

# Australian Mist Breed Profile Rationale

**Standard: Description-** The Australian Mist is a well-balanced cat of moderate type, with no tendency to extremes in any characteristic. The facial expression is open and generous. Males are larger than females and their musculature is more developed.

***Rationale:***

The general description places emphasis on the following statements:

“cat of moderate type”, medium in size and the body type could be described as semi foreign;

“no tendency to extremes in any characteristic”, this statement has been included in the standard to discourage the development of a breed feature that would dominate other features; the Australian Mist is a pedigree cat who has sweet expressive open facial features, is moderate in size, medium boned and most of all has an affectionate temperament.

**Standard: Condition** – Should feel firm with rounded contours.



**Standard: Head** - Broad head of generous proportions slightly rounded with good breadth between the ears. In profile the nose shows a gentle dip, no break. The nose tends towards broadness balanced by a firm chin and strong whisker pads.

**Standard: Neck** - well defined

**Standard: Nose** - In profile the nose shows a gentle dip, no break. The nose tends towards broadness.

***Rationale:***

The head is a broad modified wedge (round with smooth flowing lines) in appearance and as illustrated in the photo. The open facial expression is obtained by openness of the brow; any hint of a ridge or an elongated brow tends to detract from the facial expression. The muzzle is medium-short (if the muzzle is long with square “shovel” like appearance, the cat has a pinched look) and there is a broadness about the muzzle starting from the nose to the well-developed whisker pads and the chin should be strong and not fall away.

	
Example of Head Type	Example of Profile

**Standard: Ears** - Medium to large, wide at base, with rounded tips and slightly forward tilt. The outer line of the ears continues the modified wedge of the face.

***Rationale:***

The medium to large ears should follow the modified wedge of the face; this description of the ear placement has been included in the standard to discourage the development of large oriental ears.

The ear placement is illustrated in the photograph below, the kitten on the right-hand side of the photograph – ear size and shape are good but the ears are set too high on the head; the other two kittens on the left-hand side of the photograph show good breadth, shape and placement.



**Standard: Eye Shape** - Large and lustrous, upper lid straight and lower lid curved. Set wide apart, slanting towards nose.

**Standard: Eye colour** - Any shade of green. Some kittens may not have full expression but at least a green rim around the pupil should be detected.

***Rationale:***

The eyes set wide apart, the shape and size of an Australian Mist's eyes all contribute to keeping the head broad and this in turn gives the open generous facial expression; eye colour can be any shade of green.

**Standard: Body** - Medium large body length and size, hard and muscular, heavier than it appears; chest broad and round.

**Standard: Legs** - Proportionately strong. Hind legs slightly longer than front legs.

**Standard: Paws** - Feet neat and oval.

**Standard: Tail** - Thick tail in proportion to body, with minimal taper.

***Rationale:***

The Australian Mist has a semi-foreign body type but not extremely so, as the body length is medium and the legs are in proportion to the body, neither stocky nor long. When you pick up an Australian Mist they should have medium to heavy bone structure and not be fine boned as you would find in the Oriental breeds. They should be heavier than they appear with good muscular development.

**Standard: Colour** – Rich and warm with rufous toning on nose, cheeks and ears present in even the palest colours. Paler on the underside. As it takes a long time for the colour to develop fully in Chocolate, Lilac, Caramel, Gold (cinnamon), Peach (fawn) kittens they will be much paler than adults until full colour is achieved at 2 years of age. Colours while derived from Burmese and Abyssinian colours have a different expression due to the genetic makeup of the breed leading to rufous undercoat and misted veil.

***Rationale:***

The breeders wrote the above description to explain that while the Australian Mist was derived from the Burmese and Abyssinian, their colours have their own unique appearance. The warm ground colour, the colour expression of the pattern, the misted veil that makes the pattern ‘vague’ and misted, all contribute to making the Australian Mist different to other spotted pedigreed cats. (See "[Notes on Colour and Pattern](#)")



The photo shows off the rich, warm colour and the “misty appearance” of a Chocolate Australian Mist.

