

Taking a stroll on a leash. Enjoying the water in a bath. Playing a game of fetch. These examples illustrate just a few of the dog-like behaviors Shari Fedewa notices daily in her Pixiebob cats.

"I've heard that a number of breeds are 'dog-like,'" explains the breeder from Winter Park, Fla. "Well, Pixiebobs like to ride in the car [and] are intelligent and obedient — which is a word not usually in the same sentence as 'cat.'"

Fedewa points to the breed's love of water as one of its more "dog-like" qualities. "They can be better at taking a bath than my Sheltie!" she says.

Patricia Peters also notes the Pixiebob's affection for getting wet.

"Keeping a Pixiebob out of the shower is like trying to keep a child from splashing in a puddle," explains the breeder from Long Beach, Calif.

THE AFFECTIONATE AND SOCIAL PIXIEBOB MAKES A LOVING FAMILY COMPANION.

The Strong, Silent Type

Along with "dog-like," breeders use the words "mellow," "laid-back" and "amicable" to describe the Pixiebob's personality. These traits contribute to the cat's ability to get along with all members of the family, no matter the age or species.

While the Pixiebob eagerly participates in all household activities, both Peters and Fedewa describe the cat as quiet. The breed will welcome its owner with a cheerful greeting when he or she returns home — and will certainly demand dinner on time — but the cat does not chatter as some other breeds are known to do. "They are not noisy," Peters says, pointing out that when it does talk, the Pixiebob uses its own style of vocalizations. "They do not make the typical sounds of a normal cat but rather vocalize in chirps, trills and chuffs."

One typical cat sound the Pixiebob uses often is its purr. "Pixiebobs have very quiet 'speaking' voices but have very loud motors!" Fedewa says.

Legendary Origins

Though it may not chatter excitedly like other breeds, the sociable Pixiebob possesses an intelligence and curiosity that some attribute to its ancestors. Just who those ancestors may be is a question surrounded with mystery and myth.

Peters mentions a long-standing legend that the Pixiebob is the result of a mating between a wild bobcat and a domestic cat. "Bobcat hybrids have not been proven," she says. "There is no bobcat blood in the Pixiebob."

The breed is the result of a careful breeding program started by Carol

Ann Brewer in the mid-1980s. Brewer obtained a male polydactyl kitten whose bobbed tail, spotted coat and outgoing behavior captured her attention. The kitten's background was shrouded in mystery, but Brewer found no proof that the kitten was the result of a mating between a domestic cat and a wild bobcat.

Brewer's breeding efforts led to the Pixiebob that is known today, which was accepted for championship status by The International Cat Association in 1998. The breed continues to captivate cat enthusiasts at shows and through television specials. In fact, several of Fedewa's Pixiebobs appeared on the Animal Planet network's *Cats 101* series.

Although the Pixiebob is an active cat, it can also be very laid-back and relaxed.



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■ **Appearance:** Known for its bobbed tail, large size and polydactyl toes, the Pixiebob has a wild look that some mistake for a small wild cat at first glance. "The goal of the Pixiebob breed is to mimic the look of the wild bobcat," explains California breeder Patricia Peters. "The Pixiebob has a distinctive brow and hunting gaze that (makes it) look like it is a cat that has stepped out of the woods."

The breed comes in both short- and long-haired versions, with the fur consisting of a thick double coat. The woolly texture of the fur gives the cat a "padded" feel, according to TICA's website. "The 'longhair' Pixiebob is actually a medium coat in that it reaches a maximum of about 2 inches," says Florida breeder Shari Fedewa, noting that the long-haired cats have softer hair that resists matting.

■ **Standard:** The ideal Pixiebob, according to TICA's website, resembles a wild bobcat with a brown spotted tabby coat ranging in color from tawny to reddish brown. The coat is ticked and may appear silvery. The bobcat look is enhanced by fur that appears like mutton chop sideburns on the cat's face. Heavy brows accent the Pixiebob's golden brown or gooseberry green eyes.

The minimum length for the cat's distinctive bobbed tail is 2 inches, but it can be as long as the cat's back. The Pixiebob can be polydactyl, meaning that it can have more than five toes on its front paws and four on its back paws. For championship competition, the cat can have no more than seven toes on each paw.

■ **Care and Grooming:** The Pixiebob's grooming requirements are minimal, Fedewa says. The long-haired Pixiebob may need to be brushed or combed more frequently than its short-haired cousin.

While bathing is not strictly necessary, the Pixiebob may enjoy an occasional dip in the tub, Fedewa says. "I even had a Pixiebob who, after being given a bath, sat on my shoulder cleaning his paw while the dryer went," she says. "He didn't bat an eye!"

■ **Health:** "As a breed, the Pixiebob is very healthy since it has such a wide gene pool," Fedewa says, though she reminds potential owners that the cat still needs regular veterinary care to protect it from feline diseases. Fedewa also recommends a raw diet to help prevent health issues.

Today, the breed satisfies many feline fanciers' desire for a wild-looking cat with a domestic personality. The Pixiebob makes an ideal choice for someone who wants a devoted feline companion. "They are very in tune with your moods," Fedewa says. "With Pixiebobs, the lights are on and somebody's home!" 🐾

Stacy N. Hackett shares her Southern California home with two adorable Cornish Rex cats, Carson and Evita, and a playful red tabby named Jack.



IN MEMORIAM

The editors of Cat Fancy wish to extend their condolences to the entire Pixiebob community, which suffered a great loss in June of this year when Carol Ann Brewer, the breed's founder, passed away. Brewer leaves a legacy of faith, love and loyalty to the Pixiebob and the cat fancy.

Starting with two kittens from two litters rumored to be the offspring of bobcat, domestic cat matings, Brewer created the Pixiebob breed. Through her hard work and determination, the breed eventually gained championship status in The International Cat Association.

Her tireless devotion to the Pixiebob and the cat community will be missed. "Carol Ann was a generous, loving woman with a huge heart for people and cats," says Mary Gilbert, a breeder from Arroyo Grande, Calif. "We will continue with her vision; it is important to strive for the look she intended for the breed." —Stacy N. Hackett



The Pixiebob is extremely social and devoted, and bonds strongly with its family.