

Humanely controlling the cat population



Humanely Controlling the Cat Population From personal experience as a volunteer, within the last four years, or so, fifty cats have been sterilized and their offspring adopted. As responsible pet owners and volunteers, the feral cat population, will slowly reduce, the spread of diseases reduced, and animal shelters will not be over crowded with unwanted feral cats. Hunting and poisoning cats is immoral and causes the cat to die slowly in agonizing pain. Educating friends and neighbors of humanely sterilizing the cats is morally beneficial for the cats. There are approximately over 80 million feral cats, including inside and outside domestic cats in the United States. To control the rapid growth of feral cats, animal shelters and pounds euthanize cats every day that are injured, sick, or are untamable as pets.

Euthanizing cats is too expensive and new cats enter the colony when others have been removed.

Most often, caregivers come across feral cats by accident and follow their instinct to feed and care for these homeless animals. Before you know it, there are more adult, feral cats coming to eat, and now you have a colony of feral cats. Feral cats are unsocialized, born outside, and have never known human contact.

Domestic house cats can also become feral when lost or abandoned. Feral cats are just as healthy as domestic cats when spayed or neutered and can live longer. There are many organizations such as; Alley Cat Allies, Best Friends, Animal Rescue Connections, and Pets911 are just a few to name, that are willing to have your cat spayed or neutered either for a very small fee or if you are low income the cat can be sterilized free. Volunteers and members of non-profit organizations set live traps with tuna, salmon, or

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mackerel too humanely, trapped, neutered, and returned the cats to their colonies. When a feral cat has been live trapped, it is taken to a volunteer veterinary, and given an examination before surgery. To help identify the sterilized feral cat, the left ear is clipped at the top. When the feral cat has recovered in a few days, it is returned to the colony from where it came from, and friendly cats are adopted.

Kittens are caught at a very young age, sometimes as young as two weeks old to be handled by the caregiver and bottle-fed. When the kittens are at least three pounds or twelve weeks old, the kittens are examined: spayed or neutered, given vaccinations, and adopted. A colony of cats very rarely allow an outside cat to join them, however, on rare occasions, they are allowed to join if in need of food. It is not the cat's fault for what they do naturally, it is the owner's fault for not being responsible and taking the cat to their veterinary to be sterilized. Yes, cats do kill to survive; however, when any cat is sterilized, shelter for outside, has plenty of food and water, they usually enjoy sun bathing, lazily.

Cats are great in the yard for killing scorpions, poisonous centipedes, and tarantulas that can sting painfully. Workshop classes are being offered by these same organizations, to recruit more volunteers to help with the cat population. Sterilizing reduces the growing colony and reduces deaths. Unfortunately, some states hunt feral cats as a way to control their overgrowing population and other states are trying to make it legal. South Dakota and Minnesota allow shooting of wild cats, think about the actual pet cat that does not always wear a collar, being killed and the family left broken hearted. If a cat were to be shot, the animal would suffer and slowly

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die hiding in pain and that would make it more dangerous. Poisoning the feral cat would also make the animal suffer in a slow painful death. It is unethical and immoral to hunt or poison feral cats because when they are removed from their territory, new cats move in and the cycle continues.

However, it has been proven that when cats are sterilized, ??? fewer cats are euthanized??? and colonies stay under control. As for diseases, humans can become infected with ring worm and rarely ??? Cat Scratch Fever.??? Cats can become ill with feline upper respiratory infection by infection from other cats or humans. FIV (Feline Immunodeficiency Virus), and Feline Leukemia is spread able to cats and not to humans. Keeping a colony of feral cats sterilized not only keeps it from over populating but also reduces the spread of diseases to other cats. Feral cats have the right just as humans do to live on this earth and to receive help when needed just as we do. It is immoral to hunt humans, so why hunt a domesticated house cat just because it is outside and lives in large colonies.

Cats need our help to keep their over, growing population under control by spaying and neutering them. References: BBC News (April 13, 2005) US State Takes Aim at Feral Cats. Retrieved January 21, 2009 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/4441419.stm> Feline upper respiratory Retrieved January 25, 2009 http://www.marvistavet.com/html/feline_upper_respiratory.html

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