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# Cat Watch

The world of felids, big and small

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## [TNR Is Dangerous Both to Cats and to Other Animals](#)

VOICES

Posted by [Guest Blogger](#) in [Cat Watch](#) on March 8, 2017

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By Daphna Nachminovitch

By the time she called PETA for help, one of the stray cats the woman had been feeding was in critical condition, suffering from a massive tumor that had closed off his ear canal. In another case, a cat appeared at a feeder's home with grotesquely swollen paws oozing with pus, a symptom of feline infectious peritonitis. These cats' suffering was prolonged and agonizing but not uncommon. This is how homeless cats live—and die.

People who consider themselves “cat lovers,” including proponents of trap-neuter-release (TNR) —programs that sterilize but then abandon domestic cats and so should more aptly be called “trap-neuter-*abandon*”—don't mean to consign cats to such ghastly fates, but in leaving them outside to fend for themselves, they do. The average life expectancy of an “outdoor cat” is about two to five years compared with 12 to 15 years for a cat who lives indoors. Feral cats, as well as homeless domesticated cats who have been set loose outdoors by shelters seeking to avoid the criticism that they might face from euthanizing them, commonly suffer and die from feline leukemia, feline AIDS, and other infectious diseases—even rabies. They also succumb to ailments like anemia and upper respiratory infections—conditions that are easily treatable were the cats to be taken to a veterinarian—but they are not. In winter, cats in cold climates endure subzero temperatures, some [losing ears, tails, or limbs to frostbite](#); others being [cut to shreds when they climb into car engines seeking warmth](#); and still others simply freezing to death.

Many cats “disappear”—and while some are hit by cars or attacked by dogs or wild predators and some succumb to parasites or starvation because they depend on humans for everything and can't fend for themselves, others are victims of foul play. PETA's files are bursting with cases in which cats who were put outdoors without supervision, including those in “managed colonies,” have been shot, poisoned, drowned, bludgeoned, or even set on fire by cruel people who view them as easy targets or “pests” and don't want them climbing on their cars or defecating in their yards. Recent attacks include a cat in Mississippi who died after someone [doused her with hot liquid](#), a cat in New York who suffered extensive [chemical burns](#), and a cat in Maryland who was [found dead](#) with “visible injuries” and next to a note that read, “The cats must go.”

TNR programs are doomed to failure because of basic population dynamics: Even if all of the cats in a “colony” are eventually spayed and neutered (which is nearly impossible), the food set out for them will always attract “new” cats. And feeding cats also promotes abandonment, since people are more inclined to abandon their cats if they believe that someone else will “take care of” them.

Dr. Michael W. Fox—well-known veterinarian, columnist, and author—wrote in a column recently, “Obviously, cats that are neutered and then released outdoors are not going to breed, but they are likely to suffer far more than indoor cats (and those unadopted ones kept in enclosed sanctuaries) from injuries and disease, kill wildlife and pose a public health risk from some of the diseases they can transmit to humans.” Indeed, TNR programs are both a threat to public safety and harmful to native wildlife. Cats were recently dubbed the [most deadly invasive species in the world](#) by the authors of a study published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* and are believed to be responsible or partly responsible for the extinction of 63 species. They pose a serious threat to wildlife, including mammals, reptiles, and birds, who are already struggling with habitat destruction and environmental degradation. One [study estimates that free-roaming cats kill up to 24 billion wild animals and birds every year, by far the largest human-caused toll on birds](#).

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has warned that maintaining feral cat colonies can lead to an increase in the incidence of rabies transmission from cats to humans. Cats can also spread other diseases to humans, including typhus, an [outbreak](#) of which in California was thought to be linked to feral cats. A man in Oregon was [diagnosed with bubonic plague](#) after being bitten by a cat who was allowed to roam outdoors. And at least seven [wallabies died](#) in a Virginia zoo because of toxoplasmosis transmitted by a colony of outdoor cats.

Trapping and abandoning cats is hazardous to all involved, certainly including the cats themselves. Homeless cats deserve to be treated like any other cat. They deserve a chance to be adopted into a loving home or, if that isn't possible, to be peacefully euthanized in a safe and quiet environment, rather than turned out onto the street to fight daily battles for survival that they will ultimately lose. Cat abandonment is illegal because it's inhumane, and it's not the answer to the homeless-cat crisis. The answer is to require that *all* cats be spayed and neutered, licensed,

microchipped, and kept indoors.



*Daphna Nachminovitch is the senior vice president of cruelty investigations for [People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals](#). She has overseen many undercover investigations and countless cruelty cases that have led to criminal charges against animal abusers. Under her leadership, PETA has spayed and neutered more than 139,000 dogs and cats since 2001.*

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## Comments

1. Deblr  
Missouri  
October 17, 10:04 pm

From what I've come to understand thru the years is that PETA doesn't believe any animals should be kept as pets or in zoos. So of course they don't believe in TNR. I've helped with TNR groups in my neighborhood and they don't abandon cats. They come back and put out food, shelters, provide vet care when needed. I think PETA should stay out of it. Just like their opinion on Greyhound racing. Most Greyhounds are better treated, cared for and spoiled more than a lot of people I know treat their own kids. And that's a fact. I'm sure there are bad people in the Greyhound industry just like there are bad puppy mills in yards and garages all over the US. But don't condemn a whole group because of one bad one.

2. benjamin isaac  
Canada  
October 8, 5:55 pm

You are aware that cats kill all our birds and wildlife and if this keeps going all the birds and wildlife will be

extinct, and extinct is forever. Why don't people put this together ?

We have to get rid of the cats, there is no other choice.

There is a way to get rid of the outside cats.

What we have to do is offer a bounty for every dead cat. then you're going to see all kinds of hunters come out of the woodwork , and you're going to see the cats numbers decline.

and this will make the cat owners happy for their cats will be safe and inside, where there supposed to be. this will also eliminate the diseases from outside cats.

Thank you for your time.

Benjamin Welk Isaac

3. Fred Hammes

United States

July 18, 2:30 pm

I work in TNR also.

I do not, as implied in the article, "trap/neuter and abandon."

I can't argue with you and your program. I do dispute much of the misinformation in the article. Managed TNR'd colonies are much healthier. They are fed. They are vaccinated. They are monitored for cats that need medical treatment. Newly dumped kitties can be trapped and altered. Kittens and dumped pets can be fostered and sent to adoptions. They do tend to keep their territory.

The article does not acknowledge the "vacuum effect" when cats are removed from a territory with resources to support them.

The massive numbers of "wildlife" that cats are cited to kill do, indeed, include all the mice and rats that barn cats are employed to control.

It is, indeed, possible to spay/neuter entire colonies and keep them managed and healthy. They can, indeed, live active, happy lives with their families in the places that they've always called home, or in barn homes where they've been relocated to with proper protocol.

Suggesting that killing every cat that can not be adopted into a family home is the best thing for all cats is asinine.

That kind of misinformation is what I dispute.

4. Suzanne Goll

ANNAPOLIS MD

May 26, 10:40 pm

In our county Animal Control does not enforce the laws which require cats to be kept on ones property, contained in a separate area if in heat, abandoned. Reasons are insufficient resources and difficulty in enforcing; lack of leadership. Animal Control in our county also does not go out and trap free roaming cats nor answer most complaint calls. Citizens are left to deal with all this themselves. I can see all sides. What is most clear to me is that if the county you are in is not going to part take in a solution, then the citizens are left to do it themselves. For me any action is better than no action. Many people will leave a cat outside to live and reproduce before they ever trap it and bring it to Animal Control to be euthanized. But if they can get the cat TNRd they will do something which is huge – stops the reproduction etc. Also a great thing about TNR is that done right it involves education and outreach...Education and outreach into homes where cats are...living... so they can be spayed– an unfixed cat will always wind up kicked outside due to behavioral issues. Anyway, if the county you live in does nothing then I think offering ALL solutions is best... because as you all know some people will never do TNR and some will never euthanize. I do agree that pet cats belong inside.... and ideally if there were unlimited funds, ferals could be neutered and contained in large fenced in beautiful places so wildlife was not harmed... but that is not viable.

5. Jamie S  
Louisville, KY  
May 23, 12:49 pm

This article is, first, noted at the bottom as the blogger's opinion, so I want to remind everyone that this is NOT something National Geographic is saying they agree or disagree on.

TNR programs do a lot of good work in communities, though. Sure, there are going to be some instances of illness and injury. Many of the cases cited in this blog, though, are human cruelty, not shortcomings of TNR. Properly managed colonies are an excellent way to SAVE LIVES of cats who would likely be put down in shelters. On the whole, there are still more shelters that kill for space or for illnesses that are deemed too expensive to manage. Many of these feral cats, if taken to a traditional shelter, would be in exactly that place. The idea of TNR is NOT to abandon them but to have caretakers, and TNR programs seek out new caretakers when others leave/become unable to take care of the animals. The other thing that's important to note is that many of the cats rescued through TNR programs do get adopted out. Cats that are friendly and able to adapt to being indoors are often put up for adoption rather than released. And the only true alternative to TNR, if you're concerned about population control? PETA would be on board (which is why you shouldn't ever cite them)... The option when shelters are full and there aren't enough people adopting cats is that these cats get put down. This author, without SAYING IT out right, is essentially advocating for murdering the cats sooner than later, rather than giving them a chance at a happy life.

6. Janet  
Springfield, va  
May 22, 12:09 am

There are some very happy ferals with outdoor shelters provided by kind people and food and attention to them in case of illness.

Peta should work on changing the justice system to harshen the punishment for any animal abuse.

Also , tax laws must be reformed to banefit animal Care by proof and possible audit visits.

Shelters must up their services and provide free spay and neuter to poor people.

7. Yorks Tong  
May 18, 3:21 am

I understand your point of view, but I am still waiting for the best solution. As Inwas reading through, I was hoping to see a better idea in the end of the passage. It's easy to point out something doesn't work, but without giving a suggestion of an alternative it is just as unhelpful. I think TNR only isn't enough, but it may be a part of a better and more successful way to control the situation. Cats sterilzed or not hunt birds and squirrels, so do other wild animals.

8. Pamela  
NYC  
May 3, 7:11 pm

This blog post is riddled with half truths that jump from fear mongering to tear jerk outrage. Its a mean trick to piecemeal & juxtapose the imagery of violence against animals against TNR. There is no TNR agenda- colony caretakers aren't asking you for your money...cough cough...and there's no vigilante justice against sociopaths who harm the weak. The fact is that we share this world with creatures who deserve a good quality of life. What Daphna's solution would be is to TRAP-KILL—this doesn't seem a far leap from the people who poison cats on the street. In reality, killing all of the cats is pointless and creates a vacuum effect that draws other animals living nearby.

