

The Cats In Your Neighborhood

Yes – there are cats in your neighborhood. Where did they come from?

- Some were left behind when neighbors moved
- Some are offspring of unaltered cats belonging to neighbors
- Some are owned cats who belong to your neighbors, and are allowed to roam.
- Some belonged to your neighbor, but s/he died – and no one wants them.

Some people like the cats. They didn't ask for them, they don't "want" them – but they recognize the cats are there through no fault of their own, and have taken responsibility to provide care for them.

Some people don't like the cats. They didn't ask for them, they don't "want" them – and they want them gone.

The reality is the cats will NEVER be gone. Even if someone were to set out to trap and remove them, it would be a temporary thing. For over 100 years, people have tried to solve the cat over-population issue by trapping and killing the cats. It doesn't work. Because – you never will get them all, and all it takes is 2 to start it all over again. But more than that, irresponsible people will once again bring home little kittens and not have them fixed, and they will grow up to be cats left behind to reproduce and live in your neighborhood.

So – to whom do these cats now belong? If you read the news these days, you will know these cats are now called "community cats" instead of ferals. They live in our communities, they are here because of the actions of people in our communities, and as a result they become the responsibility of those who live in the community.

We are here to offer you solutions. We are here to work WITH you to make your community a place where both YOU and the CATS can live.

SOLUTIONS

Contact cccofwa@gmail.com for more info

#1 – Free spay/neuter and vaccinations for all neighborhood cats.

#2 – Free classes in how to do TNR – Trap/Neuter/Return

#3 – Loan of equipment, mentors to guide you through this.

#4 – Solutions for keeping cats out of problem areas – like gardens:

- ~~Free ultrasonic devices, paid for by our volunteer organization while supplies last) – Sorry... these are now gone. But we do recommend you try them, many people have had success with these – see :~~
- A list of other options to try (see attached)

#5 – Advice on building “catios” – a way to let your owned cats have outdoor fun while keeping your neighbors happy

#6 – Free diatomaceous earth on request to help eliminate fleas in your environment.

The absolute essential point to be made in this whole guide is spay/neuter of all cats. New studies are showing “targeted” TNR is extremely effective; targeted TNR means one area is selected and 100% of the cats in that area are trapped, neutered and returned. Any given area will support a certain number of cats – remove them, and more will move in. Neuter them, and allow them to stay – and few if any will move in. The key is always to watch for the unaltered cats, and the way this is done is by “ear tipping” the cats. When a free roaming cat is altered, the tip of one ear is cut straight across – anyone can then tell by a glance this cat is altered. When the cats are all altered, they settle down. The

males no longer produce the stinky pee; there are fewer fights, the noise and commotion settles down, there are no more kittens. They begin to settle, there are fewer to wander. And, it is FREE – along with FREE vaccinations!

How YOU can help solve the problem in YOUR neighborhood

Because the cats in the neighborhood are free-roaming, people who own cats and let them roam need to understand they have to be on the front lines in creating a responsible community cat approach. We highly recommend owned cats be kept indoors, but if that is not happening please accept leadership in caring for all the cats. Your neighbors will be happier and so will the cats – and your own cats will not end up in the shelter, or suffer a worse fate.

YOU can help by

- watching for cats without ear tips and either simply helping to TNR those in your back yard, or connecting with your neighbors who are caring for the cats; if you cannot do this, contact us for advice at cccofwa@gmail.com Our organization is 100% volunteer, we all work, have families, and other commitments. But we are committed to helping our community as we all work together to create a peaceful coexistence for all. We are not an organization that comes out to trap, but we have classes and equipment to loan, and will do our best to guide you through this online.
- Join in compassionate care of your neighborhood cats – work with your neighbors to feed the cats, accepting responsibility for the cats in your back yard. They belong to none of us – and to all of us.
- If you know of people moving out and leaving cats behind – report them. Animal abandonment is a crime, but until we all start holding these people accountable, we will all continue to be caring for the animals they have abandoned.
- Understand taking cats to a shelter is not the solution. These cats are “unadoptable” because they are not well socialized – they will be killed.

And more will come to fill the void they just left. Plus – the taxpayer (you) will be charged a hefty fee for every cat you bring in to be killed.

- Work to find homes for the un-owned friendly cats in the neighborhood
- If you own cats, respect your neighbors and do not let them roam. Catios are all the rage – they keep cats safe, neighbors happy, and give cats outdoor time. Be responsible.