**Standard: Pattern – Spotted or Marbled.** The Spotted pattern is random, with spots of any size and shape, including arrowheads and rosettes. The coat patterns have three levels of definition; (1) ground colour, paler than pattern; (2) pattern, delicate though distinct from ground colour; (3) appears to wear a misted veil, caused by random ticking in the solid colour areas.

The photos below illustrate the spotted pattern – the colours and the different sizes and patterns.



Brown



Blue



Chocolate



Gold



Lilac: spots (arrowheads)



Peach



Brown Marble Kitten



Same Brown Marble Kitten as an Adult



Blue Marble Adult

***Rationale:***

The breeders and the judges of WNCA all felt the pattern description of the original standard needed re-defining, the pattern (spotted and marble) was over-described yet how the pattern was formed was never mentioned. The different levels of the coat pattern are explained and how they combine to give the “misty” appearance.

The coat faults will be briefly discussed: two faults that present themselves are the over-masking of the pattern and a lack of misted veil. Over-masking of the pattern occurs where the cat appears to have little or no pattern and the misted veil has obscured the pattern. This fault is easy to recognise and usually occurs in older cats.

Lack of the misted veil (or ticking) can occur in the solid colour areas. Without the ticking the coat loses its delicate appearance and the pattern becomes quite definite.



The photo shows a blue coat that is too dark, pattern area lacks the ticking or the “misted veil”.

**Standard: Allowable Outcrosses** – WNCA will only accept fully registered Australian Mists bred according to the following formula which must consist of foundation cats in the following proportions: 50% Burmese; 25% Abyssinian and 25% domestic Shorthair that shall be chosen to contain no or little part-pedigree ancestry. Inadmissible to carry the Silver, red (O) or longhair genes.

***Rationale:***

The above statement pertaining to the “Allowable Outcrosses” was inserted into the standard to protect the future of the breed.

Should there be a need to develop new lines, the formula that made up the original experimental programme must be used and only cats derived from this formula will be eligible for registration.

The Australian Mist is now an established breed with its own breed characteristics that were derived from the breeds that made up the original experimental breeding programme.

From the Burmese came the dilution of colours, their sweet nature and friendliness and also the following colours: brown, blue, lilac and chocolate; the Abyssinian contributed by adding a little alertness and intelligence, ticking to the pattern and also the colours gold and peach; the domestics, especially those which were spotted, used in the experimental programme contributed to the pattern and most importantly the health,



including genetic health and also an expansion of the gene bank.

## Notes on the Australian Mist Patterns and Some Background to Colours

### ***Coat pattern***

Dr Bruce Vogel writes on patterns in the newer breeds:

The Spotted Mist (see page 136) has perhaps the most complicated combination of the newer breeds, including seemingly random spots interspersed by ticking. All these characteristics are polygenic; they rely upon the influence of a number of genes.

### **....and about Australian Mist Colours:**

Gold

One of the colours brought in from the Abyssinian ancestry, this is genetically a cinnamon. The mixture of genetic influence in the Australian Mist has transmuted the coat to gold and bronze markings on a cream ground.

Peach

Salmon-toned markings on a warm, pinkish-cream ground make this the closest thing yet to a pink cat. Underneath, it is a dilute cinnamon, but this coat shows the effects that different combinations and polygenic influences can have.

*Dr Bruce Vogel, in The New Encyclopaedia of the Cat, 2001 Dorling Kinderley, London*

Gloria Stevens comments on rufousing:

## **“Rufousing Polygenes**

Polygenes are a group of smaller genes that influence the major genes. Rufousing polygenes affect the yellow bands and the ground colour, changing the yellow band to an apricot- or burnt –orange-coloured band and ground colour. All tabbies have the rufousing polygenes. The smaller the number of these polygenes, the paler the bands and ground colour will be, giving an almost dull beige colour. The greater the number of polygenes, the more intense the colour will be. The rufousing polygenes also change the brown pattern on the torso to lighter shades of brown. This may be the result of rufousing polygenes being thermolabile (heat sensitive). The Abyssinian, Somali and Bengal have a larger quantity of the polygenes.

*Legacy of the Cat (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition) 2001 Gloria Stephens, Chronicle Books, San Francisco*