Sadly, feral cats are not adoptable- they were never abandoned and aren't domesticated in the way that dogs are. A FERAL cat isn't able to be socialized in the way that a STRAY dog or cat might be rehabbed. People's lack of accountability is why these cats are on the street in the first place, so humans should be responsible for making it right again, not in one grand sweeping gesture of eradication but rather in a sustainable and thoughtful approach. When a cat is TNR'd, they are Neutered, Vaccinated for Felv/FIV/Rabies, treated for parasites/fleas, and any injuries. Post op, they're taken to a safe space for healing and then returned back to their natural territory, which may be YOUR backyard, learn to share. Many caretakers provide winter shelters, clean water, and food. Their lives won't be enriched by trying to force your ideal of a cat-less street. The world wouldn't be a better place, the psycho's who throw acid on cats will still throw acid. Please do your own research and find your own truths. There's also a beautiful documentary called "Kedi" about the cats of Istanbul and their relationship with the city. There can be a balance.

9. Hilary Entley  
United States  
April 19, 9:14 pm

YES YES YES!!!!!! As a huge supporter of wildlife rehabilitation, we see the problems these invasive species make!!!! These cat people are sick in the head to not see the problems! Blinded by their own agenda!

10. Dusty  
United States  
April 7, 1:07 am

It's not Re-abandon!

As a feral cat, I take much umbrage at this highly offensive article. I happen to enjoy being alive, I am clean, healthy and well taken care of and Ms. Nachminovitch has done nothing but a disservice to my class of cat with her misguided and targeted comments and links that ultimately bolster the position that all feral cats should be killed—how unoriginal-though the attempt is worth of a brief nod for the opening paragraph. We've heard this argument before in various other persuasive, craftily worded articles with good grammar that aim to convince the world-that feral cats are responsible for the decline of public health in the modern world-yes let's blame everything on the feral cat—let's stop and think a bit more carefully about this from my perspective as my lot has been dealing with this for a very long time.

I was born to an outdoor cat who was not spayed or neutered—all on both sides can agree that yes the mother cat SHOULD have not sterilized—but she was NOT – and therein lies the root of the problem—HUMANS! Now, I do not advocate for the erasure of the human who was too busy, or too lazy, or too uncaring to take proper care of the cat, for as we all know, there are plenty of good ones—and it wouldn't be fair to lump them all into the same category, so dump lump me into the same category. I happen to have a home now -I got lucky, but many of my family remain on the streets and that is the life they know, and it's not all bad.



The search for an easy answer through a feel-good scratch of an article from Ms. Nachminovitch is never going to solve the problem either because it's not possible because you can't catch all of us—so if you don't TNR [btw it's TRAP NEUTER RETURN (to managed colony where we came from) NOT TRAP NEUTER RELEASE and abandon], and you don't do anything, there will be more and more of us. While we appreciate the kind thoughts that Ms. Nachminovitch has toward the suffering of the free-roaming cat—and there are certainly instances where euthanizing is warranted—killing all of us won't help those who are suffering because it removes our right to life, our right to be and exist, and, we are here and there and everywhere; and there is no humane way to euthanize me because once you trap me I will be scared to death and then likely stuck in a cold room in an underfunded shelter at full capacity full of other scared-to-death ferals and it will be a horrible and terrifying death – so let's get real about rounding us all up and “euthanizing” us because you, and the audience you serve are certainly not going to do it because let's face it: people are very busy on facebook voicing their opinions (over and over again), and sitting on their behinds writing blogs, while the TNR people and the caring rescue groups bust theirs trying to help us—we don't need more patronizing know-it-all activists who insist on promulgating unverified knowledge that's not even theirs, or who brag about their numbers, but don't tell us their euthanasia rate. They aren't helping the situation—even this article won't help the problem ...yes, cats should be in loving homes but the reality is there aren't enough of them... so what actions do we want to see to bring about the change in the feral cat population and who will do the job? TNR is the only humane solution at this point. But, humanely euthanizing – who is going to trap and then spend money to gently and lovingly kill a feral cat? Not many people. As I note above the likely outcome is the local shelter and if you are lucky maybe a compassionate humane society. Resources are always an issue for the humane caretakers and the humans who hate us and want us gone won't bother with a humane method of eradication.

Every cat blamer quotes the Smithsonian article never once giving a fair shake to the other side ..cats are one of the most 100 invasive species – doesn't that mean there's 99 others?! I'm a cat and I can count on one paw better than most humans! Cats kill more creatures than whatever, like 24 billion or something? Who came up with that number (who cares), and isn't it always prefaced with the word “estimated”?! Never mind that human development, wind energy, air travel, pollution, lack of food contribute to the decline of birds—if the cats are killing a certain bird in your neighborhood stop complaining and go out and sterilize us! Here's a link to a really good article on some really bad science <https://www.alleycat.org/resources/the-wisconsin-study-bad-science-costs-cats-lives/>. But no, let's quote more research (it's where the real money is); let's ..yawn.. talk about tracking data—stop tracking and start trapping—TNR that is! Never mind that birds carry toxoplasmosis – go to the CDC website (you are better than research than I am) if you don't believe me, or that you can get it from not cooking your meat, that you can get it from your pet cat that may go outside, or that other animals carry it too. Never mind that other wildlife have fleas, or kill other animals, or eat everything—hint...the opossum—and, I venture to say, they may even kill more animals than cats do (they eat ticks too which is really good). Never mind that we kill rodents so you don't have to go out and poison your home and neighborhood; we are pretty useful creatures, the untouchables of the cat world that have served a purpose for so long, so much so that now rescues and advocates are finding us work as barn cats and such other opportunities that may come our way for making a living. Not always ideal situations but at least they care enough to do something.

Then, there are the positive social aspects that we bring—for every one of you that can come up with an excuse or one of your “educated” reasons (once upon a time a millennia ago I heard about a neighborhood kid that got toxoplasmosis blah boring blah), there is someone or some group of people that will come together as a community, become friends, adopt out the kittens and try to find a way to help the cats and all the other critters around them – love of animals is a common and binding thread that time and again benefits and engages a community in working together toward common goals.

Having a feral cat colony that is 100% fixed can be done, but like all other life forms, where there is food there will be someone to eat it and they all follow each other and the food, so yes life in all forms will continue on and there will always be new faces, just like humans. For a colony to be managed you have to have a manager. Colonies aren't doomed to fail, that is a false argument, once managed they are more likely to succeed than fail—you just have to have a willing participant who won't give up. And, once you have done it, as my human, has, you know it's working—it's always the people who've never tried or attempted it that say it's doomed to fail – the amount of baby cats that are not born due to sterilizing is staggering but the

cat blamers would never quote those number because it would give credence to TNR advocates and practitioners of medieval –style cat hating generally don't do that.

For example, key words here again from Ms. Nachminovitch are “And feeding cats also promotes abandonment, since people are more inclined to abandon their cats if they believe that someone else will “take care of” them.” What does this have to do with cats? She is, once again, talking about the failings of humans, not cats. Sure, it can happen but that doesn't mean you have to round us up and kill us.

Ms. Nachminovitch adds insult to injury when she cites an article about a man in Oregon who was diagnosed with bubonic plague after being bitten by a cat who was allowed to roam outdoors..... it was from his own cat – not a feral! From her own link to the CBS story: “Gaylord contracted the disease when he tried to pull a mouse out of the mouth of his cat, Charlie, because it was choking on the rodent.” Talk about a spin, I guess if you can't come up with real facts to back up the case against homeless cats just throw the odd domestic pet cat in – the audience won't notice as they've drunk the kool aid already and the article is getting too long for them.

How about the reference to the typhus outbreak that “may have been” brought on by feral cats. In a link to the article she quotes it states: “Typhus infections occur when a person is bitten by the fleas or lice that carry the Rickettsia typhi or Rickettsia prowazeki bacteria. These pests live on feral animals, including rats, cats, skunks, raccoons and opossums.” Stay away from your backyards people, you might get typhus.

Oh and by the way, you are pretty unlikely to catch rabies from a feral cat as we don't let humans touch us and if we are sick we stay away from everyone. The likelihood of contracting rabies from a cat is so rare to not even be definable – again. Here's another link for you:

[https://www.cdc.gov/rabies/exposure/animals/wildlife\\_reservoirs.html](https://www.cdc.gov/rabies/exposure/animals/wildlife_reservoirs.html).- Also, TNR, frequently referred to as TNVR (TRAP-NEUTER-VACCINATE-RETURN) includes a rabies vaccine for the cat, so they go back to their colonies protected.

This article is an opinion and everyone is entitled to one, but this is not deserving of National Geographic or any true animal advocate. Winning the war on animal cruelty won't come with euthanizing all ferals, it's gotta be done on a one-on-one basis, it's not for the lazy, it's not a quick fix and it doesn't have one solution .. if only someone could come up with something creative and constructive – wait we have it, it's called TNR, and it's called love. This vaguely written article is smellier than a can of tuna on trapping night and I'm not going into this trap and neither should you. That being said, I've voiced my opinion, I'm going to post it, cough up a big hairball and take a well-earned nap.

11. Manchester United Wilson Hemmatröja  
Netherlands, Rhooon  
March 31, 12:18 am

Hi there, after reading this awesome paragraph i am also glad to share my knowledge here with friends.

Bayern Munich Alonso Hemmadräkt



12. Janet Williams  
Marin County, CA  
March 29, 4:19 pm

I can speak from experience that this article is totally untrue, at least in our case here in Marin. My nonprofit, Marin Friends of Ferals, works closely with the Marin Humane Society. We have TNR'ed over 2500 cats in the last 12 years. We do not and never would release cats without daily food, water and shelter. We have dedicated volunteers and Marin residents who care for our sterilized ferals. Many of the cats are over 10 years old because of the care they receive. Not all people and feral cat groups believe it's humane to practice TNR without feeding and caring for the cats. So I think this article did an injustice to the hundreds

of people dedicated to humanely reducing feral cat populations and it only adds to the incorrect belief by some that feral cats have no purpose simply because they aren't lap cats. This was a very one-sided opinion that only served to spread more misinformation about a humane and effective alternative to euthanizing perfectly healthy animals., provided the cats are fed daily.

13. Angel Reed  
March 27, 10:57 pm

I agree that adopting cats and then putting them outside is dangerous and negligent, but what about TNR for stray cats who seem to be too feral to catch/rescue/socialize? What's the best thing to do for them?

