

Cats & chipmunks (and other critters)

From what I've heard in the past, cats have a one square mile "roaming" territory. I would love to put locators on mine during the day to see just where they all go. I've always looked at it as if they were going to work. Most of them will have breakfast in the morning and then they're off, doing their own thing. They return late in the afternoon or evening, in time for dinner. Of course, they sometimes bring their "work" home with them.

One cat is notorious for bringing in love offerings. She bops through the dog door and then spits out a chipmunk or mouse, still alive. If you watch her do it, it looks like she says "blah" as she spits the thing out of her mouth and then goes the opposite direction (usually in the direction of the food dish), leaving the dogs to chase the little critter.

I have three westies that love nothing better than to chase the little critters. They are very adept at sniffing, chasing, and killing. No matter how hard I try to catch/trap the critters and give them a second chance in the wild, it very rarely happens. A couple of weeks ago one tough little chipmunk made it's way under my kitchen cabinets and hid out for two days (I know this because the dogs kept a 24 hour watch on the cabinet, noses to the baseboard). I was sure we would have to cut a hole through the floor underneath to take it's poor, lifeless little body out from under the cabinet. But it decided to make a run for it and met its demise in the bathroom. The latest victim led a merry chase through the house, hiding first under one low to the ground chair and then the leather couch. The dogs were having such a fit with this one, that I kept having to lift the chair and couch in order for them to get underneath. I didn't make it back to the couch soon enough though. One of the dogs was in such a frenzy that it ripped a two inch circle of leather off the front of the couch. Life was not pleasant

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for a few minutes. (I haven't figured out how I'm going to patch that one yet.)

And did you know that chipmunk tails shed their skin/fur if pulled on? Found that one out one day as I was trying to pull a chipmunk out of a crack between the old floorboards and baseboard. It held on tight as I tugged carefully, trying not to hurt it. Imagine my shock when the poor little thing's tail let loose! That particular chippy bounded back underneath the armoire and then jumped straight up through the dog cage into the middle of a roll of paper towels that was sitting on top. An easy save, that one. I felt bad, though, as it ran away with a bare little white bony tail.

You would think that the chippy population in our woods would diminish over time, but since the cats roam so far, they have an indefinite number to hunt and bring into my house. *sigh*

Misty

(In the general vicinity of) Smack dab in the middle of Lower Michigan ;o)

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Date: Sat Jul 10, 2004 10:50 pm

Subject: Cats & chipmunks (and other critters)