

Allergies

Several Breeders and prospective owners have requested a clarification regarding claims that Russians are “hypoallergenic”. (“Hypoallergenic” - hypo meaning “below or slightly below normal”.)

There are many references to Russians being “hypoallergenic” in books and on the internet with some of these articles also containing photographs of Russians. Some breeders, both in the UK and abroad, even go so far as to advertise this “trait” on their websites.

The RBBA strongly recommend that our Breeders do not use this term to encourage people to buy Russians as the “evidence” is anecdotal only. The only “survey” that appears to discuss hypoallergenic traits in cats relates to the Siberian, a long haired breed. <http://www.siberian-cat-club.co.uk/view/2>

*No cat is totally allergen free – **every** cat or kitten differs so unless breeders are willing to test all kittens then no such claims should be made. It is not just cat fur which causes allergies – dander and saliva also contribute.*

Many of our breeders have quoted instances where new owners have not informed the breeder that they had allergies and kittens have been returned to the breeder which is not a good start for any kitten. One of the many questions a breeder should ask of prospective new owners is if any member of the family suffers from any form of allergy which may affect their well-being and that of the kitten.

*The recent sad story of one little kitten – “.....I had one kitten returned twice due to allergies. The first people came every two weeks and spent a couple of hours with the cats and kittens from when the kittens were tiny without any reaction at all, then they took her home both mother and daughter suffered reactions so bad it took mum 3 months before she could breath again properly!! The second people despite being told why the kitten was now available again did not admit to their allergies and only managed 3 hours before they realised they couldn't keep her “ ---- *The kitten is very happily homed now.**

Marlene Buckeridge

Chairman