
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

News Report

How dangerous are cats?



NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

A US man called emergency services after he and his family were "**trapped**" in their bedroom by an angry cat.

Lux, a 10kg Himalayan cat, first **scratched** the family's seven-month-old baby. The man then kicked the animal in response. Lux didn't like this and became very **aggressive**, which made the family hide in a bedroom.

In the end, police caught the cat, and the child's injuries were not serious.

But how much of a threat are cats to the human population?

"It's extremely rare for a **domestic** cat to behave like this", says John Bradshaw from Bristol University. With more than 80 million pet cats in the US, this unusual behaviour makes Dr Bradshaw think Lux has "**a screw loose**".

"Cats are never aggressive for no reason," says Sarah Ellis, an expert in cat behaviour at the University of Lincoln.

So, cats who live with people rarely attack humans. But what are **feral** cats like?

Sarah Ellis says if a **kitten** doesn't meet a human between the ages of 3-8 weeks, it could go feral, and may bite or scratch people.

She says it is our "**duty**" to stop cats being afraid of humans by making sure they have the chance to spend time with people from an early age.

Vocabulary

trapped

unable to move or escape from a place / stopped from leaving a place

scratched

cut or damaged the surface of something (for example, skin)

aggressive

behaving in an angry and violent way

domestic

if an animal is domestic, it lives with people

(to have) a screw loose

(to be) a bit crazy

feral

wild

kitten

a baby cat

duty

responsibility

This story is based on an original BBC News story:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-26541146>