



SAVE A KITTY FERAL CAT PROGRAM, INC.

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NEWSLETTER

www.saveakitty.org

Tabby Cats: Tabbies are cats with distinctive coat patterns. It is not a specific breed as thought by many. It features stripes, dots and swirl patterns. The tabby pattern is so common it is found in many pedigreed cats today and is accepted in a number of breeds by the most popular feline registries. Actually, the gene for the tabby pattern can be found in all domestic cats. When viewed in the sunlight, even a solid black cat will reveal hidden tabby patterns. There are three (3) actual tabby patterns: classic, ticked and mackerel. The most common pattern is mackerel. There is also a fourth variation, spotted, that is still being debated. Mackerel tabbies have striped rings around their tail and legs and a band of stripes on the front of their chest running down the sides of their bodies. They often have an "M" shape on their forehead. Classic tabbies usually have whorls ending in a target on the side of the cat. These cats are intelligent and extremely affectionate. If you want a lap cat, get yourself a tabby!

Clothes Tree Consignment Shop: Rhonda Cain, owner of the Clothes Tree Consignment Boutique has set up an account for Save a Kitty Feral Cat Program for anyone who is willing to donate good, used clothing (in season) to her shop for re-sale. The proceeds will be applied to Save a Kitty FCP's account with the funds going to our spay/neuter program for feral and homeless cats and kittens. If you are interested in helping, please contact Rhonda Cain at (304) 424-6805 or drop the clothing off to her at 2812 Dudley Avenue, Parkersburg.

Dr. Judith Kemp: Special thanks to a very generous and caring individual who has helped our program many times. We would like to personally thank Dr. Judith Kemp for her generosity and dedication to our program. She has enabled us to help several cats and kittens receive their sterilization surgeries and live a little better life

than before. Thank you Dr. Kemp for such a kind and generous heart. We appreciate it!

Athens Co. Humane Society update: Southeast Ohio Magazine has featured our project in their Winter 2007 magazine article entitled, "Cat Fight". Save a Kitty Feral Cat Program was contacted by the Athens County Humane Society when they came upon a gentleman who was feeding approximately 50 tame and feral cats and kittens. The Humane Society had recently closed their doors to the public and was not sure how to approach such an endeavor. We immediately began planning the felines trapping event and sterilization surgeries. Today, the colony is around 15, a much more manageable situation. Many of the cats were adopted to new homes, including part of the colony that was relocated to Parkersburg and adopted by Judy Deem, our own Education Coordinator. Several kittens are now in new homes and all but 3-4 of the cats has been sterilized. The remaining cats will be trapped before springtime, which will finish out this project. We thoroughly enjoyed working with the folks at the Athens Co. HS and the Help for Animals mobile unit in Barboursville, WV. We will be utilizing them as often as possible. Athens County Humane Society is now considering becoming a TNR (Trap, Neuter, Return) program also. We wish them the best of luck!

Response to Dr. Scott Shalaway's article: We "cat lovers" spend a large part of our lives caring for and protecting these beautiful felines, who are homeless through no fault of their own, so I had to respond to Dr. Shalaway's article regarding "free-roaming cats" in the Sunday, January 7th newspaper. His article entitled "Free-roaming cats are no one's pets" touches on many valid points but the reality is that many of these cats are owned pets and you can't take the already 70-100 million un-owned cats and place them in to someone's home. Most of them are wild animals

just like the raccoons, skunks, squirrels and foxes that are trying to survive. We don't round up all these animals and destroy them! Just as we shouldn't do that to these cats, who have reverted to a wild nature because they have to. It is true that they can be exposed to dangers, just as any wild animal is. Yes, they were domesticated animals but the fact of the matter is, not all people treat them as such, so they end up homeless and feral (wild). We will always have irresponsible people in our society who allow their cats to roam and reproduce, so we have to resort to the next best thing. That is (TNR) Trap, Neuter, Return of feral cats and kittens. You can tame kittens less than 9 weeks and place them up for adoption but after this age, it is very difficult to prepare them for inside living. There are just not enough homes for all these felines because irresponsible people have allowed them to mass reproduce. Why then, should they be rounded up and mass killed because we aren't a responsible society? They shouldn't! This is year 2007 and it is time for all to move toward a "no kill society". Mass slaughter of cats and kittens is not the answer. For all the talk of cat predation, science has exonerated our feral friends. Every major, reputable study has shown that claims of cat predation affecting bird or wildlife populations are wholly overstated. Most of the studies site habitat loss, pollution and inclement weather changes as the real culprit. The reasons are well documented. As human development continues in our already crowded cities, available habitat for wildlife is depleted. When you chop up their habitat they become genetically separated and if a particular population is not large enough, remnant populations are subject to genetic inbreeding. As a result, as habitat declines, so does diversity and heterogeneity, resulting in high extinction rates. Harsh winters or long periods of drought also affect our wildlife. All living things depend on water for survival. Pesticides are also a major culprit in bird decline, particularly the effect of toxic lawn care products in the decline of the songbird. Insecticides, herbicides, fungicides and rodenticides are routinely used in city parks and lawns. This is referred to as "lawn care syndrome" and is another factor in bird decline. A 1994 WorldWatch Institute study showed that of the world's 9,000 bird species, 5,000 are in decline, while another 1,600 are threatened or nearly threatened with extinction. Some bird populations have fallen by 75% as a

result of four primary factors: habitat loss, overtrapping, drought and pesticides. Cats are absent as one of the factors. Cats are widely recognized to have low success with bird predation. The study by biologist Robert Berg showed, in fact, that any feral cat predation at Golden Gate Park would actually occur on the rat population, increasing the quail strength, because it lowers nest predation by rats. It also showed the great bulk of the unfed feral cats' diet consisted of garbage, insects, plants and rats, finding no impact on continental bird and wildlife populations. Studies have concluded that feral cats as serious predators of birds are apparently "without basis". In fact, unless we are going to conclude that the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, the Commission on Animal Control and Welfare, the Golden Gate Park studies and predation studies on four continents (Europe, North America, Australia and Africa) are all wrong, feral cats should not be unfairly implicated in any perceived decimation of local wildlife. They didn't choose to be feral or homeless! The fact is that not everyone will keep their pet cat indoors, so as a result we will have "free-roaming" and feral cats. Why should they pay the price for man's ignorance? Information reprinted with permission from Alley Cat Allies, "Feral Cats on the Firing Line". www.alleycat.org

Did You Know?

In 1987, cats reached the number one spot in popularity, replacing dogs as America's favorite pet.

A domestic cat can run up to 30 miles per hour.

Cats do not have a true collarbone-that's why they can squeeze in to any opening big enough for their head.

Cat saliva is believed to contain a deodorizing and detergent like substance that keeps their fur clean.

Special Thanks to Donators: We would like to take the opportunity to thank each and every one of you who donated funds for our shelter and cat food project. Several colonies of cats are now enjoying new insulated shelters and canned cat food thanks to you. We truly appreciate your support in making their lives a little easier.