14. Ka  
Honolulu, HI  
March 25, 7:26 pm

It's certainly possible that you're correct regarding a few isolated and horrific instances. However, the overwhelming evidence is that TNRM (you keep forgetting the "M") is the only humane and proven method to reduce feral cat overpopulation and suffering. Please see this excellent discussion:

<https://voices.nationalgeographic.org/2017/03/10/big-love-for-small-cats/>

15. Yvretta Carus  
Las Cruces, NM  
March 22, 5:12 pm

TNR advocates used to say, "TNR can eliminate cat colonies." Now they say, "TNR works" without defining "works." As mentioned in this thread, TNR has been practiced for over 60 years with no evidence (only anecdotes) that TNR eliminates cat colonies.

Let's do an experiment. Find two cat colonies in the same city, comparable size, comparable setting. Trap all cats in both colonies. Neuter and return all the cats in one colony. Remove all cats from the other colony, and make sure that no cat food is available in the vacated colony site. (What you do with the removed cats depends on how many cat-lovers are willing to relocate feral cats to their fenced private yards.) Census both colony sites every year for 10 years. Replicate in several other cities. Then we will have some data on TNR's effectiveness in eliminating a cat colony.

16. Sandra B Hoover  
New Mexico  
March 20, 11:26 pm

Bravo for PETA. Ignore the fact that TNR doesn't work – check out the good studies enumerated by Peter Marra in [Cat Wars](#) – cats should be kept indoors for their health. Feral cats are a huge vector for *Toxoplasmosis gondii*, a horrible parasite that reproduces in the intestines of cats. The eggs are carried in the feces and spread from there. Children can be infected with one exposure. The neurological damage can range from blindness to schizophrenia, and possibly ADHD and other problems. Some populations of cats showed a majority were infected with Toxo. We need to stop this building epidemic which can be handled by eliminating outdoor ranging cats.

17. Chris Smith



MN

March 20, 3:10 pm

A rational conclusion. The proponents of TNR depend on alternative facts to further their agenda.

18. Gina Davis

Denver

March 20, 2:46 pm

Go PETA! TNR is the worst thing to ever happen to cats and wildlife. Cats suffer short, harsh lives on the street and while they battle the elements, dart through traffic, get chased by dogs, and succumb to diseases they continue to harass and kill local wild animals who are struggling to survive human encroachment and environmental destruction. No one wins by leaving homeless cats in a chronic state of homelessness. I am a strong opponent of trap-neuter-abandonment programs for domestic felines, and am thankful that there is a strong, sane organization educating people on the issue. PETA always stands up for all animals!!

19. Gail Mihocko

Accord, NY

March 20, 12:24 pm

Thank you, PETA, for a realistic description of the plight of our seriously overabundant outdoor cat population. I have been running a cat shelter for over 15 years and have witnessed first-hand the horrors to cats and wildlife via the practice of trap-neuter-release. I have seen the horrors of hoarding situations resulting in intense cruelty and suffering because people are constantly led to believe that humans should avoid euthanizing cats at all costs.

Domestic cats, *Felis catus*, are not wildlife and are not native anywhere on earth. They are domesticated just like dogs and farm animals and should not have unfettered freedom on the landscape. They should be kept as pets on one's property and provided lifelong care.

For people who think feral cats should be allowed to litter the landscape rather than being euthanized, where is your empathy for all the birds, small mammals, reptiles and insects they will maim and kill? An overabundance of outdoor free-roaming cats seriously upsets the balance between native prey and predators – fox, hawks, owls who also now need to compete with cats for the same prey.

TNR is a terribly unbalanced effort to control cat populations by people who apparently have no understanding of wildlife populations or just don't care.

As director of a cat shelter, I love having cats around, as do our compassionate adopters, but we have a strict policy of keeping them indoors, in catios, or leash-walked. That way we can be responsible pet owners while still respecting our beautiful and necessary wildlife.

20. Kimmarie

March 20, 11:22 am

For me, this sentence says it all: “The average life expectancy of an “outdoor cat” is about two to five years compared with 12 to 15 years for a cat who lives indoors.” If you care about cats, don’t support TNR.

21. amydonovan  
March 20, 11:17 am

No one wants to euthanize an animal, but sometimes there are worst things than a painless, peaceful death. Feral cats do not die of old age. They have hard lives full of starvation, danger and fear. As a cat lover, I would want cats to have humane dignified deaths, rather than suffer years of hunger, freezing weather, injuries, disease, and painful or violent deaths.

22. LucyP  
United States  
March 20, 11:12 am

All cats deserve a loving home. If this isn’t possible because they cannot be socialized to live with humans (as with some feral cats), a painless end is far preferable to what an existence on the streets inevitably holds: broken bones and internal hemorrhaging from attacks by predators and being hit by cars, untreated infections, lingering deaths from fatal and contagious diseases, starvation, succumbing to the elements, abuse by cruel people, and worse. I applaud PETA for taking a stand for cats’ welfare.

23. JJ McKibbon  
USA  
March 16, 6:23 pm

Many, many cases of rabies in feral cats lately.

<https://www.facebook.com/rabiesferalcats/>

24. Laurie Wittges  
Boise, ID & San Jose, CA  
March 16, 1:30 pm

I don’t think Daphna knows the realities of colony management & TNR.

As someone who has been doing TNR in Idaho & Calif for over 30 years – IT WORKS!

Yes, many of the animals die over time, some are targeted by sick, inhumane bullies, some succumb to cars and predators.

But managed colonies work! My friend & I have personally: \*Saved several friendlies who were released in colonies (rather than their owners finding a better solution),

\*We have euthanized ill cats

\*Nursed or done what was needed to save others

\*we have fostered hundreds of very adoptable kittens that were saved from being a feral the rest of their lives.

I have seen decreases in colonies that have been successfully TNR’d and managed.

But this thought the the colonies will magically “disappear” over time is ridiculous!

Just as in science we are taught “water will seek it’s own level” – there will always be critters that live in the environment, it is an ecosystem.

The colonies will maintain at a reasonable level, when a cat or two dies or goes missing there will usually be one to replace it in time. Each environment has a level of critters of all kinds that it will support. That will never change. If there aren’t feral cats then there will be an abundance of some other critters that may be less visible – but it is there none the less.

We must be good and responsible caretakers of the earth and its inhabitants and do what we can to improve the lives of the ones that can be saved and managing the colonies for other kitties that wish to remain feral. In many parts of the world, they have similar situations with street dogs, homeless dogs, and feral dogs. tnr has been proved as the best method of controlling these populations as well.

25. Millie Reddig

Boise, ID

March 16, 12:46 pm

It is my understanding that feral cats have been around forever but I never heard of them or saw any until 2008. I believe their current numbers are a human-caused problem due to so many owners not spaying/neutering and dumping and abandoning their cats. So I believe the solution should be humane and the responsibility of humans who care, not cat haters who blame the cats.

When I became aware of a feral colony where my daughter’s house was being built, I made a commitment to them and other feral cats. These cats were probably a mixture of true ferals and cats that had been abandoned. Their home was displaced when construction began. I trapped, neutered and returned the colony of around 14. I set up a shelter and feeding station. This was next to a sheep farm so the cats took advantage of the hay stacks, mice and out buildings there. But many more than that came to my feeding station. I have trapped and fixed over 200 cats that came on my daughter’s property. No doubt the majority belonged to people.

I agree with TNR and Alley Cat Allies’ philosophy on feral cats. The most humane answer is to TNR and allow them to live out their lives. They can survive quite well on their own, given the chance. I don’t understand why people get so upset over them killing birds – other species hunt and birds can fly, for God’s sake.

I worry constantly about cats getting hit by cars but most of the ones I see crossing streets belong to someone. Should we start euthanizing every roaming cat?

By spaying and neutering cats, health problems that are spread by mating and fighting are cut down. I’m not against euthanasia for sick or injured cats and have made that choice when necessary. But I believe trapping and killing every cat we see is irresponsible and was dreamed up by people who don’t want to work at a humane solution.

I think it is wrong to make statements about feral cats being a threat to human safety. The original colony I fixed 9 years ago still run away when I put out their food and water. The only danger I can conceive of is when a cat is cornered and that would most likely only occur if their life were threatened.

Those who are promoting blanket killing of ferals and strays need to search their hearts for their true motive – hatred and convenience are possibilities.

As a result of my growing involvement with feral and abandoned cats, I have taken in a number of cats. They all receive vet care, excellent food and shelter. They are divided into smaller groups according to personalities and space. Some are feral, some were orphaned, some were abandoned or dumped. Half of

them are in my art studio I donated to them. They have outdoor kennel space and are given free time in the yard because we put up a cat fence. They give us great pleasure with their different personalities and quirks. I can't begin to conceive of any of them not being allowed to live.

26. Peter J. Wolf  
Phoenix, AZ  
March 13, 12:31 pm

### The Greatest Danger to Outdoor Cats? This Ongoing Campaign of Misinformation and Scaremongering

Daphna Nachminovitch's recent guest post ("TNR Is Dangerous Both to Cats and to Other Animals," March 8) contained a number of misstatements that are likely to undermine chances for reasonable discussions on the subject of outdoor cats, thereby hampering efforts to craft sound public policy. Indeed, contrary to her various claims, the greatest danger to outdoor cats is the ongoing campaign of misinformation and scaremongering used (by PETA and others) to justify their killing in unprecedented numbers.

Nachminovitch states, for example, that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention "has warned that maintaining feral cat colonies can lead to an increase in the incidence of rabies transmission from cats to humans." In fact, data compiled annually by CDC show that the number of cats testing positive for the rabies virus has remained essentially unchanged since 1992, despite the fact that the popularity of trap-neuter-vaccinate-return (TNVR) programs has soared over this same period. Indeed, data posted on the agency's website reveal that, of the 49 human rabies cases reported in the U.S. since 1995, 10 were the result of dog bites that occurred outside of the U.S. while the remainder were traced either to wildlife or were of unknown origins. And according to CDC, just two cases of human rabies in the U.S. have been attributed to cats since 1960. The fact is, TNVR programs provide a significant public health benefit, vaccinating many thousands of cats who have, historically, remained largely "under the radar." The resulting herd immunity protects the cats, of course, but also provides a barrier between wildlife and the community.

When Nachminovitch blames outdoor cats for an outbreak of flea-borne typhus in Southern California, she fails to acknowledge other factors that might have been involved, including the area's recent drought. More important, she fails to acknowledge the most recent data from the California Department of Public Health demonstrating that the number of flea-borne typhus cases in 2016 was the lowest it's been in six years (just nine confirmed cases across the state) and significantly lower than the average number of cases from 2001 to 2010. Again, this dramatic reduction in flea-borne typhus cases comes alongside a considerable increase in TNVR efforts.

