

**Amazing
Animals**

6 Silly PET

TRiCKS

BY ALINE ALEXANDER NEWMAN

THESE PETS LIKE DOING TRICKS,
BUT YOUR PET MAY NOT. NEVER
FORCE YOUR PET TO DO A TRICK
IT DOES NOT WANT TO DO.

FORGET
HANG 10—
I'M HANGIN'
18 TOES,
DUDE!

Surf's up for Curly!

1

Bunsen takes a surfing
break on his radio-
controlled boat.

MICE SHRED THE WAVES

COOMBABAH, QUEENSLAND, IN AUSTRALIA

Curly, Bunsen, and Harry the mice may be the world's smallest surfers. They shred three-foot-high waves tossed up by boats cruising along Australia's coast! The little squeakers were babies when owner Shane Willmott taught them to swim in the bathtub. Later, he pulled them around his pool on homemade miniature surfboards. Soon they hit the beach. "I push them onto a wave, and I'm right there to pick them up when they're done," Willmott says. And in case of a wipeout? He sometimes dyes the animals' fur so they're easy to spot. Out of the water, the rad rodents live in custom-built condos and gorge themselves on their favorite treat: toast soaked in melted butter and milk. Sweet!

HARRY THE
MOUSE IS
LEARNING TO
PARASAIL.



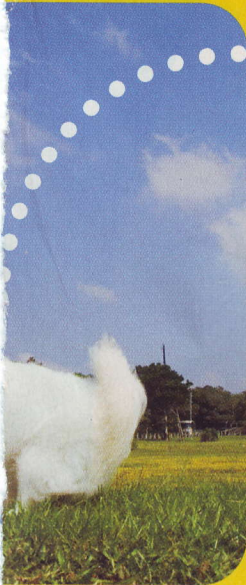
THE **AMERICAN
ESKIMO DOG** HAS
NO CONNECTION TO THE
**AMERICAN
ESKIMO CULTURE.**

2

DOG TURNS FLIPS

MYRTLE BEACH, SOUTH CAROLINA

Don't tell Dick the American Eskimo dog he can't learn new tricks. He'll flip—literally! It took three years and countless boxes of dog treats, but now Dick turns more than five backward somersaults in a row. "When Dick was a puppy, he was very jumpy and always tried to reach high places," says owner Denis Ignatov. He began playing Frisbee with the dog, tossing the disk so that Dick had to jump and lean backward at the same time to catch it. Once Dick mastered that, the trainer used his hands to flip Dick all the way over. Soon the dog got so good that Ignatov stopped helping. But Dick didn't stop helping himself to the dog treats!



3

FISH SCORES GOAL

GIBSONIA, PENNSYLVANIA

He may not qualify for the World Cup, but Albert Einstein the calico fantail goldfish sure can handle a soccer ball. To train his fish to push the ball into a goal, owner Dean Pomerleau held a straw under the water and dropped food pellets through it. Eventually, the fish associated the straw's tip with food. Then Pomerleau placed a weighted-down miniature soccer ball and goal in Albert's tank and lured Albert to the ball with the straw. The fish would get treats when he touched the ball. Soon Albert was guiding it into the net. "Now when I put the ball and goal into the tank, he instantly swims up to the ball and starts pushing it in," Pomerleau says. AI doesn't need shin guards—but maybe he could use some "fin" guards!

**GOLDFISH
CAN LIVE TO
BE 20
YEARS OLD.**





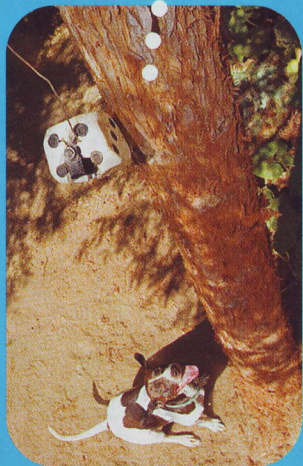
4 PELICAN PLAYS CATCH

NEW SOUTH WALES, IN AUSTRALIA

Pong the Australian pelican can't hit a tennis ball, but she's great at catching one. Whenever trainer Allison Starr (above) throws a ball in the air, Pong stretches out her neck, opens her beak, and...*plop*—she's got it! Pong then drops the ball into Starr's hand, and the fun continues. Starr discovered Pong's talent when the trainer absentmindedly tossed a leaf into the air. Pong reached out and snagged it, and the trick was born. Pong may be a star catcher, but she's also affectionate. "After playing awhile, she stretches out her neck and rests it over my shoulder," Starr says. Then Pong makes a burping sound. Guess that's her way of saying, "Thanks for playing!"

**PONG THE
PELICAN
LIKES TO
SNUGGLE.**

5





6

CATS JAM IN BAND

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Dakota, Darby, and Pinky the cats can't read music—but that doesn't stop them from playing it! With Dakota on drums, Darby on the keyboard, and Pinky on guitar, the tone-deaf band known as the Rock Cats entertains people with their "music"—even if the people have to cover their ears to listen. Owner Samantha Martin trained the group using a clicker. Every time the cats made a sound with their instruments, Martin clicked and gave out bites of chicken. "It didn't take them long to figure out that I was after the sound," she says. And Tuna, the backup guitarist, has another trick: After each performance, he taps a tip jar for the audience to drop cash into!

DOG CLIMBS TREE

MARTINEZ, CALIFORNIA

Buster the German short-haired pointer is barking up the right tree—any tree—to retrieve his toys. After the playful pup scrambled up a redwood tree chasing a squirrel, owner Bob Wilhelm stuck the dog's tennis ball up in the branches. "I didn't know if he'd get the ball at all," Wilhelm says. But sure enough, Buster went for it. The powerful pooch gave himself a running start, took a flying leap, and dug his claws into the trunk's soft bark. Up and up he scooted until his head was eight feet off the ground. Then he knocked the ball down with his nose. Now he retrieves all his toys the same way. Buster isn't just a tree climber—he's also a lifesaver. Buster alerted his owner's wife when her elderly mother suffered a heart attack.

GERMAN
SHORT-HAIRED
POINTERS HAVE
WEBBED
FEET.

A WHITE CAT
WITH BLUE EYES
IS MORE LIKELY THAN
OTHER CATS TO
BE DEAF.