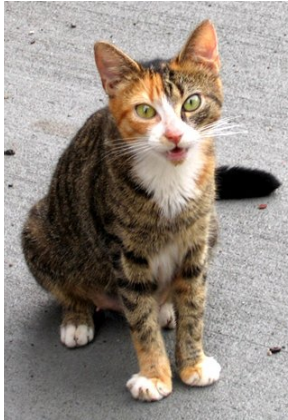


abandon cats and allow unneutered cats to roam, become the source of those new cats. Without public education and a TNR program with a permanent caregiver to monitor the area, the breeding cycle quickly starts up again.

Trap and kill has been used for decades and there is still a feral cat overpopulation problem. It is ineffective, costly and inhumane.

### Don't feral cats cause wildlife decline?

While outdoor cats do kill birds and other small animals, they are hardly responsible for the decline of entire species (humans can take the blame for that). That being said, Project TNR values all life and seeks to reduce the impact feral cats can have on birds and other wildlife. The key is recognizing that lower cat numbers reduce any incidence of predation and the most effective way to stabilize and reduce ferals cat populations is not through trap and remove, but rather through TNR.



### The benefits of a TNRed colony

- ✓ the cats are healthier since they have been vaccinated and altered
- ✓ the population stops exploding because they are altered
- ✓ there is an initial reduction in numbers as friendly cats and kittens are removed for adoption
- ✓ over time the number of cats in the area drops
- ✓ an established colony protects its territory from new cats—the rate of new cats appearing slows dramatically when the colony is managed
- ✓ all cats are vaccinated against rabies, thus protecting the public's health and eliminating any concern of feral cats transmitting rabies to humans

✓ nuisance behavior associated with unaltered cats stops, resulting in less complaints and happier neighbors

**TNR is the only workable solution**

### What you can do to help feral cats in your community

✓ **Engage in a TNR program.** It can simply be for the cats you feed or it can be part of a larger community effort. Ignoring homeless animals is precisely what perpetuates the problem. TNR is a proactive solution.

✓ **Educate residents** of your community and your local politicians by becoming a spokesperson for feral cats. Uninformed neighbors and town officials can be your biggest obstacle.

✓ **Join our Nexus** of feral cat caregivers. Learn the basics of TNR, connect with other caregivers, share experiences and resources. Whether you are a novice or experienced trapper, you will benefit from being a part of our statewide Nexus.

Contact us to learn more about feral cats and TNR. We're here to help you and the cats.

#### Project TNR

*a program of Animal Protection League of NJ*  
**PO Box 174, Englishtown, NJ 07726**  
**732-446-6808**

For online information about feral cats, please visit [www.ProjectTNR.com](http://www.ProjectTNR.com)



**TNR is the only program for stabilizing and reducing feral cat populations in a practical, respectful and effective manner. Read on to learn more.**

# Feral Cats - Questions & Answers

## Who is a feral cat?

A "feral" cat is one who has reverted in some degree to a wild state. They originate from domestic cats who were lost or abandoned and then learned to live outdoors in environments involving little human contact.

## What is TNR?

TNR stands for Trap-Neuter-Return, the only method proven to be humane and effective at controlling feral cat population growth. Using this technique, all cats in a colony (the term used to describe a groups of cats living in one area) are trapped, spayed or neutered (altered) and vaccinated. Feral cats are returned to their territory where caregivers provide them with regular food and shelter and lifelong care. Young kittens as well as friendly adults, are placed in foster care and eventually adopted out to good homes.

Misconceptions regarding feral cats and TNR may cause unnecessary public anxiety. Many believe that ferals carry diseases, are a threat to public safety or are responsible for wildlife decline. Some believe that cats are better off dead than living outdoors or want them rounded up and taken away. Additionally, there are those who think that caregivers managing a feral cat colony have put the cats there. No so. The cats were already congregating in that area.

## Isn't it true that cats should be kept indoors?

Ideally, yes. Domestic cats are safest indoors. However, because of the overpopulation crisis, there are not nearly enough homes available. The next best thing for feral cats is a managed colony where food, water, shelter and veterinary care are consistently provided.

## Do feral cats pose public health risks?

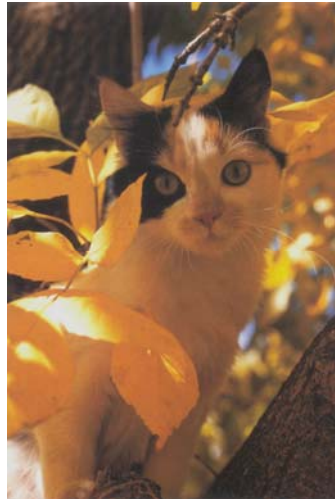
Stanford University's Department of Environmental Health and Safety conducted a study which found that feral cats pose virtually no risks to the public safety.

Rabies is not commonly found in feral cat colonies. Overall, the danger of rabies in humans is relatively slight, but the best way to eradicate any risk of rabies from a feral cat is through a TNR program. Feral cats who are TNRed are vaccinated against the disease, thus eliminating concern about transmission to humans.

## Aren't feral cats sickly?

By altering, feeding and monitoring a colony, the health of feral cats is enhanced. Proper TNR includes keeping a watchful eye on the cats, being on the lookout for illness or injury and providing medical care if needed. FIV (AIDS) and FeLV (leukemia), are two feline diseases believed to run rampant in feral colonies. However, feral cats and indoor domestic cats have approximately the same rate of infection from these diseases, with the percentage of cats infected with FIV being 2-5% and FeLV 3-7%.

Alley Cat Allies, a premier organization for feral cat and TNR advocacy, states



that "Despite concern over viruses, there is no feline disease that ends more lives than euthanasia due to overpopulation."

## Can't they just be moved? Or taken to a sanctuary or farm?

There simply aren't enough sanctuaries, barn homes and the like to house the tens of millions of feral cats estimated to be living in the United States. The only humane and effective way to control the feral cat population and give the cats a chance at healthier lives is through TNR.

Under no circumstances should cats ever be relocated or abandoned in an unfamiliar area. They will not be able to survive by hunting. Furthermore, cats are extremely territorial animals and will try to find their way back 'home.' Most will not survive their desperate attempts to reconnect with their family and the habitat where they were born.

## Why doesn't trap & remove work?

The trap and kill method is usually implemented by animal control in response to complaints and is done in spurts. Cats will be trapped for a few weeks and then the area is left alone as the animal control officer moves on to other business. Cats who escaped the traps remain, and breed.

Additionally, removing all cats from an area creates the "vacuum effect." Trap and remove creates a void that will almost always be filled by new cats, as the area was hospitable in the first place, providing the cats with food, intentional or otherwise, and shelter.

Irresponsible individuals who continue to

