

ZURI'S RESCUE STORY

When I approached Brigitte Cowell Moyne about a rescue story, her first thought was of an F2 Savannah named "Zuri".

I also mentioned I was writing about the issues and complications of declawing, so it was quite clear this story about Zuri needed to be written.

I contacted Zuri's current owner, Sarah Johnson, and she was immediately excited and on-board to share Zuri's story of her rescue, the declawing of all four paws by her first owners, and how she was ultimately surrendered to the Humane Society when her breeder refused to take her back.

Zuri was born 5/14/2008. She was declawed on 11/24/2008, by her owner, on all four paws at just six months of age. This would prove to wreak havoc for poor Zuri the rest of her life.

As a result of this declaw, Zuri sadly developed fearful behaviors as well as flinching, and pulling away anytime her toes were touched--even when under heavy sedation by the vet as she couldn't be examined. She was in immense pain and tended to favor her right foot. She also refused to dig or bury her litter box waste; despite her excellent litter box habits.

Zuri also showed aggression towards other cats, but was oddly fine with dogs. Her owners ultimately surrendered to the Humane Society, stating they couldn't touch her. She was

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With Sarah Johnson, Zuri's owner



surrendered on 5/12/2014. It was stated in Zuri's intake evaluation that she "shouldn't be placed into a home as a pet and could likely never be domesticated".

This was when Savannah Cat Rescue (SVCR) and Brigitte Cowell Moyne stepped in. Zuri was placed in foster care while she underwent surgical repair on all four feet due to retained bone fragments from her botched declaw surgery in 2008--six years later! She also had regrowth of her nails, which caused her feet to sustain lacerations causing

even more pain. She also was suffering from arthritis, as a result.

Being no stranger to rescuing a cat with a botched declaw surgery, Sarah came to Zuri's rescue, ready to give her a chance, despite all odds. Zuri had her corrective surgery on 6/17/2014 and on 7/24/14, went to live with Sarah and her family. The ride home in the car was a challenge and resulted in Zuri having diarrhea. Once home and in quarantine, Zuri assumed a safe place under the bed, where she proceeded to stay until venturing out the following morning. She played with a feather teaser, but was still shy and guarded.

On 7/28/2014, Zuri was starting to explore the upstairs area, no longer staying under the bed!

Zuri ate well, and with Brigitte's advice, Sarah put some food on her finger and offered it to Zuri. Not only did Zuri take the food, she pushed her entire head into Sarah's finger demanding to be petted! This was a huge accomplishment and completely unexpected!

From that moment forward, Zuri made friends with KC, their other Savannah cat, and Jake their dog. True to her history, she took to Jake better, but does get along with KC. The hiding stopped and Zuri enjoyed being petted and eating her favorite snacks of freeze-dried chicken. The sad and angry "look" on Zuri's face turned to calmness, she became quite the talker, and started playing consistently. She even walks on a harness--all these milestones happened in a very short time--and against all odds!

Zuri is now 12 years old and a treasured member of the Johnson family for six years. Sarah's daughter, Ashley, is Zuri's "person" and they snuggle together all the time, something else the vets at the Humane Society said she'd never do.

There are lessons to be learned through Zuri's tragic ordeal and her ultimate happy ending with her new family following surgical repair of her botched declaw. Never give up on these amazing animals, never ever declaw ANY cat, and be patient. You never know if you might have a diamond in the rough, just like Zuri!

Zuri happy in
her Furrrer
Home