Based on a handful of graphic, largely anecdotal cases, Nachminovitch claims that "leaving [cats] outside to fend for themselves" is to seal their "ghastly fate." Evidence from large-scale, shelter-based TNVR programs tells a very different story, however: the vast majority of these cats are doing just fine. Of the nearly 2,500 cats admitted to a two-year program in one Alachua County, Florida, community, for example, only 16 (0.7%) were ineligible for the program due to health issues. And in San José, California, where more than 10,000 community cats were sterilized and returned over a four-year period as part of a shelter-based TNVR program, it was observed that "impounded feral cats are surprisingly healthy and have good bodyweight."

While Nachminovitch argues that TNVR is "not the answer to the homeless-cat crisis," she fails to offer anything in the way of an alternative. In fact, it's well understood that the "traditional" approach to managing community cats (i.e., impoundment followed, in most cases, by lethal injection), which has been used for more than 100 years in this country, has failed to produce any long-term population reduction. (Were this not the case, the current "crisis," as Nachminovitch calls it, simply wouldn't exist.) Shelter killing with no end in sight is not only demonstrably ineffective, it's also wildly unpopular and costly — the poster child for failed public policy. Targeted TNVR programs, on the other hand, offer a humane, effective,

and economical alternative.

Best Friends Animal Society operates more large-scale TNVR programs than any other organization in the country. And the successes we've seen, in our own programs and others, echo the findings of research studies demonstrating both the effectiveness of targeted sterilization programs to stabilize and reduce the population of cats at a local level, and the broad public support such programs enjoy.

Community cats are already out there in our neighborhoods, found virtually anywhere humans are found. TNVR programs are simply the most humane, effective, and economical response to this reality. These programs are sound public policy — better not only for the cats, but also for our public health, our animal shelter systems, and our communities as a whole.

Peter J. Wolf  
Cat Initiatives Analyst  
Best Friends Animal Society

27. Tamara  
Denver, Co  
March 12, 12:45 am

Wow, just wow.

I'm shocked how many people are just listening to the results of one article and not doing research on this before making comments . I'm shocked that the author of this article as well for not doing complete research

Millions of pets are euthanized every year. If you took all these cats out of an environment where someone is feeding them and try to rehome them they would end up getting euthanized. It's sad, but true.

TNR programs are not the best option, but in most cases it's either that or euthanize them. Not all cats and colonies like this end up with horrible medical issues. I have attended a TNR session and it has helped in many locations where at least the animals don't continue to reproduce and they are getting food & water. There is evidence to back this up and the real problem we have here is over pet population and why did these colonies get started in the first place. It's because of irresponsible pet owners in the first place. Fix the problem before it begins and don't chastise people for trying to do what ever they can to help.

28. TNR Researcher  
March 11, 8:35 pm

Here is glaring proof of how, as cat-hoarders so often and mindlessly respew, "Trap-Neuter-Release is the most effective means of managing feral cat populations. In fact, it is the only proven way to do so."

The residents of the UK who invented TNR in the 1950's have been relentlessly practicing that failed ideology **nationwide** for over 60 years now. And all they have managed to do with TNR is **DOUBLE** their vermin cat populations — from 4.1 million vermin cats in 1965 to 8.1 million vermin cats in 2015. (One site claims 10.5 million today!) And to help, all this time they are still killing them in shelters and legally shooting them in rural areas under their animal depredation-control laws. By foolishly hoping and praying that their very own TNR concept will reduce vermin cat populations someday they have now even driven their one and only **NATIVE** cat species to extinction with their invasive-species vermin "moggies" (feral house-cats) — with less than 19 "Scottish Wildcats" left in the whole world. (Along with 421 other species that they have already made extinct in the UK in the last 200 years — **OVER TWO SPECIES PER YEAR GONE FOREVER** just due to British cultural beliefs, practices, and values.) All the while they still insist that practicing their failed TNR policies will still save their "Scottish Wildcat" from being wiped from the



earth forever. You can kiss their “Scottish Wildcat” good-bye too now because 19 individuals is not even enough RNA diversity for a viable/successful species anymore — they are already EXTINCT. (Laughably ironic if it weren’t so pathetically, globally, and permanently sad. The population of the UK have made themselves into the ecological-laughingstocks of the whole world.)

Nice plan. TNR sure does work, doesn’t it!

You know that saying about doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result. The British have proved the failure of their vermin cat-insanity for over 60 years now. You too can be just as ecologically destructive, ignorant, and just as insane as the inbred mentalities of the *Toxoplasma gondii* brain-damaged moggie-licking British by practicing and promoting their failed-belief in their TNR concept.

Here too are some wonderful quotes from an article published by their most revered TNR promoters — the very “scientists” that TNR imbeciles always quote out of context to try to support their TNR insanity. Read it and weep.

“Virtually no information exists to support the contention that neutering is an effective long-term method for controlling free-roaming cat populations.”

“Free-roaming cats do not appear to have sufficient territorial activity to prevent new arrivals from permanently joining colonies.”

Levy, Julie K., David W. Gale, and Leslie A. Gale. “Evaluation of the Effect of a Long-Term Trap-Neuter-Return and Adoption Program on a Free-Roaming Cat Population.” *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* 2003, 222(1)

Or these comments from Julie K. Levy’s other study::

“In both counties, results of analyses did not indicate a consistent reduction in per capita growth, the population multiplier, or the proportion of female cats that were pregnant.”

“Implementation of the stage-structured model suggested that no plausible combinations of life history variables would likely allow for TNR to succeed in reducing population size, although neutering approximately 75% of the cats could achieve control (which is unrealistic), a value quite similar to results in the present study.”

Levy, Julie K; “Analysis of the impact of trap-neuter-return programs on populations of feral cats”

Pretty damning conclusion regarding the efficacy of TNR.

“No plausible combinations.... would likely allow for TNR to succeed...”.

In other words – It can’t work.

29. Carole Miller  
San Jose, CA  
March 11, 11:58 am

TNR (Trap-Neuter-Return) of feral cats is humane. It is NOT DANGEROUS!!! I do not agree with Dr. Michael W. Fox, who I’ve respected, that “...TNR programs are both a threat to public safety and harmful to native wildlife. Homeless cats are wary of and avoid human contact, less a threat to public safety than what we do encounter in our daily lives. Cat predation of wildlife is grossly misrepresented in flawed

scientific studies and overstated to satisfy others' ulterior motives.

I have TNR'd and advocated for the right to life of homeless cats for more than 40 years. They are victims of human irresponsibility. We fail to keep them out of harm's way. We lose or abandon them. We fail to get them spayed or neutered, so they reproduce litters of kittens for whom there are not enough good homes or open hearts. They become wary to survive, and their offspring, with no human contact, are unsocialized..feral. That alone is a reason to give them life, not condemn them to death. To euthanize is to relieve suffering. Killing an innocent animal of any species other than to relieve their immediate suffering from pain of injury or illness from which they cannot recover is inhumane and should be unacceptable to all of us. It is a condemnation of us, devoid of compassion. To kill an innocent, sentient animal to relieve "potential" future suffering, as PETA advocates, is unconscionable. That same warped way of thinking could apply to us. Would you kill your children? To kill these precious animals is also abhorrent.

I care for and deeply care about my feral colonies, my extended family. Most of you have adopted cats into your lives and family from this homeless population via a shelter, rescue group or directly off the street into your home. Meanwhile, your neighbor has lost or abandoned theirs back into the street. Sadly, it's a revolving door...

PETA has championed the rights of animals for decades; but their death wish and death squads for homeless cats, as well as homed pets, has made them the problem. Ingrid Newkirk and I were of like mind at one time, but she and her organization have become unhinged in their advocacy now to kill.

30. Becky

California

March 10, 9:16 pm

To all those saying TNR works, I say show me. The idea behind it was to get all of the cats in a colony fixed and after some number of years, due to attrition, there would be no more cats. That could be considered a success by the TNR standard. But I only hear about all of the people doing TNR. A colony with 5 cats, 50 cats. When does it ever get to 0 cats? Remember, these cats will likely die some awful death – and, no, it's not "nature" as some would suggest. TNR in small doses – attentive caregiver, small number of cats, resources to provide vet care should the need arise – okay. Largely popular TNR as seen today has become too much of a fun hobby for some. Is there genuine intent for a colony to become zero?

31. Kari Riley

Reno, Nv

March 10, 9:00 pm

Will you provide equal time to a blogger who has a varying view, Nat Geo? PETA has definite views on animal population control while those of us who have worked in the No Kill movement find there are other ways to address the issues. There are many misconceptions out there regarding feral cats. Let's give a fair and balanced dissemination of info and show the other side.

32. Paul

March 10, 4:58 pm

Watch this foster care nom. It's terrific. <https://www.youtube.com/c/KittenAcademy/live>

33. Carolyn Bibb  
Georgia  
March 10, 3:35 pm

Managed colonies of TNVR cats have a place in the eco-system. Just read this link about how Ascension Island eradicated their feral cats which caused an explosion in the rat population. In turn, these rats began eating bird eggs. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/science/2016/12/03/rat-explosion-threatens-sooty-terns-ascension-island-cat-cull/>

Cats are also commensal meaning that they go where humans go. Humans are an invasive species that has resulted in far more habitat loss than cats. At the end of the day we all want the same thing, fewer free roaming, unowned cats. TNVR is the only humane way to accomplish this.

34. Edwin Lesperance  
Kaneohe, Hawaii  
March 10, 3:28 pm

“The answer is to require that all cats be spayed and neutered, licensed, microchipped, and kept indoors.”

And how do you propose we do that with the estimated 300,000 ferals on Oahu alone?

35. Edwin Lesperance  
Kaneohe, Hawaii  
March 10, 3:26 pm

Great to pontificate about some of the problems we face, but what is your solution? Mass euthanasia? Massive cat shelters (that who is going to pay for)? Primary abandonment? You can't see the forest for the trees. Stopping TNR will only mean more cats will be there to suffer.

36. Marla Fyfe  
Missouri  
March 10, 3:19 pm

And... PETA's euthanasia rates are over 90%. As someone in rescue, I can attest that MANY "colonies" do NOT spread rabies, many are NOT feral. I'd be happy to read an article from an organization not intent on killing

37. Candy Niccolson  
California  
March 10, 1:58 pm

It is unfortunate that the author of this piece distorts the facts. TNR cats are not abandoned – each cat is evaluated after spaying or neutering to see if it can be socialized and made ready for adoption. Those cats that can't be socialized are put in a cat colony where they are fed but also vaccinated and when they get sick get vet care. This article does a disservice to all those working day and night to help this often forgotten

population.

38. MRoman

New Jersey

March 10, 1:44 pm

Most outdoor cats are lost or abandoned family pets and their offspring to even suggest to kill or implement feeding bans on lost and abandoned family pets speaks volumes.

