, omitting K, Q, W, X, Y and Z.



Kittens are usually ready to go to their new homes around 16 weeks of age, after they have been properly socialized and have completed their kitten immunizations. Most Chartreux breeders in the United States also neuter or spay pet kittens before placement. Chartreux kittens are eager to play and interact with human companions, and quickly become attached to their family.

The Chartreux is generally a healthy breed. Keep this rare treasure safely indoors, spay or neuter your pet, and provide acceptable surfaces (such as cat trees and posts) for the natural behavior of scratching. With proper care, your Chartreux can look forward to a long and joyful life.



[chartreuxbc.org](http://chartreuxbc.org)

For more information, scan the QR code to visit the CFA Chartreux Breed Council web site.