

FERAL CAT FOCUS

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TERMS OF THE TRADE

STRAY CAT - A domestic cat that has been abandoned or has strayed from home and become lost. Once a companion cat, a stray cat can usually be successfully placed back into a home.

FERAL CAT - Literally "gone wild", a domestic cat that has reverted to the wild state after being lost or abandoned or a cat that was born outside to a stray or abandoned cat. A feral cat can also be the offspring of feral cats that have lived in a wild state for several generations. Feral cats live in family groups called colonies and can be found anywhere there is food. Feral cats can survive almost anywhere and are found all over the world.

TRAP-NEUTER-VACCINATE-RETURN (TNVR) - A humane and non-lethal approach to feral (wild) cat population control. TNVR is comprehensive management plan where healthy feral cats are sterilized and vaccinated and then returned to their habitat and provided with long-term care. Adoptable cats and kittens are placed into foster homes for adoption.

VACUUM EFFECT - A situation arising when feral cats are removed from an environment. More cats move in to take advantage of whatever meager food source is available and will quickly fill this space. These new unsterilized cats will breed to the capacity of the site.

FERAL CAT CAREGIVER - An individual who has takes on the responsibility for the health and well-being of a colony of feral cats. The caregiver provides food, fresh water and shelter in cold weather. The caregiver is responsible for humanely trapping and taking the cats to a veterinarian for vaccinations, sterilization, and other medical care for injury or illness.

MANAGED FERAL COLONY - A group of cats where all cats are spayed or neutered and vaccinated. The cats are provided food, fresh water and shelter from inclement or cold weather. Colony cats are healthier and no longer breed. The caregiver regularly monitors the colony and individual cats. Feral cats are dependent on caregivers to enact this plan and provide long-term support. Besides the obvious advantage of population control, the cats are better able to care for themselves since they no longer have to put all of their energy into producing and caring for offspring. A properly managed colony is a healthy and stable colony in which no kittens are born.

HUMANE TRAP - A trap used for Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return (TNVR). Humane traps do not cause the animal any pain. The trap has a door on one end, which can be lifted up and set in place with a small catch. The door is connected to a flat metal trip plate on the bottom of the trap. The trip plate is set far enough back in the trap so that the animal's tail won't get caught in the door when it slams shut. A small amount of aromatic food is placed in the back of the trap, past the trip plate. The door will spring shut behind the cat as soon as a paw hits the trip plate.

TRAP COVER - Trap covers are necessary to keep feral cats calm when in the trap. Without a cover, cats can become agitated and injure themselves trying to escape.

EARTIPPING - A technique of painlessly removing a quarter inch off the top of a feral cat's left ear. Eartipping is performed while the cat is anesthetized for spay/neuter surgery. It is the only effective way to clearly and easily identify a feral cat that has been sterilized and vaccinated against rabies.