Don't reinvent the wheel – Education is a wonderful thing then we wouldn't have to REPEAT, REPEAT, REPEAT about the success of TNR. There are excellent resources from animal organizations. Pass it on: Community Effort: Trap Neuter Return w colony management caregiver/s (caregivers evaluate new comers into the colony, if friendly, check for chips, post cat on lost & found if not claimed rehome.)

Some free roaming cats have homes and are considered indoor/outdoor pets but the majority of outdoor cats you see or don't see are lost and abandoned family pets and their offspring.

Cats are trapped by an experienced trapper and evaluated. Socialized family cats that are lost and abandoned are posted on NJ lost and found pets pages and local shelters. ALL socialized cats/kittens that were not reunited with their family are put up for adoption to be rehomed. Un-socialized cats are returned to their home outdoors in the care of a community caregiver/s.

Feeding bans don't work, it's inhumane to starve lost and abandoned family cats to death.

=REUNITE, REHOME, ADOPT -TNR -NO KILL

<http://animalallianceny.org/feralcats/about-community-cats-tnr/>

TNR EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES-How the successful organizations got started

<http://www.neighborhoodcats.org/>

Click on TNR Handbook 2nd Edition:

<http://www.neighborhoodcats.org/resources/books-videos-more>

<http://www.alleycat.org/about/history/>

TNR GRANTS

<http://www.sawanetwork.org/grant-sources.html>

<http://www.state.nj.us/health/vph/animal-control/feral-cats/>

<https://www.facebook.com/ASPCApr/photos/a.101497070996.101547.98324655996/10152194417395997/?type=3&theater>

<http://www.state.nj.us/health/animalwelfare/images/twocat.gif>

<http://www.animalallianceny.org/>

[http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/OPI/Reports\\_to\\_the\\_Legislature/animalwelfareforcereport.pdf](http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/OPI/Reports_to_the_Legislature/animalwelfareforcereport.pdf)

Great job Senator Greenstein! Please call or email the Senator & let her know if you approve of her bill! As per Pet Watch New Jersey: New bill affecting shelter animals introduced

S3019 – An Act concerning the regulation of animal shelters, pounds, and other animal holding facilities, supplementing Title 4 of the Revised Statutes and chapter 9 of Title 54A of the New Jersey Statutes, and amending various parts of the statutory law.

S3019 Establishes additional requirements for operation and oversight of animal shelters, pounds, kennels

operating as shelters or pounds, and veterinary holding facilities.

Introduced by Linda R. Greenstein, as Primary Sponsor

2/27/2017 Introduced in the Senate, Referred to Senate Economic Growth Committee

31 pages

HTML Format

[http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/2016/Bills/S3500/3019\\_11.HTM](http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/2016/Bills/S3500/3019_11.HTM)

PDF Format

[http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/2016/Bills/S3500/3019\\_11.PDF](http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/2016/Bills/S3500/3019_11.PDF)

Please contact Senator Greenstein to offer comments and to thank her for caring about animals in New Jersey's animal shelters!

Her legislative page:

<http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/members/BIO.asp?Leg=329>

39. Katherine Lee

Pennsylvania, United States

March 10, 12:37 pm

Please read the following article with more data basis:

[http://m.huffpost.com/us/entry/us\\_58bc48abe4b02b8b584dfcfb...](http://m.huffpost.com/us/entry/us_58bc48abe4b02b8b584dfcfb...)

Please read articles with enlightenment before fuming animals (aside from humans, of course) are better off dead than living where they were born. An animal born outside is not 'abandoned' when returned to its' prior location. Infected with rabies? How much research have you done on this subject, exactly? Feral cats are afraid of humans. When TNR'd (also now called TNVR'd for lack of basic human understanding) means Trap-Neuter-VACCINATE-return. Feral cats are vaccinated for rabies under law at the time of their spay/neuter. Many people also have them tested for FIV and Felv before the procedure so having it in the colony is unlikely (and neither of those are transmissible to humans). The Bubonic Plague outbreak arose hundreds of years ago, when they, once again, tried killing off outdoor cats in waves, you know, out of pure 'love' for animals. People were infected by the rodent population explosion that carried it from fleas. If someone got it from a cat, you can thank the mouse it ate that thankfully didn't breed in the walls of your home. Birds? Please see the above article cited. Also, there are numerous studies done where they wiped out cat populations on islands and watched disease and other populations sky-rocket out of 'human' control, you know, because we have to control everything. On Toxoplasmosis? Cats get infected from infected prey, you know, the ones you're worried about 'protecting' from cats, although birds of prey routinely eat other birds, rodent populations haven't suffered or been added to as many endangered species lists as all the 'predators' humans have been pushing to extinction. Are birds and rodents extinct in the UK, where cats have lived thousands of years? What about Asia where Asian Wildcats are from, or Africa, where African Wildcats are from, ancestors of today's domestic housecats? There are still birds and rodents there, aren't there? Now back to Toxoplasmosis, cats are only infected through eating infected prey. Cats can only give it to humans if you EAT infected material, like eating a sandwich after scooping an infected litter box and not washing your hands first. There are many other ways to get Toxoplasmosis that don't include cats. Please see the CDC's article on the subject, officially, and please read it in its' entirety if you want to act completely informed. Any other misleading data you want to fling around please feel free to challenge with hard, true facts. I'll be sure to look them up.

The truth here is, TNVR workers aren't paid taxpayer dollars, and aren't funded by the state like shelters are to kill animal 'throw-aways'. They spend their own earned money sterilizing and vaccinating cats on their own, that did not 'abandon' because they were born outside. Many times cats are worked with for months to rehabilitate and socialize them to adopt themselves or to others. Kittens are almost always fostered and adopted out whenever possible. They are fed so they stay healthy and are less likely to get sick and will hunt for less prey. Feeding cats does not 'bring more cats' if they weren't already out there in the first place. They don't morph from thin air. TNVR saves space for animals needing homes in shelters without killing all others that 'don't fit' in the shelter system's capacity. TNVR has been proven to work in many cities, with

‘cooperation’ and ‘education’ of its’ many misinformed citizens. Good day to you all.



40. Eric Carr  
United States  
March 10, 11:18 am

Killing a healthy animal is never the most ethical choice.

Many TNR’ed cats turn out to be adoptable. The rescue program I work with (Project M.E.O.W. in West Philadelphia) saves hundreds of cats per year. My own cat Stormy was a TNR case whose trapper noticed that he was friendly enough to be put into a foster home. He’s been a wonderful companion for a few years now, and helps me socialize new foster cats that come through the system.

TNR, along with fostering the adoptables, absolutely works, as anyone who’s spent any time in the field knows.

41. Don Schulz  
Arizona  
March 10, 11:08 am

“The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has warned that maintaining feral cat colonies can lead to an increase in the incidence of rabies transmission from cats to humans.” But a check of CDC data going back to 2003 shows there has not been a single case of human rabies attributed to cats, feral or otherwise. “One study estimates that free-roaming cats kill up to 24 billion wild animals and birds every year” but the study also states that the overwhelming majority of them are rats and mice. Tens of billions of rats and mice allowed to thrive will produce hundreds of billions of rats and mice. What “ethical treatment” does PETA have for eliminating disease-carrying rodents?

42. Apeil  
Tuscaloosa AL  
March 10, 8:22 am

Wow. TNR is the most humane way to help feral cats, significantly decrease disease and reproduction of hard, short lives on the street, and increases their lifespan and improve health. How can you go against TNR? We can find something imperfect and negative about anything!! But to go against something that keeps shelter numbers down, helps the ferals and humans is outrageous and senseless!!!!

43. Teddy Gingerich  
Arizona  
March 10, 8:13 am

Properly applied, TNR is a vital part of animal care. We will never rid the world of feral cats (for whom humans are to blame), so the wisest course is to sterilize as many as possible. Killing them simply opens up a void for more unfixed animals to move into, as well as being unnecessarily cruel. By fixing (and vaccinating) a stable population, we maintain healthy animals who will not reproduce. In a perfect world, there would be no strays, as their humans would not abandon them to the fate of the streets. As for the “cats

kill every wild thing they come in contact with” argument, it’s not applicable to maintained community colonies. They are fed, so they don’t have to look for food elsewhere. They are also more likely to look for food on the ground (mice and rats) – things we would rather not have around our homes. Bird populations are more impacted by climate change (which changes their food supply), encroachment into their land with buildings, and the increased use of pesticides, which kills their food supply.

For an excellent example of properly maintained community colonies, look to The Happiest Place on Earth: Disneyland. When the park was built, workers became aware of numerous strays living in the new buildings and construction areas. Rather than try and kill them, Walt let them stay. Where there are theme parks, there is food (and trash). Where there is food, there are mice. Walt only wanted an imaginary mouse associated with his park, so the cats stayed, and the real mice weren’t a problem. Now there is a well-known colony, cared for and loved. They are given vet care, fixed as necessary (new cats show up), and if kittens are found, they are adopted out when old enough, and the mother spayed. They have a website and Instagram page as well. As I said, in a perfect world, they would all have homes. Since we humans are apparently not decent enough to NOT throw away our pets like trash, the least we can do is care for the ones we can in a humane way. Which, BTW, does not mean PETA’s “kill them all” way.

44. Katherine  
Australia  
March 10, 6:14 am

I have 2 rehomed/rescue cats who are spayed who live with me. They are locked up at night (to avoid night hunting or fighting) but roam free during the day. This ‘roaming’ is actually sleeping on back deck or garden. I actually think locking a cat up 24/7 is harsh and unfair. I also think that the suggestion that letting them out is cruel, is just ridiculous. My cats are both now 13 and 15 so we are doing something right.

45. Janie  
March 10, 12:57 am

A huge national group like PETA, which successfully raises lots of money every year, shouldn’t be bragging about spaying/neutering an average of just 23 animals per day over the last 16 years...then gripe about the (more effective) work that others do.

46. Jenny  
United States  
March 9, 11:15 pm

Feral Cats are truly wild animals..and can not be kept inside the house.. they dont respond well to being “locked up” inside a house.. they actually will continuously throw themselves at windows.. trying to get out.. I had one here for a few weeks after he got fixed.. he DIDNT want to be inside.. I open the door and he ran out as fast as he could.. I leave food and water for him.. He doesnt deserve to be put down.. he is a good kitty, just not a tame one. he would shred my hand if I tried to pet him.. while its true that wildlife should not be attacked by these kitties.. remember, they also hunt mice, rats and other “undesirables” as well as birds and animals we dont want hunted..

