

## Feral Cats

### Position:

The Edmonton Humane Society supports the non-lethal control and prevention of feral cat populations using a multimodal approach. The Society practices Trap-Neuter-Return of ferals, subsidized accessible spay/neuter, and community education about responsible pet care.

### Definition:

**Feral:** Feral cats exhibit wild, untamed behaviour due to lack of human contact during critical socialization periods as kittens. Feral cat populations result from uncontrolled breeding of free-roaming domestic cats.

### Rationale

- Cats choose to reside in locations for two reasons: (1) there is a food source (intended or not) and (2) there is a form of shelter. When cats are removed from an area, new cats move in or survivors breed to capacity.
- Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) benefits the cats and the community. Cats are spayed or neutered, vaccinated, microchipped, tattooed, and ear-tipped (the universal symbol of a neutered and vaccinated cat that involves removing approximately a quarter-inch off the tip of a cat's left ear in a straight line cut. This is done while the cat is anesthetized for spay/neutering and healing is rapid), before being returned to their outdoor home. Without the opportunity for reproduction, the colony's population stabilizes.
- Trap-Neuter-Return improves cat lives and their place within the community. Undesirable behaviours and stresses associated with mating stop.

### References

1. American Veterinary Medical Association. "Free-Roaming Abandoned and Feral Cats." AVMA policy statement, n.d.
2. Canadian Federation of Humane Societies. "Feral Cats." CFHS position statement, 2003.
3. Humane Society of the United States. "The HSUS's Position on Cats." HSUS position statement, 2013.
4. Humane Society Veterinary Medical Association. "Free-Roaming, Abandoned and Feral Cats and Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) HSVMA policy statement, Washington, 2011.
5. Kortis, Bryan. "Defining Community Cats." PetSmart Charities. Last modified April 16, 2014. <https://www.petsmartcharities.org/blog/defining-community-cats>.