

# Cat's Eyes<sup>1</sup>

The most common marbles children played with in the early 1950s were the *Cat's Eye* marbles. Their nickname comes from the eye-shaped ribbon inside a clear body glass that gathers light and reflects back like a real cat's eye.

*Cat's Eyes*<sup>2</sup> are clear-based with a single-ribbon design inside. The curved ribbon usually has multiple wings, called *vanes*, leafing out from the center of the ribbon (e. g. from the top, a three-vane *Cat's Eye* looks like a propeller).

## Look for

- Three to six vanes, depending on who made the marble.
- A single-vane *Cat's Eye*, looks like a banana and is called a "Banana".
- Thin, chubby, wavy or flared vanes, depending on who made it.
- Vanes may be all the same color, two or more different colors, or opposite vanes a different color.
- Clear base glass (American) or tinted (Imported).
- Multiple strands that widen out, just under the surface, mid-way between the poles are *Caged Cat's Eyes*.



## The Keepers<sup>3</sup>

*Cat's Eyes* are very common. Peltier's, single-vane *Bananas* are collectible, especially the *Root Beer Float* (#97), (white vane in an amber base glass). *Cat's Eye hybrids*, with more than one color on a vane are collectible. *Cat's Eyes* with aventurine and nine-vane *Cat's Eyes* are rare.

## Fun Facts

The injection technique used to create the leafy vanes inside a clear *Cat's Eye*, resembles what happens when you squeeze icing out of the nozzle of a cake decorating tool.

The *Cat's Eyes* that flooded the United States toy market in the 1950s were imported from Japan.

The cheaper *Cat's Eyes* ended the reign of American-made marbles. Marble King, Master Glass and Vitro Agate, responded with clearer transparent base glass *Cat's Eyes*, with only mild success.

Glasfirma also produced a tri-color, six-vane, *Cat's Eye* Marble, in 1944, called the *Trébol*, but it was not distributed in the United States until mid-1990.

<sup>1</sup> From page 23 of *Collecting Marbles A Beginner's Guide*, by Rich Maxwell

<sup>2</sup> See Stephen Bahr's video on Cats Eye Marbles <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tdsHJfKPQ8A>

<sup>3</sup> Elizabeth Kempski's book is available on eBay or with PayPal at [elizkempski@hotmail.com](mailto:elizkempski@hotmail.com)