47. Amy Anthony

Troy, MI  
March 9, 11:12 pm

Global warming has been acknowledged by the science community as an explanation for unprecedented habitat alterations which then cause animal hardship. Why do the bird lovers never consider its role in changing bird populations and migratory patterns (which would make it seem like some are missing). Birds go where their sustenance is. For example, if there's a drought, they won't stay. Like bears and fish, they are likely struggling with environmental impacts. But their advocates routinely blame cats and want death. Very peculiar. It's like they've been brainwashed.

48. Anna Bartels  
Georgia  
March 9, 10:00 pm

Good article that addresses many issues of feral or outdoor cats. Wildlife has NO chance when there is any cat around be it a TNR cat or other. As a wildlife rehabilitator, most of my animal patients are cat injured or caught. The majority of victims die. It is sooo sad to have pieces of a bird or turtle torn off their body and someone (who owns the cat or says it is a TNR cat) says, can you fix this? You cry and scream inside when you see the torn body of the victim and it is still alive. Cats are hunters and killers and very detrimental to all small wildlife. Cats also face getting hit by cars, coyotes prey on them quite a bit. many TNR cats cannot be retrapped as they get trap wise. It is sad when any life ends but TNR is NOT the answer. Responsible pet ownership is and keeping them indoors for safety is much more humane to them and wildlife.

49. JS  
Ky  
March 9, 9:53 pm

Hmm...I notice that this is written by a PETA associate. PETA is known for notoriously high kill rates. And, furthermore, this article is factually incorrect, as studies show that feral/semi-feral cats in colonies can have similar quality (and span) of life to indoor cats. I've personally seen several outdoor cats live 10+ years, and one who died of natural causes at the ripe age of 18.

50. Robert Moats  
Mich. USA  
March 9, 9:51 pm

So instead of TNR, you capture and kill them and this is more humane. People really agree with this, so what should we do with the homeless, if they can't find homes shall we kill them? When can anyone say that like any animal in the wild should be killed? What makes a feral cat any different than any other wild feline? When has PETA decided what lives are more important than any other? Are you saying now that cows and pigs were breed for food, so it's okay to kill them? I've lost all respect for PETA!

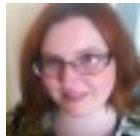
51. Kelly Parks  
United States  
March 9, 8:56 pm



My neighbor and I have been doing TNR for the cats in our neighborhood, I can assure you that these cats are fed, watered, sheltered and when ill trapped and taken in for medical attention. I have contacts with other trapper/colony care takers and we all invest our hearts, time and money into our colonies to see that they are healthy and happy. These animals are not abandoned they are cared for and given a second chance. In fact cats are the killers of wildlife PETA claims they would not need people to provide food for them, they would be healthy like the larger truly wild cats are. I have had colony cats that have lived to be 10 yrs old and enjoyed their lives as free roamers that were cared for and loved. PETA needs to check their facts about TNR, rabies and the good that is done by people who truly care about life and not just killing to temporarily solve a problem.

52. Tracy Reinert  
Stratford NJ  
March 9, 8:33 pm

I am just stunned by not only this article but also by the ignorance of some of the comments above. TNR is an amazing answer to helping homeless cats. I have 2 colonies that I care for every single day. The adoptable cats were adopted out to homes, while the others were TNR'd. They are fed daily and live in safe areas with clean shelters. They wait for me every single night to come with their food and some greet me at my truck. They all have names and deserve the right to live a full life just like every other cat. It is NOT their fault that they were dumped by some human who no longer wanted them, or whatever their circumstance may be, it is NOT their fault they have no home and have to live outside. It is our job to keep them safe outside and well fed and cared for and my babies are just that. I do understand that not all cats outside are being well cared for, but therefore in my situation one should not say TNR is wrong or TNR does not work when clearly TNR does work and TNR is the clear humane answer!



53. tequila  
United States  
March 9, 8:32 pm

If you want proof TNR works, please visit [Tinykittens.com](http://Tinykittens.com).  
Over two hundred managed cats from three colonies.

54. Ragga  
March 9, 8:31 pm

If TNR is so inhumane and cruel, what is taking a life then? Is it really okay for us to kill millions of cats just because they are "bothering" us?

55. Sierra  
March 9, 6:17 pm

Well, it seems that PETA is against any animal living in cages, but is absolutely okay with the fact that a cat should be locked up at home (which is nothing more than a bigger cage if you think about it). What kind of logic is that?

Yes, cats on the streets die sometimes in agony, does PETA also plan on locking in homes every animal in the world that lives in the wild because they do not have the divine help of humans to die peacefully?

Maybe we should follow the logic of the article and euthanize every living being because without our interfering they would probably have a natural death (and a natural life), which is obviously unfathomable here.

Cats have been domesticated for thousands of years, but until very recently they were mostly left to fend for themselves. They didn't have humans to feed them and decide if they should live or die depending on the nature of their "social" status amongst us.

The problem is not the cats, it's the irresponsible humans that let their cats reproduce ("just once") and give the kittens to strangers like you pick your box of cereals at the mall.

WE are the reason there are so many of them, instead of punishing them with "humanely" death and house-sized cages for something they are not responsible for, WE should be the ones taking our responsibilities like real adults.

Besides, experience has shown many, many, many times that the ones who complain are often the ones who actually do nothing. You want less cats in the streets? Help spay/neuter strays and feral and domestic cats, tell all the people around you to do the same, volunteer in shelters, start fostering cats, stop letting your cat reproduce, say no to ANY kind of breeding (cat breeds = animal abuse!).

Most feral cats colonies are very well supervised. When a cat is sick or hurt volunteers will catch them a second time to take them to the vet, AND humanely euthanize them if they can't be treated or saved.

Cats are in no way abandoned. In fact, they are often given more care and attention and love (and better food) than most basic owner will give their own animal.

Studies have shown AND proved that TNR is way more effective than strict eradication, because when a cat disappears for whatever reason, another cat/animal will take its territory. Whereas with several cats in one place, new ones are far less likely to stay, and the population is better controlled.

Country like Australia eliminate cats because they just don't spay them. They have done the same before with kangaroos and even rabbits! This is pretty obvious to me that their method is very ineffective...

56. Stacey Lynn Diodato

United States

March 9, 6:11 pm

All my TNR kitties come inside when they get fixed they were all strays that I fed and have raised in my home as a part of my family. I then do my best to find them loving homes but I do not put them back out once they are fixed.

57. Kathi Tincher

Michigan

March 9, 5:42 pm

I've been doing TNR for over six years now and it DOES work. A feral cat is always released in a managed colony where it's fed, watered and given shelter. And most people that do TNR like me will usually find inside homes for adoptable ones, but sometimes feral cats need to go back to their home.. outside. As far as rabies being transformed to a human there are hardly any known cases in the US. Cats are normally going to run away from rabid animals such as raccoons, bats and foxes. TNR keeps 24 kittens from being born a year to each female and keeps euthanasia down in shelters. As far as life expectancy goes they are going to live two or five years whether they are trapped or not. At least they aren't producing more but instead are given a chance to live out their lives fat and happy. I will always be their voice as long as I'm here on this earth.

58. Adrienne  
March 9, 5:41 pm

I couldn't disagree more with this article. If tnr was such a bad thing to do animal shelters and rescues would not offer this. Most of the cats that are in a tnr colony are too fetal to find a home which is why tnr is around . Humans as a species like to blame other species for the problems they cause around the world. Humans poison, destroy and kill off anything they find and are like a virus to this world. Peta how about instead of preaching about tnr is bad , vegan is good anything else is bad and killing pets with a 97% Rate start educating people on how to stop others from destroying the places wild animals live and help stop the poaching and senseless trophy hunting.

59. Chiitra  
Netherlands  
March 9, 5:11 pm

TNR works and isn't killing cats but saving many. It's a lot of nonsense, which can be easily turned around;

1. Neuter cats, means less or no kittens, means less cats, means less fighting.
2. Neutering saves male cats from fighting till death or being severely injured, and females from having difficult pregnancies and kittens dying.
3. When cats have adopted to living in the wild, it's almost impossible to keep them inside and houstrain them, so adopting and keeping them in the house isn't really a option. And it can cause them a lot of stress.
4. Cats always have been smart, and lived outdoors most of the time. They are able to catch their own food and adapt well when dealing with bad weather conditions most of the time.
5. There are not many cases known of cats getting infected with rabies or infecting people with diseases.
6. They catch mice and rats which can save our crops and will prevent pests. Domestic cats are not so much vicious hunters
7. There have always been colonies of feral cats (and dogs). Yes they catch a lot of birds, but by TNR there are less cats so less killing. Situation controlled.
8. Severe punishment for people who mistreat any animal or dump them, to prevent this to happen.
9. Common sense...

60. Lisa Walcott-Moreley  
Georgia  
March 9, 5:10 pm

Ideally every cat should have an indoor home and a human to love and spoil him. Unfortunately, we do not live in an ideal world. There simply aren't enough homes available. TNR is much better than killing the poor cats. I personally have adopted ferals, one of which was so wild it took a year of indoor life before I could pet her. But for all cats to have a home, every person would have to adopt something like forty five cats. TNR humanely reduces the cat population without killing beautiful cats.

61. Adrienne  
Austin, Texas  
March 9, 4:55 pm

I'm incredibly disappointed to see this article. You think that PETA is truly looking out for cats? They've

only spayed/neutered 139,000 dogs or cats in 16 years? The city of Austin's programs s/n more than 60,000 in just nine years, without the millions PETA receives every year in donations. If PETA really cares to address the plight of homeless cats, they'd put their money where their mouths are and get into communities that need free or low-cost resources/services — and education! I've never seen them around in any of the volunteering I've done. But sure, they care so much.

62. Sam wood  
Wisconsin  
March 9, 4:52 pm

Awesome job. The TNR advocates hate when truth and facts slap them in the face. We need to stay on top of this epidemic before we are in the same boat Australia is in.

63. Bob  
United States  
March 9, 4:42 pm

I'd like to know why people defend PETA

64. Shawn Flynn, Author of "The Kitty: Who Rescued Me After I Rescued Him"  
Connecticut  
March 9, 3:49 pm

I completely disagree with the author of this article! She clearly doesn't understand what TNR is. In most cases, once a feral cat reaches a certain age, there is no hope of ever domesticating it. TNR is for feral cats, not stray cats. Anyone who has ever had any interaction with a stray cat and a feral cat know the difference between the two. Stray cats can be rehabilitated and socialized, in most cases adult feral cats can not. Well managed TNR colonies for feral cats are far more humane than simply putting them to death.

