

Discover the Truth About Community Cats

Community cats have existed alongside people for 10,000 years.

They are not a new phenomenon. Community cats, also called feral or outdoor cats, live and thrive in every landscape, from the inner city to rural farmland.

Most community cats are not socialized to people. And therefore, they are not adoptable. They don't belong indoors and are typically wary of us. However, as members of the domestic cat species (just like pet cats), they are protected under state anti-cruelty laws.

Community cats should not be taken to pounds and shelters.

Community cats' needs are not met by animal control agencies or shelters. They live full, healthy lives outdoors—but are usually killed in shelters. Even no-kill shelters can't place unsocialized cats in homes.

Their kittens can be adopted.

Kittens can often be adopted into homes, but they must be socialized at an early age. There is a crucial window, and if they aren't handled in time, they will remain feral and therefore unadoptable.

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Community cats live healthy lives in their outdoor homes.

Community cats are just as healthy as pet cats—with equally low rates of disease. They have the same lifespans, too.

Catch and kill doesn't work.

Animal control's dated approach for community cats—catching and killing—is endless and cruel. Cats choose to reside in locations for two reasons: there is a food source (intended or not) and shelter. When cats are removed from a location, new cats move in or survivors breed to capacity. This vacuum effect is well-documented.

Trap-Neuter-Return does work.

Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) benefits the cats and the community. Cats are spayed or neutered, vaccinated, and eartipped (the universal symbol of a neutered and vaccinated cat), and then returned to their outdoor home. The colony's population stabilizes—no more kittens! Trap-Neuter-Return improves their lives and improves their relations with the community—the behaviors and stresses associated with mating stop. Many cities and shelters now have TNR programs to care for community cats. Does yours?

People are the cause of wildlife depletion.

Studies show that the overwhelming causes of wildlife and bird death are habitat loss, urbanization, pollution, and environmental degradation—all caused by people, not community cats.

You can make a difference and save lives.

Together, we can educate people about community cats and the fact that they don't belong in pounds and shelters, and spread the word that TNR is the humane approach for them. To learn more or to find resources to help, go to www.alleycat.org.

**Join our movement
to protect cats.**

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