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HUMANE OHIO

Humane Ohio operates a low-cost spay/neuter clinic and a pet food bank. Our vision is a community without homeless pets where every resident has access to affordable spay/neuter.

TIPS FOR DETERRING CATS FROM YARDS AND GARDENS

So, you're seeing cats in your yard.....

Like all outdoor animals, outdoor community cats make their homes where they can find shelter and food. Often this is within close proximity to humans. We understand that not everyone enjoys living with cats and other wildlife in their yards. The simple tips listed below will help you or your neighbors divert community cats from yards and gardens. These suggestions, coupled with Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR), can help you and your neighbors co-exist with neighborhood cats (please see below for more information on TNR).

Easy suggestions for deterring cats from yards and gardens

- Push wood chopsticks or 10-inch plant stakes into flower beds every eight inches to discourage digging and scratching.
- Try a non-chemical cat and wildlife deterrent called Cat Scat™ (available at Gardener's Supply Company, www.gardeners.com or 1-800-863-1700 for about \$22; come in packs of five). Each mat is cut into four pieces and comes complete with flexible plastic spikes. The spikes are harmless to cats and other animals but are effective in discouraging excavation. Gardener's Supply Company reports that people consistently reorder this product.
- Scatter orange and lemon peels or spray with citrus scented spray because cats dislike the smell of citrus. You can also scatter citrus scented pet bedding such as Citrafresh.
- Use cayenne pepper, coffee grounds and/or pipe tobacco to repel cats. Some people have also found that lavender oil, lemon grass oil, citronella oil, eucalyptus oil and mustard oil work.
- Spray cat repellent (available at pet supply stores) around the edges of the yard, the top of fences and on any favorite digging areas or plants.
- Cover exposed ground in flowerbeds with large attractive river rocks to prevent cats from digging (plus, river rocks have the added benefit of deterring weeds!).
- Plant an herb called rue or sprinkle the dried version over the garden to repel cats.
- Try an ultrasonic animal repellent (available in lawn and garden stores).
- Use a motion activated sprinkler (available through Contech for about \$89 – 1-800-767-8658). Cats who enter the yard will be sprayed but unharmed, and you'll help water your lawn.
- Use a garden repellent called Reppers (manufactured in Holland by Beaphar and available at Foster & Smith, PetsMart, www.petsmart.com, and local pet supply stores for around \$20).
- Soak strips of old towels or rags with old perfume and place or hang where the cats are digging.
- Try the Cat Fence-In System (fits on any height fence) to keep cats and other animals out of your yard (available at www.catfencein.com or 1-888-738-9099).

TIPS FOR DETERRING CATS FROM YARDS AND GARDENS continued

- Keep a tight lid on your trash can.
- Use a car cover at night.
- Prevent future generations of cats from taking up residence in your yard by trapping the current cats and having them spayed/neutered at Humane Ohio, a process known as Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR). Statistics show that TNR works and that cat populations are gradually reduced over time. Nuisance behaviors associated with breeding, such as yowling and spraying, are virtually eliminated and no more unwanted kittens are born. (Humane Ohio's staff can talk you through the TNR process. Humane traps are available through Humane Ohio for a \$60 deposit that is fully refundable when the trap is returned. Please call us at 419-266-5607).

Summary

If your neighbors are complaining or concerned about the outdoor community cats in their yard, you might want to offer to help by purchasing the above supplies for them or helping them set-up the deterrents. They will probably appreciate your willingness to help even if they don't accept your offer.

Thanks to the San Francisco SPCA and Alley Cat Allies for providing much of the above information. Please visit www.alleycat.org for even more information on outdoor community cats and TNR programs. Humane Ohio's staff can walk you through the TNR process and the process of becoming an outdoor community cat caretaker. Please contact us at 419-266-5607.