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### **Feline Behaviour and Welfare**

AF Fraser (2012). Published by CABI, Nosworthy Way, Wallingford, Oxon OX10 8DE, UK. 280 pages Paperback/Hardback (ISBN 978-1-845-93927-4/978-1-845-93926-7). Price £37.50, €50.00, US\$72.50/£75.00, €100.00, US\$145.00

*Feline Behaviour and Welfare* is a complete ebook giving a good overview on the aspects of this topic in 14 varied, yet connected, chapters. The scope of the topics is broad and ambitious, covering topics from neuroethology and maintenance behaviours to those behaviours that are undesirable in cats, but is organised in a logical fashion. The chapters covering welfare and behaviour of wild cats, and comparing the traits of these animals with each other and domesticated cats, are a welcome resource in this field, especially when delivered in such a succinct manner. This information can serve as a useful inaugural reference for those in welfare, care of captive wildlife, veterinary medicine, and conservation, as well as all who are interested in this topic. The depth and amount of information gathered to deliver this information is at an appropriate depth and breadth to encourage further exploration of this topic, which may be too cursory for some.

Dr Fraser's background in animal welfare and behaviour shines through this book. Of particular interest is how he aligned the chapters to delve into domestic cats, and then into the many different species of wild cats, subsequently addressing their similarities and differences in their behaviour. By doing this he gives readers tools to understand how we can study our domestic cats to more adequately address the welfare and environmental needs of their wild counterparts. Another important aspect that he addresses is how the changing wild environment impacts the behaviour and welfare of wild cats, utilising the comparative information that we have about both domestic and wild cats.

In the second chapter, the author addresses well-being and its roots, looking at moods and other affective states, including how pain can affect these in cats. However, the information presented on behavioural traits of purebred domestic cats is gathered from popular press articles, but is presented as factual-based information. This detracts from the validity of the information presented elsewhere.

The chapters on the stages of a cat's development, basic activities, and reproduction give a good overview of these topics. The author adequately summarises the steps of the developmental aspects of life, along with a good overview of how play develops and how it is important in the lives of cats. He also gives a nice summary of information on basic and necessary maintenance functions, such as ingestion, elimination, movement, and sleep. The chapter on reproduction and maternal behaviour is well organised; however, I am concerned about the overarching recommendation to supplement pregnant and lactating queens with raw foods without consideration that the cat may be on an adequate diet already, and that oversupplementation could be unsafe.

The chapters on the wild cats provide a nice summary of their behaviour, habitat, and physical attributes. They are broken down into the giant wild cats (lions, tigers, and jaguars), other wild cats (including leopards, pumas, and cheetahs, to name a few), and minor wild cat species (including black-footed cats and fishing cats, to name a couple). The chapter on the giant wild cats gets into more depth about the behaviour and welfare of these cats, while the other two chapters serve more as a brief overview of the covered species.

In the chapter entitled 'Common and comparative feline features' the author summarised the behaviours that are similar (and different) among domestic cats and wild cats, understandably focusing least on the minor wild cat species' behaviour. Some comparisons are well-referenced, while others afford a more cursory assessment. Some behaviours, such as human attack (and the domestic corollary of human-directed aggression), are not compared between the wild and domestic species.

The chapters on problem behaviours and health monitoring, as well as the chapter on neuroethology, serve more as an overview of the topics and are somewhat outdated in a few areas. More detailed information on these topics can be found in more current veterinary medical and clinical animal behaviour resources.

The chapters on welfare and well-being focus heavily on the welfare of domestic cats, presenting the information in a logical fashion and sometimes from a point that is not often thought of. The discussion of animal rights in domestication, while not focused directly on the domestic cat, gives an interesting perspective to this discussion. This final chapter attempts to summarise the aspects previously presented in the light of an animal welfare discussion.

This book is written in such a manner that it is like reading a story, which may be a bit tedious to those who are expecting a more technical approach to this topic. The few tables in the book are mostly well placed and thought out, clarifying the information delivered in the text. Graphics are generally well linked to the text, especially the excellent line drawings; however, some pictures appear to be unjustified in regards to the information that the author is delivering.

In summary, this book serves as an overview of aspects of physical and psychological well-being of domestic and wild cats, and should serve as a starting point for those interested in these topics.

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