



Spay Neuter Hotline

A program of the Animal Defense League of Arizona

P.O. Box 33093, Phoenix, AZ 85067, (602) 265-SPAY (7729)

info@adlaz.org or feralcats@adlaz.org

Tips for managing a cat colony:

-FIX EVERY CAT IN THE COLONY OR GROUP A.S.A.P.! Educate yourself about Trap Neuter Return. Fixing the cats is the very best thing you can do for them.

- It stops the breeding cycle so the numbers don't continue to grow
- It reduces nuisance complaints because the cats aren't yowling, fighting and spraying or marking territory. They also tend not to roam as much because they are no longer looking for mates so they are not as noticeable in the neighborhood.

-Be on the lookout for any new cats and get them fixed as soon as you see them

- Occasionally a new cat may wander into the area. Make sure you get him/her fixed as soon as possible as to not attract any more unaltered cats and end up with new kittens being born.

-Create feeding stations at safe locations

- Establish a specific area for feeding. Cats can be discouraged from climbing on cars or other private property by gradually moving their shelters and feeding stations away from these areas.
- **Feed the cats at scheduled times. You can choose a time in the morning and/or a time in the evening. Only leave the food out for 1-2 hours to avoid attracting other animals (wild or domestic) to the area.**
- Camouflage the area where the cats eat. The goal is for this area to not be visible to the public.
- Remove all garbage/trash daily to make the feeding station sanitary and unobtrusive. Use rocks to secure plates and bowls from blowing away.
- Keep feeding containers clean and to a minimum.
- If birds are an issue, feed at night. If wildlife is an issue, feed during the day.
- If ants are a problem, remove food/water containers and spray the area during daylight hours with ant deterrents or insecticides, but be sure the area is dry before returning food. If there are other animals in the area make sure you aren't leaving anything around that could be harmful for them

-Handle nuisance complaints quickly

- Be willing to address your neighbor's concerns if you want them to support your TNR efforts. They don't have to be cat lovers.
- Many times your neighbors may be initially supportive, but after not seeing any results become fed up.
- Offer deterrents to keep cats out of neighbor's yards, such as a motion activated sprinkler, scent repellants, ultrasonic devices, and other deterrents to digging, see last page for a list.

-Create a habitat for the cats.

- Cats congregate in areas where they have shelter.
- Offer shaded area for cats to keep cool in the summer heat. Plant trees and shrubs for hiding places and cover for the cats.
- Dig out the areas around the trees and shrubs and water them down in the morning and evening to make a cool, shady place for the cats.
- In colder months cats seek warmth. You may make cold weather shelters, or allow cats a warm place with blankets, straw or entry to the garage.

-Create outdoor cat box areas of sand, and clean and scoop the area regularly.

- Build one or more outdoor litter boxes or place sand or peat moss in strategic areas for the cats to use as litter. Simply dig out an area approximately 2 feet by 2 feet wide, about 18 inches deep and fill with sand.
- Dig out your flower gardens and fill the area with a generous top layer of sand, scoop regularly.

- Scoop regularly to alleviate odors and keep flies away. Remove cat feces if you see it. Make an effort to remove cat feces from your neighbor's yard if they point it out to you.

-Don't try to socialize the cats or get them familiar with people

- ***Do not try to handle the cats.*** Use humane traps if needed but never try to handle them yourself.
- One of the keys to the cats surviving on the street is to be fearful of people. If you are not able to commit to taking the cat into your home as a pet for its lifetime and don't have someone that will commit to taking the cat in, don't socialize them, fix them and return them to where they were trapped from.
- If the cat learns to trust you they may trust someone that wants to do them harm
- The more used to people they are the more visible they become and the more likely they are to hang out in populated areas. The fewer people that know the cats are there the less likely there are to be complaints about them and the safer they will be.

-Find a substitute or replacement caregiver.

- Don't wait until you are not able to take care of your colony to find a substitute or replacement caregiver. Life is full of the unexpected. There is not a shelter that will be able to take the cats
- Carry information about your colony in your wallet to inform emergency workers of what to do in case something happens to you or a disaster occurs.
- Include all contact information for your substitute caregiver, including names and phone numbers.

-If you live in an HOA (Home Owners' Association), apartment complex or manufactured home community:

- Become familiar with your CC&R's and make sure they don't limit your ability to help the cats.
- Become a board member, educate your community about trap neuter return and managing outdoor cats.
- If you're leasing a property make sure you review the lease for any restrictions to caring for outdoor cats or "pet limit" rules.
- Many manufactured home parks have rules and regulations for the park itself. Make sure you are familiar with the rules and find out if there are any restrictions to caring for outdoor cats or "pet limit" rules.

-If you suspect acts of cruelty to the cats

- Report animal cruelty immediately! In the State of Arizona, it is illegal under Statute 13-2910 to intentionally, recklessly, or knowingly subject any animal to physical harm, injury, cruel mistreatment, neglect, or abandonment.
- Look it up, print it out and carry a copy of the statute with you. You may need to educate your local officers about animal cruelty laws.
- If you do not receive adequate attention from the dispatched officer and your complaint is not taken seriously, speak to the supervisor. You may also be able to do a citizen complaint.
- Always be calm and respectful when reporting animal cruelty or filing a complaint.

-Fix every cat in the colony or group. Once you have fixed all the cats in your neighborhood be on the lookout for any new comers and fix them A.S.A.P. to avoid any new kittens being born.

Thanks to Foundation for Homeless Cats for providing many of the suggestions in this document.

Humane Deterrents

There are items you can put in your yard that will help to keep cats out of certain areas. Below is a list of effective cat deterrents, you can google these items and find out how to order them.

Motion Activated Sprinklers: These sprinklers detect movement and will squirt water at the moving object. This works very well to keep cats out of areas that you don't want them in. A name brand of this product is the scarecrow or haveahart

Ultrasonic outdoor cat deterrent: This deterrent uses a motion sensor and emits a high-pitched, ultrasonic alarm that can't be heard by humans but will frighten most cats and small dogs. You place the unit facing the area you want to protect. A brand name of this product is Cat Stop

Training Mats: Raised bumps are uncomfortable to sensitive paws, so the training mat can be used to cause a cat or dog to respect the boundaries you establish. Each mat has flexible spikes that you can press into the soil spike side up the spikes are harmless but effective. A name brand of this product is x mat, you can also buy the plastic cleated office mats and use with the spike side up.

Additional items that can be used as deterrents (From Best Friends website):

- Concrete pavers, river rocks, lava rocks, large pinecones, chicken wire (sharp edges down) or large bark can cover loose soil, discouraging cats from eliminating there. Poultry fencing put into flower beds and tree wells can also be effective. Place it flat just below the surface of the dirt. The cats can't dig in the area with the fencing.
- Plant the herb rue or coleus canina (scaredy-cat coleus easiest to find online), decorative plants that repel cats.
- Generously sprinkle cayenne pepper, coffee grounds, pipe tobacco, lemongrass oil, citronella oil, eucalyptus oil, or mustard oil on the ground to deter cats.