

Facts & Fallacies About Free-Roaming Cats

There are outside cats in most neighborhoods and apartment complexes in San Antonio. Due to our warm climate, they breed year-round. We also have a high abandonment rate as people move away and leave their pets behind. Pets that are not fixed and allowed outside *will* reproduce.

The most effective way to control outside cat populations is Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR). This proven method is used in cities and countries around the world. Our city officials recognize and support TNR as we try to reduce San Antonio's overpopulation and have given funds to the spay/neuter clinics in support. Getting people to participate in a program to fix a problem they did not create can be challenging. Residents who trap and fix neighborhood cats are performing a service for their community and should be thanked!

It all starts with one un-spayed female. Tomcats will find her! That one cat and her offspring can create close to 5,000 more cats in 7 years. So the money spent to fix that one cat is actually a very good investment!

Cats who do not have a caretaker only live an average of 5-7 years. During this time, they keep rodents, snakes, and other stray cats away. Neutered cats will still spray to mark their territory, but the odor is not as strong. This marking keeps other cats who are not fixed out of their territory and out of your yards.

If you are a feeder, be a good neighbor and put a sandbox in the corner of your property to encourage the cats to use that instead of next door. There are effective deterrents to keeping cats out of yards. One of the most effective is the Scarecrow. It's a motion-activated device that connects to your water hose and sprays bursts of water in all directions. Cats do not like to be sprayed with water and will learn not to enter your yard.

There are 2 myths regarding outside cats that are important to understand:

1. Stop feeding them, and they will go away.

Cats do not leave their home territory. They just widen their search for food and become sick and diseased as they eat and drink things they should not because they are starving.

2. Remove them, and that will solve the problem.

For a short while, yes. Then other cats will move in when they do not detect cats in the area. This is a phenomenon called the "vacuum effect."

Cruelty is a side-effect of overpopulation, and it is illegal to harm an animal. Pets have died when people were trying to poison outside cats. Please do not let this tragedy happen in your neighborhood.

The **San Antonio Feral Cat Coalition** is a volunteer nonprofit dedicated to reducing the suffering of cats and kittens caused by overpopulation. We help the public with TNR by providing training, traps, and low-cost spay/neuter. Our subsidized price includes surgery, rabies, and FVRCP vaccinations. Let us help you be part of the solution, not the problem.

Call us at 210-877-9067.

Email: info@sanantonioferalcats.org

Website: www.sanantonioferalcats.org

Thank you!