65. Brie  
Reno NV  
March 9, 3:45 pm

TNR is for un-doptable feral cats, not social cats. Feral cats will always exist from human error. TNR gives them an easier way of life and a chance at life. No cats are released to uncertainty. They have people who care for them. No kill is the humane way. Many lost or abandoned cats have been reunited with their families because of being trapped for TNR. This article is a bias opinion, PETA promotes killing feral cats. Educate properly ,not on a false , one sided, inhumane view. PETA's death toll for 2016 is astonishing. All healthy dogs and cats

Research PETA first.

If e had no feral cats we would be inundated with rats etc. We all can coexist and that's proven.

66. Lori Reynolds  
PA

March 9, 3:33 pm

As long as a feral colony has a caretaker and the cats are altered, vaccinated and provided proper food, water and shelter I have no problem with TNR. Whoever wrote this article obviously knows little on the subject. Since when does FIP cause swollen paws with pus? BTW, PETA is a joke. They have a very high euthanasia rate at their shelters.

67. jenn Bakal  
Pittsburgh, PA  
March 9, 3:06 pm

hi Daphna, your short bio says:

“Under her leadership, PETA has spayed and neutered more than 139,000 dogs and cats since 2001.”

how many cats and dogs has PETA euthanized in that time?

68. Jen Newman  
United States  
March 9, 2:59 pm

Apparently those of that support PETA need to do some research. TNR is indeed the only humane solution to the devastating feral cat population. You all need to know that when cats are TNR'd they were caught in their area they call home. Believe it or not, they are being cared for or they would not be alive. They are spayed/neutered, vaccinated and returned to their home (colony). They are fed daily by the ones that had the kind heart to trap them in the first place. In over 30 years I have successfully TNR'd over 200 cats. And I have had many that have lived well over 10 years. This baloney of them destroying wildlife...get your facts. It is us humans that are destroying mother nature by building on what used to be their homes. The colonies I manage live with other wildlife, including birds! They even “share” the food I leave for the cats every day. And whether you want to believe it or not the birds fly away once they are done eating. I just can not believe people support PETA. PLEASE everyone...do your research and see what PETA does with the donated money that you thought was going to help animals. As you can see here...they rather euthanize than fix the problem which TNR is a proven fact! I think the stray dogs are going to become the next story in TNR. Stray dogs everywhere and the destruction and harm they cause...why are you focusing on cats? Dog will get a human sicker 100x's faster than a cat. And so sad to say, but I always manage to see a dog that was hit by a car everyday compared to a cat...maybe once every 6 months! We just need to let Mother Nature run it's course. But we also need to make spay & neutering free or affordable to everyone. Most importantly there needs to be a law and punish all of the supposed owners that leave their cats & dogs behind when they move! I have 7 now from surrounding neighbors that moved and left the cats locked inside the house! This is not the cats fault they are homeless. It is the humans for not taking care of their pets! So heartbreaking.

69. Becky Steinmetz  
Cleveland, Ohio  
March 9, 2:45 pm

It is a shame that you do not have the facts and only take the word of a group of people who would rather kill healthy animals. TNR does work and is safe and humane for cats. Cats have been a wild animal in all communities for hundreds of years. We just domesticated them in the last hundred. Most have caregivers who provide the food and shelter. Others live fine on their own for many happy and healthy years. Of course

there are always exceptions and those are what this group focused on, not the majority of the successful and happy TNR cats.

70. Helana  
Florida  
March 9, 2:28 pm

This is for every person who thinks PETA is doing cats a favor by opposing TNVR: Why should cats die because people are irresponsible? Why are you so lazy as to do nothing about that irresponsibility? Why have you no empathy and compassion for animals abandoned by people? You judge as do many others, but you do nothing to improve the situation. So typical of PETA supporters.

71. Bob's mom  
Massachusetts  
March 9, 1:46 pm

I would like to ask ALL of the people who agree with this article to ask yourselves 1) who do you propose will be the ones to trap and humanely euthanize the cats? 2) when do you propose to educate people about spaying your cats if you don't have a massive spay/neuter project in place? 3) Who is going to go door to door to tell each feeder that they cannot feed cats anymore because they will be killing them? 4) who is going to figure out these neglectful owners who are dumping cats to suffer the consequences? Personally, I would be ok with the last one but no one is doing it. I am obviously a proponent of TNR because I see that it works. I have also saved so many friendly cats because I am out there feeding. I meet people and talk to owners and I even aid in helping the owned cats get fixed. I will NEVER be the volunteer trapper if I am going out there to trap and euthanize so you can count me out in helping your goal. If you believe in just trapping and killing because you think it is better than a life on the street aka, the cat's home, then you are actually just satisfying your own needs, not theirs. You THINK it is better, but it isn't necessarily. You cannot just assume you are correct without seeing all sides. Yes, we have to care about the sick and dying ones. We take IN the friendly ones. The only ones that are returned are the ones that are not socialized to people. They are protected by the laws so people who poison and kill them should be and are punished. Their selfish actions are like any other crime. Think about the cats and kittens that YOU Save by focusing on working with humane groups to spaying these outdoor cats so there is less suffering and more education. DO something caring rather than just talk, talk, talk about killing cats for "their own good" afterall, sometimes humans provide terrible homes for cats and yes, I am judging, but I have witnessed that with my own eyes. So, these articles that bash cat advocates for getting cats fixed and fed are not helping anyone, just setting up cats, and humans for a ton of disappointment and acceptance.

72. Gina Davis  
Denver  
March 9, 1:40 pm

Thank you, PETA! PETA always stands up for animals, even when other organizations have shunned them. I remember reading about PETA being upset when a fly was swatted, and I'm vegan because of all the things I've read and seen on their web site. If TNR was good for cats and wildlife, if it helped animals in any way, PETA would be promoting it. Euthanasia is sad, but it is humane and dignified, unlike death on the streets. People who don't want cats euthanized should be lobbying for laws requiring cat owners to spay and neuter, banning the sale of cats and kittens at pet shops, and helping people in their community get their cats

sterilized. Spending resources to instead abandon animals on the streets is not only stupid, but cruel.

73. Craig Shapiro  
United States  
March 9, 1:35 pm

I couldn't agree more. My girls are 15 and 13 have been insiders their entire lives. They are happy, healthy and safe.

74. Julie  
SC  
March 9, 1:34 pm

<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/09/150901-feral-cats-birds-animals-science-nation/>

This Opinion is not appropriate for all outdoor cats. The cats I care for in our awesome community are well cared for and healthy and love life, as are all of the other volunteers in my community that care for their colonies appropriately. If a cat is found to be good inside a home then they are adopted out. Not all cats that are great want to be inside a home. It all depends on the cat. This broad stroke opinion is just that... This is not a fair or balanced opinion.

75. Dottie Berzins  
USA  
March 9, 1:30 pm

If TNR is inhumane and unkind, what about those animals that peta "saves" by killing them. Better dead than owned? I bet if you asked those cats who died in "shelters" and other killing places, they would choose life every time. Managed cat colonies can do wonderfully well. And, where I live, the hawks take more prey than cats do. Life is precious, all life.

76. Laura Borders  
March 9, 1:20 pm

One final note: here in rabies-endemic Georgia, raccoons are the main rabies vector. You have much more to fear from those guys on your back porch. I cannot recall a case of cat rabies in Metro Atlanta for my 30 years here. You may want to check the stats but rabies is not an issue with TNR cats here.

Further, these stray cats cited in the instances are strays, I don't see anyone saying these are specifically TNR cats. They have tipped ears. Should be easy to tell. Let's be specific.

As for killing them being preferable to life in a colony, sorry, no. And you can't have my ferals either. They live a good life and I, as all the colony tenders I know, am only concerned with providing the best possible care I can at my own expense. I hand-raise kittens too that have lost their mothers and place them in safe homes. Guess you'd like to kill their mommas too, as they are always ferals. Nope, not mine.

77. Sara Pike  
Grantham, PA  
March 9, 1:18 pm

Colony caretaking is an essential part of TNR – this method does not include the abandonment of cats. Please research the method before making these claims. Alley Cat Allies or The Nobody's Cats Foundation can provide information on the holistic nature of this work.

78. Laura Borders  
United States  
March 9, 1:13 pm

I cannot disagree with the author more. I have no doubt she has found these instances of disease and injury in TNR colony cats. They do not have the life expectancy of a cat that lives indoors: that is obvious. The goal of TNR is to provide a life along with a lifetime of care. That's what my cats get. Disease and injury come to indoor cats too. As for animal cruelty, as long as there is a stray cat, or dog, in the world, there will be abuse. That is a larger issue.

And there is the larger issue. What will you do with all the stray cats that exist now, on your way to your nirvana of all cats indoors, etc? What is your plan for a humane life for all the strays right now? I don't see one word about that. If TNR isn't good enough for you then what is YOUR answer to the problem right now?

As for your data, there are other studies that refute cats as the primary cause of extermination and extinction, citing the human hand as the larger killer of everything from insects to mammals. We can Lexus/Nexus that all day long.

I want to know: what is your answer to what to do now with all the stray cats in the world? I think you need to get out in the field and get your hands dirty. Trap a cat and save its life. The life expectancy of an unfixated, unvaccinated cat is about three years. I'll be waiting for your answer.

79. Judy Price  
United States  
March 9, 12:55 pm

There will always be people who think that only humans have a right to walk the earth and have some sense of freedom. Being locked inside forever is safer for kids too—no risk of car accident, sports injury, kidnapping, school shooting. Cats deserve the right to the outdoors as much as people, and dogs (never see the same recommendation for dogs) and cats are even more driven to have that freedom. TNR is NOT about abandoning cats after they are trapped and fixed; responsible people make sure there are colony caregivers. Outdoor cats can have a great life. Whereas cats incarcerated inside a house forever develop the 'modern American' diseases such as high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity, hyperthyroidism. It's clear to me that the lifespan averages here are very skewed, but even IF outdoor cats didn't live as long, there is the very important consideration of quality versus quantity. If I had 20 years of living inside my house only compared to 10 years of being able to have the freedom to go out in my yard and roam the mountains, I would choose the 10 years EVERY TIME. Maybe the author would not, so I suggest she commit to staying inside forever in order to stay safe.



80. Silvia



March 9, 12:38 pm

While my comment is in moderation, and probably will not pass... please visit #PETAKills on Facebook and read.

81. Debbie McClendon

Ft Worth Tx

March 9, 12:38 pm

I have a couple of feral cat colonies, one being 24-26 cats, all TNRd. My colony cats are very loved and cared for, they are healthy and I notice immediately if one is sick or injured and get them medical care. They have shelter and are in a safe gated area where they have lived for many years. Outdoors might not be the best place for them but they do not want for anything and are very protected from the weather. They love me and follow my car when I drive in to feed them. You are irresponsible to say they should be dead. I've even worked with some of them and they are living in homes now. So please quit making blanket comments like this because it's just not true

82. Tamara. Whitaker

United States

March 9, 12:36 pm

Please educate yourself before accepting what PETA promotes TNR works. For every vet that agreed with PETA there is 5 that will promote and practices TNR.

