

Steps You Can Take for Deterring Cat Behaviours

1. Talk to your neighbors. Determine whether the cat is a pet, stray, or feral, and if he has been neutered. If not, get it done!
2. Apply nontoxic deterrents around your yard.
3. Put a tight lid on your trash can.
4. Block gaps in the foundation of all sheds and outbuildings.

The reality is that community cats are here to stay and that the best option for us as members of the community is to learn to live with them as best we can.

Please note that harming or killing feral cats is against anti-cruelty laws in Ontario and law-breakers are vigorously pursued. Not only are the laws enforced, but animal rescue groups and activists are relentless in pursuing and heaping public scorn on anyone who kills or injures feral cats.

For more information

Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) - Free-roaming, Abandoned, and Feral Cats - Position Statement
<https://www.canadianveterinarians.net/documents/free-roaming-abandoned-feral-cats-position-statement>

Canadian Federation of Humane Societies (CFHS) - Feral cats
http://cfhs.ca/athome/feral_cats/

Ontario SPCA - Feral Cat Support Programs
http://peac.ontariospca.ca/what-we-do-peac/humane-education-peac/982.html?_ga=1.2154864.1127997128.1466822990

Alley Cat Allies comprehensive resources about feral cats can be found at
<http://www.alleycat.org>

Local Organization Contact:

Prepared by PAWS4DURHAM Members
August, 2016



LIVING WITH COMMUNITY CATS

Community cats, also called “feral” cats are just like a house cat but have been born outside and have had little to no human contact. Through no fault of their own, these are cats who may have once lived in a home but are now lost, abandoned or free roaming to live on the streets and may “act feral” because they are afraid.

Community cats live all over the country, in every landscape—including our community. They are members of the domestic cat species, but are not socialized to people. They live among their own in "colonies," and unless neutered, those colonies grow.

Volunteers and rescue groups are working within the municipality to help care and maintain these colonies through humane and cost effective methods.

How can we control the population of community cats?



Trap-Neuter-Return and Manage TNR(M)

Trap-Neuter-Return and Manage or TNR(M) is the only humane way to reduce the homeless cat population. TNR(M) improves the lives of community cats. It is the most cost-effective, long-term approach for stray and feral cats. Cats are humanely trapped, spayed or neutered, vaccinated and micro chipped. Cats not socialized to humans are returned to their colony site, and their population gradually reduces over time.

The behaviors associated with mating, such as yowling, fighting and spraying, 'STOP', and the cats become good neighbors.

A cat that has been TNR'd can be readily identified by the removal of the tip of its left ear during surgery. This is an internationally recognized practice to readily identify a TNR'd cat. *(Shown in the image above)*

Traditional methods do not work

Animal control's traditional approaches for community cats—such as catch and kill or attempts to relocate—do not work. They are costly, inhumane, and endless. Having cats removed from an area creates a vacuum, which more cats move into and breed to fill. Decades of these failed practices proves their futility.

Why is TNR(M) so important?

Despite a huge shift toward humane policies, many cats are still caught and brought to animal control and shelters. About 70% of cats who enter shelters are killed there, including virtually 100% of unsocialized community cats, who could have had healthy lives outdoors. This practice is very costly to the municipality.

It doesn't have to be this way. With TNR(M) and responsible pet ownership, stray and feral cat populations will decrease, the municipality saves tax dollars and community cats can live out their lives.

Doesn't feeding attract more cats?

This is a common 'MYTH'

FACT is that like all animals, the cats find their own food sources – rats, mice, etc. – and shelter and then congregate there. It's important to understand that the cats were in the neighbourhood before anyone fed them. Feeding them merely helps to make their lives easier. It doesn't attract more cats and is not responsible for the feral cats being in the neighbourhood. In fact, if your neighbour practices TNR(M), the population of feral cats actually decreases.

Benefits of TNR(M) include:

1. No more kittens and a gradually decreasing population.
2. Caretakers will notice new cats and can get them sterilized right away.
3. Fewer complaints to animal services (as a result of less nuisance behaviour and roaming).
4. Lower shelter intake and euthanasia rates.
5. Cats are vaccinated and their physical health improves.

Co-existing with community cats

There are simple things we can do together to ensure a peaceful coexistence. Sometimes outdoor felines behave in ways that their human neighbors don't like or understand. Not everyone likes having cats and other animals in their yards, but the fact is, the animals are there and it is their home, too.