Cat Deterrents*

1. Ultrasonic devices

- CatStop contains a motion sensor and, upon being triggered, emits a high-frequency alarm imperceptible to humans but highly annoying and startling to cats. The key with CatStop and other ultrasonic devices is to make sure you have enough of them for the size of the area you're trying to exclude the cats from. CatStop reportedly monitors 330 square feet.
- The respected feral cat group IndyFeral swears by CatStop which, like the Scarecrow, is manufactured by Contech. IndyFeral has come up with some creative uses for the device, such as using two of them to guard a property line. One device is placed at each end of the property line and then positioned so that their motion sensors face each other. Whenever a cat crosses the line, one of the devices goes off. CatStop can also be mounted high up off the ground and positioned to "cover" a car parked below, keeping cats off the vehicle. It can be used in any weather, though the battery will likely need to be replaced more often in cold temperatures. Order CatStop directly from Contech for \$59.99. AC adaptor available for additional \$20.80. call -1-800-767-8658; Buy it for less through Safe Pet Products for \$48.90 (\$44.90 each for two or more; AC adaptor for additional \$16.95 per unit). To order call 1-888-977-7387.

2. Motion-activated sprinklers

- Motion activated sprinklers use infra-red to detect when an animal enters a defined territory. When a cat enters the infra-red field, the sprinkler shoots out a burst of water for a few seconds in the general direction of

the animal. The effect is to frighten the cats rather than soak them, but they quickly learn not to enter the area. After a while, the sprinkler becomes unnecessary. It doesn't work in winter conditions, as the water will freeze, but if you introduce the device in warmer weather, by wintertime you'll have trained them.

- The ScareCrow, made by Contech, has been personally tried and proven by us. It costs \$79.00 if you purchase it directly from Contech. To order, call 1-800-767-8658, or Buy it for less! Check out the price for The ScareCrow at Safe Pet Products (\$53.95 + free s/h). To order, call 1-888-977-7387
- Havahart manufactures two motion-activated sprinklers. Like the ScareCrow, Spray Away attaches to a garden hose. Cost is \$69.99 (\$60 each for two). Spray Away Elite has its own water reservoir so it's hose-free and portable. \$179.99 includes shipping.

3. Scent repellants

- Reports on the effectiveness of scent repellants are mixed, sometimes working quite well and in other situations, not at all. Repellants should be sprayed or placed around the edges of the yard, the top of fences and on any favorite digging areas or plants. Sprays need to be replenished after rain. Naturally-based products include:
- The Coleus Canina plant, a weed originating in Europe, is known as the "Scardy-Cat" or "Pee-off" plant because it emits an odor offensive to cats (but not to humans) and deters their presence. Recommendation is to plant them three feet apart around the area to be protected. You may need to order cuttings or seeds from a nursery or dealer. Do a Google search for the plant to find a dealer and compare prices - one dealer when last checked is Rosy Dawn Gardens. **WARNING:** There are many varieties of Coleus plants, so make sure you order the correct one - Coleus Canina. Order early in the spring planting season before dealers run out of stock.
- For protecting gardens or flower beds, common household items may be effective, including the herb rue, either planted or sprinkled in its dry form. Other suggestions for garden areas are orange and lemon peels (cats dislike citrus smells), cayenne pepper, coffee grounds, pipe tobacco,

lavender oil, lemon grass oil, citronella oil, peppermint oil, eucalyptus oil, and mustard oil.

- Havahart "Critter Ridder" Dog & Cat Repellents use capsaicin, pepper and oil of mustard as its active ingredients. It repels by both taste and odor, has a lemon scent, lasts 7-10 days and needs to be reapplied after rain or new growth.

4. Physical barriers to digging

- Gardens and flower beds can be protected from digging through a number of means:
- Cat Scat from Gardener's Supply consists of plastic mats that are pressed into the soil. Each mat has flexible plastic spikes and is cut into four pieces. The spikes are harmless to cats and other animals, but discourage excavation. Item No. 31-954 is \$28.95 for a set of five, \$26.00 per set when ordering two or more. Phone: 1-888-833-1412
- Cover exposed ground with rough surfaced rocks
- Lay lattice fencing on the ground prior to planting, then plant flowers and seeds in the openings.
- Cats don't like to walk on bristly material. An idea: in mulching the problem bed, include something on which the refined paws of cats will fear to tread, such as sharp-edged pine cones. Another mulch that functions as a natural cat repellent is stone mulch. It may not be the most attractive type of mulch for your particular bed, but cats prefer to poop in loose dirt. Cats usually won't bother with an area mulched in stone. They'd rather be "pussyfooting around" where the digging's easier on their paws.

*http://www.neighborhoodcats.org/HOW_TO_KEEPING_CATS_OUT_OF_GARDENS_AND_YARDS