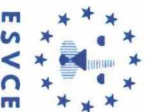


Proceedings of the 6th annual meeting of the
European Veterinary Congress of
Behavioural Medicine and Animal Welfare

3rd - 4th October 2024

AN **INTERDISCIPLINARY** APPROACH
TO BEHAVIOURAL MEDICINE,
ANIMAL WELFARE, ETHICS AND LAW

Paris, France



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Welcome

Welcome to the 6th annual meeting of the EVCBMAW at the heart of Paris. It is a unique opportunity to share ideas, discuss current challenges, and strengthen collaborations within our community.

This year's theme *An Interdisciplinary Approach to Behavioural Medicine, Animal Welfare, Ethics, and Law* highlights the importance of integrating various disciplines to enhance deeper knowledge and better practice in behavioural medicine and animal welfare. Presentations will cover a range of topics, including the latest techniques in behavioural medicine, advancements in animal welfare, ethical considerations, and legal frameworks affecting veterinary practice.

The programme includes keynote lectures, oral presentations, poster sessions, as well as a study day for residents. We are honoured to welcome distinguished speakers.

The objectives of this conference are:

1. to promote sharing of knowledge and experiences among veterinary professionals
2. to encourage innovation and research in behavioural medicine and animal welfare
3. to foster interdisciplinary collaborations to improve animal health and well-being
4. to raise awareness on the ethical and legal issues in veterinary practice

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all the speakers, participants, and sponsors who have contributed to the success of this event. Their commitment and support are vital to advancing animal welfare and behavioural medicine.

We hope that this conference will be a source of inspiration and knowledge for all participants, contributing to our shared goal.

Thank you for your participation and enjoy the conference!

Claire Diederich, Caroline Gilbert, Agnès Tiret, and Emmanuelle Titeux
on behalf of the local organizing committee

Spontaneous Spitz-like tail postures in two domestic cats

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Domestic cats use visual cues to communicate with conspecifics and humans. This includes the position and movement of the tail (Deputte et al., 2021, Stanton et al., 2015). The tail up signal (i.e. tail held vertically with the tip curled) has been identified as a friendly greeting signal between cats (Cameron-beaumont, 1997) and from cats to humans (Turner, 2021). We present here a report of two cats unable to display the classic tail up signal due to Spitz-like (curled) tail characteristics, a morphology not previously reported in cats. The cats, a British Shorthair (Mn, 2y) and Domestic Longhair (Fn, 8.5y), belonged to different households and were participants in a study of intraspecific social interactions. Video recordings show the cats displaying normal tail movements (waving, swishing, twitching) and position when the tail was relaxed and hanging down. However, once the tail was raised to a vertical position, it immediately curled over the back. This Spitz-like tail posture was displayed both when greeting people and other cats. It had reportedly been present since adoption, and there was no underlying medical history of injury or pain to indicate this was an acquired state. We suggest this Spitz-like tail is a spontaneously occurring anomaly, that does not seem to noticeably impair the cats' communicative abilities, as normal affiliative behaviours (e.g. allogrooming, sleeping together, social play) were observed during interactions with the cohoused cat. We discuss the significance of this finding in relation to the formation of social bonds and the signalling of affiliative intent.

Ethics approval: The cats included in the case series participated in a study on feline social behaviour as approved by the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences of Ghent University (Ref: 2023-026). The owners of the two cats were informed and agreed to include their cats in a scientific contribution specifically on their cats' tail position.

Cameron-Baumont, C. L., 1997. VISUAL AND TACTILE COMMUNICATION IN THE DOMESTIC CAT (*Felis silvestris catus*) AND UNDOMESTICATED SMALL FELIDS.

Deputte, B. L., Jumelet, E., Gilbert, C. & Titeux, E. 2021. Heads and tails: An analysis of visual signals in cats, *felis catus*. *Animals*, 11.

Stanton, L. A., Sullivan, M. S. & Fazio, J. M. 2015. A standardized ethogram for the felidae: A tool for behavioral researchers. *Applied Animal Behaviour Science*, 173, 3-16.

Turner, D. C. 2021. The Mechanics of Social Interactions Between Cats and Their Owners. *Frontiers in Veterinary Science*, 8, 1-6.