Check out the stats on TNR and the people and vets who practice TNT

83. Barbara DeGrande

Grand Prairie, Texas

March 9, 12:21 pm

While the outdoor life is often much harsher than an indoor life, that is not really the option for these cats, but statistics show that programs which trap/neuter/vaccinate and release to loving colony caregivers can give the cats a good quality of life. The high kill rates at many shelters prior to entering into a TNR program have seen large reductions in killing, lower intakes, and high live release rates for cats after TNR. These are lives saved. Additionally in our own TNR program, we often find field kittens that can be funneled into adoption programs and have found homes for dozens ourselves. We at Grand Prairie CAT CREW are committed to ending homelessness for cats and respect their lives. We have caregivers who get them vet care when needed and we support these compassionate people. Many of our caregivers offer these cats a secure outdoor area with shelters, twice daily food, and lots of love. Killing is not the answer.

84. Joanne Kaufman

Ft. Lauderdale, FL

March 9, 12:14 pm

This is an incredibly biased and misinformed opinion piece. The TNR movement is predicated on the fact that a responsible caretaker is managing the colony, which involves monitoring for medical conditions as well as feeding. It would be most appropriate if the TNR people added an “M” for management. My colony cats are well-fed and accordingly, eat side by side with visiting ducks. They don’t attack people — on the contrary, they are afraid of human content and keep their distance. I have had to trap cats and have them euthanized or medically treated because I won’t tolerate a suffering animal. Cats are homeless through no fault of their own. Some were abandoned; others were dumped for a variety of nonsensical reasons. The laws on animal cruelty and abandonment need to be strictly enforced rather than killing cats on a massive scale. Besides, since cats are territorial, if the cats in a particular colony are all killed (how barbaric), new ones will come in to take over the space. PETA has a terrible track record with domesticated animals and their disdain has poisoned the debate.



85. Debra Hoffmann

United States

March 9, 12:12 pm

I’m sorry, but this is absolutely not the case. I’m mom to 19 cats. They are all rescues, all indoor cats (they have a catio that is enclosed and a screened porch). We do TNR. If I find “friendly” cats, I work to get them into good homes. They are neutered, treated medically for any issues they have, and I find a foster or find placement, if possible. If they are non social to people, they are neutered, tattooed and ear tipped. I care for my TNR’d cats, and many have been with me for years. It should also be noted that when we moved from one state to another, I trapped the last of the old colony I had cared for and took him with us. He now lives an indoor life. He isn’t social to me, but he is to my other cats, somewhat. While it would be wonderful for every non human friendly cat to have someone to work with them and give them a home whether or not they come around, this doesn’t happen often. My TNR’d old colony had a fairly good long life. They ate well, got vet care, and had shelters. They also hunted the mice on the property that the store owner who’s lot they backed was grateful for.

TNR’d cats do not decimate populations of wild species, wild species are decimated due to humans invading habitats, development, and loss of habitat.

Killing cats-which is what PETA believes in, by the way-is never the answer.

86. Catherine A Scarano

United States

March 9, 12:05 pm

I have done TNR for over a decade and I can assure you that my colonies are well cared for, neutered, vaccinated ,vetted when injured or sick and have warm shelters.

It is statistically impossible to euthanize all feral or dumped community cats. If cats are removed and euthanized other cats will eventually fill the vacuum and those cats are most likely not neutered or vaccinated so you are back to where you started. Also it is very hard for Animal Control to trap all cats due to lack of resources. The only solution to the problem of community cats is an affordable spay/neuter program and townships that have a TNR program that brings together Animal Control and the grass roots TNR groups to work the problem together. It’s a numbers problem that is not solved by black and white thinking.

87. Paula Renee

USA

March 9, 12:00 pm

I share my home with two cats who had been picked up as strays. When Mochi was first found by animal control officers, he had a nasty wound on one of his back legs, most likely from being attacked by a dog. To this day, Mochi's leg gives him trouble, and he sometimes stumbles when he tries to run or jump. The "great outdoors" is not great for cats—keep them inside!

88. Evelyn

Cincinnati, Ohio

March 9, 11:30 am

I support TNR, have seen it's effectiveness. Much of what is in this article is provably untrue! I've worked in cat rescue for about 15 years. The rescue group I work with adopts out about 350-400 cats & kittens each year, I foster dozens in my home every year & often socialize scared, feral kitties who haven't had much or any human contact. ->> it's not possible to tame every cat/kitten that people find! Feral-born cats aren't domestic animals or pets – over about 4 months of age, they don't get tamed easily, and aren't likely adoptable candidates. ->> While TNR isn't perfect, I'd much rather see TNR in place in a community than automatically killing every stray or feral cat that gets brought into an animal shelter. Statistics have proven that years of killing thousands of them every year doesn't reduced neighborhood cat populations, but managed TNR programs do. Allowing them to live – similar to raccoons & bunnies & squirrels – rather than catching & killing them, is much more humane than automatically killing every one that gets caught.

89. KimMarie

March 9, 11:22 am

I'm so glad that Nat Geo published this article because too many people don't understand TNR programs and that they inevitably fail the animals they're designed to "help".

90. Jennofur OConnor

Largo, FL

March 9, 10:15 am

I agree 100 percent. Life on the streets is no life at all. Dodging traffic and cruel people, scrounging for food, finding a warm and dry place to sleep, always feeling unsafe ... they don't belong in the streets.

91. Susan C McDonough

Albany, NY

March 9, 10:06 am

I was a NYS Trooper for 26 years and my field of expertise focused on animal cruelty. Cats were the number one victims of abandonment, torture and neglect. I also spent 15 years as a wildlife rehabilitator. Almost all of the songbirds who were brought to me were victims of cats, most of these birds died of puncture wounds. euthanasia is very sad, but it isn't cruel. Forcing cats to live on the streets is cruel. Thank you PETA, for having the guts to be truthful about this issue. Cat licensing and keeping cats indoors are the only answers to this problem.

92. Catgrrl63

Virginia

March 9, 9:49 am

TNR isn't "better than doing nothing," for a couple of reasons. One is that the food put out for cats attracts more cats (and rats, mice, raccoons, and other animals). Another is that cats who are fed are better able to reproduce (which is an issue since it is nearly impossible to spay and neuter every cat right away, or even at all). Also, people opposed to TNR aren't suggesting "doing nothing." They are suggesting mandating spay/neuter and leash laws for ALL cats and trapping and removing homeless cats instead of putting them back outdoors.

93. Heather

United States

March 9, 9:42 am

I agree. Until everyone has their cats spayed or neutered and keeps them safely indoors, cats—as well as birds and other wildlife—will continue to suffer and die. TNR programs may appease people's consciences, but they do nothing to help animals. Euthanasia is the most merciful and realistic option when dealing with feral cats and other animals who are struggling to survive on the streets.

94. LucyP

United States

March 9, 9:34 am

Thank you for this well-reasoned piece. "Feral" cats are no better equipped to survive outdoors than the cats who share our homes are. They are domesticated, and leaving them on the streets or in the woods is abandonment. They die miserably, after days or weeks of suffering, instead of painlessly. This is not kind.

95. frederick domer

United States

March 9, 8:37 am

Neutering feral cats is better than doing nothing (which is what PETA is suggesting)  
Support TNR. Don't let a blizzard of distortions obscure the obvious.

96. Duff Smith

Key Largo, FL

March 9, 7:13 am

A lot of people in local government call for the two sides on this issue to "sit down and talk," but this article clearly spells out one of two major reasons why there's nothing to talk about. The idea that dying outdoors from "natural causes" is more humane than professional euthanasia is utter nonsense. Yet, colony caretakers adhere religiously to this. The other major sticking point is that the lives of other animals that die from infection or predation are worthless in their minds. They are to serve as food and toys to the one species of

animal they care about. Here in the Florida Keys there is currently 90-100% interference with the civil process for dealing with nuisance cats, and a lot of happy cat farmers. Every cat brought to the shelter is neutered and passed back to an outdoor hoarder in open violation of our municipal codes. I'm sorry to the people looking forward to the arrival of migratory birds this spring on the US east coast, because we are losing down here.

97. Donna Nespoli  
United States  
March 9, 7:04 am

Excellent article. I wish TNR folks like Alley cat Allies would stop dumping cats back on the streets. We don't do it to dogs, or domestic rabbits or birds...then why is it OK to do it with cats?

98. Beth  
Pa  
March 8, 9:31 pm

Great article. Sadly TNR advocates don't want to address the cruelty to the cats, the huge impact cats as a domesticated animal has on wildlife, the human health risks, and the nuisance caused by the cats.

99. Henry George  
Springfield, Missouri  
March 8, 9:30 pm

Hear, hear. TNR is cruelty to animals. When I worked as a humane officer, we cited or arrested people for abandoning animals. Where are our humane officers and police today? How can this be allowed? I'm thankful that PETA takes this stand and is helping educate the public on this important issue. I can't count the number of cats whose broken bodies I have had to scrape off the street, barely clinging to life after they were hit by cars, attacked by dogs, eaten alive by maggots, and found literally suffocating on their own mucous. It is far more humane to euthanize homeless domestic (which means dependent) animals than abandon them to die in horrible ways, alone and forsaken.

100. Connie Black  
Canada  
March 8, 6:28 pm

I share my life with 2 ex-barn cats, now indoor only cats. I just don't understand how anyone can think that TNR (Trap Neuter Re-abandon) can be humane or kind. Thank you so much for your excellent article Daphna.

## Post a comment

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## About Cat Watch



(Photograph by Michael Nichols, National Geographic)

Cats are king, and they are everywhere. There are [38 species](#) of felids, ranging from the mysterious [Pallas's cat](#) to 500-pound Siberian tigers—with cheetahs, leopards, ocelots, and other striped and spotted cats in between.

What makes *Felidae* such a successful family? How much do we know of feline secrets? How are big cats coping with climate change, loss of habitat, and other trials? What makes cats the most popular pets in the world—and why does your cat do *that*?

We'll look for answers and post them here, along with regular updates about the science and conservation status of felids, among our planet's oldest and most critical species. We'll also share *National Geographic* articles, videos, and behind-the-scenes features and keep you up to date on our [Big Cats Initiative](#) work to help big cats hang on in the wild.

Cat Watch Host: Luke Dollar ([lukedollarbci@gmail.com](mailto:lukedollarbci@gmail.com))

Cat Watch Director: David Braun ([dbraun@ngs.org](mailto:dbraun@ngs.org))

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