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HOW TO HUNT FOR MARKETS--OVER THE HOLIDAYS

By Dr. Erika Dreifus

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Chances are, you'll be busy over the next several weeks. Between preparing for, celebrating, and unwinding from the holidays it may be difficult to maintain your regular writing routine. And if researching potential homes for your work is part of that routine--as it is for many of us who regularly submit stories, essays, poems, articles, and reviews for publication--you may be worried about falling behind.

But it's time to put those worries to rest. In truth, there are many ways to keep up with your market-hunting over the holidays. Here are just four possibilities:

- 1) When you visit friends and family, peruse the magazines they may have on their coffee tables or stacked in their recycling bins. They may subscribe to some that you don't receive. Who knows how many new markets you may discover? (Just be sure to ask for permission before you start rummaging!)
- 2) Be bold with your gift list. If someone close to you should ask what you might like for the holidays, go ahead and say it. Go ahead and tell that person: "I'd like you to bring me/send me all the magazines you've received for the past six months--and haven't yet thrown out." That person won't need to shop, and you will be able to spend the rest of the winter researching markets.
- 3) If you'll be traveling, take advantage of any complimentary publications that may come your way: inflight magazines, morning newspapers at hotels, and so on. Again, these may provide you sample issues for markets that you haven't considered before.
- 4) If you're visiting anyone out-of-town, stop by the local library, and check out the magazines the library keeps stocked. It's quite likely that you'll discover some--especially regional publications--that you won't be able to research as easily back home.

Can you think of other possibilities? Add them to the list! Happy holidays, and happy market-hunting.

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About the Author: Dr. Erika Dreifus edits the free monthly newsletter, "The Practicing Writer," and is the author of several resource guides, including "The Practicing Writer's Directory of Paying Short Story Markets" and "The Practicing Writer's Guide to No-Cost Literary Contests and Competitions." Visit her website at <http://www.practicing-writer.com>

Your Cat The Hunter...

By Larry Chamberlain

Many cat owners believe that their good little kitty would not even dream of going hunting.

After all, their cat is loved and well fed. Why should their pet bother hunting down birds, mice and other wildlife? If a domestic cat has any access at all to the outside world then it will hunt, no doubt about it, it's all part of being a cat.

Here are some of the myths and old wives tales about cats and hunting.

Pet cats are just too lazy to hunt.

In no way is this true, domestic cats may sleep away two thirds of their day but they are shallow sleepers and alert to all sound, and movements, that take place around them. Cats are designed to use high levels of energy in relatively short bursts, and then rest to recuperate.

A cat that is well fed will not hunt.

This is simply untrue. A cat will hunt whether it is hungry or not, hunting is an instinctive need within your cat. The fact is a well fed and healthy cat is more likely to be an effective hunter of prey, than an ill fed feral cat.

Cats that have been declawed will not hunt.

This is a misconception. A cat that has been deprived of its claws will use its front legs to give a paralyzing blow to its prey, and then, as any cat does, use its powerful jaws and needle sharp teeth to bite its victims neck. Declawing a cat for this reason would be pointless – in any event declawing is a cruel and unnecessary process.

Domestic cats prefer hunting mice to hunting birds.

Cats are opportunistic hunters and in metropolitan areas where rodent populations are kept under control, the most plentiful supply of prey is birds. In country areas some studies have shown that birds make up only twenty percent of a domestic cats prey. You may see cats catching more birds than

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mice, voles and rats, this is because the birds are prey that is available during the daytime, rodents are usually caught at night.

Kittens must be shown how to hunt by their mother.

Only partly true. Kittens are born with a natural hunting instinct, but if the mother cat is on hand to teach her kittens the necessary skills, they will be able to become more proficient hunters.

Larry Chamberlain is a lifelong lover of cats and lives in London England. He is the webmaster and owner of

. If you have a pet related web site and you wish to reproduce the

above article you are welcome to do so, provided the article is reproduced in its entirety, including this resource box and live link to

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