

Living with Community Cats



“Community cats” control rodents, and tend to avoid humans, so most residents live harmoniously with these elusive felines. However, if you want to keep cats off your property entirely, try these tips to make your yard or garden unappealing to cats:

- Remove or secure anything that might attract cats, such as pet food or garbage cans.
- Push chopsticks or 10-inch plant stakes into flowerbeds every eight inches.
- Cover exposed dirt areas with large rocks, or place lattice fencing over the soil. You can plant directly in the openings of the lattice. This is also a great way to control weeds!
- Sprinkle orange and lemon peels, pipe tobacco, and coffee grounds repel on your garden. Or spray the area with citronella, eucalyptus, or lemon grass oil.
- Plant an herb called “rue” around your garden border, or sprinkle the dried herb over your garden.
- If these simple and inexpensive solutions don’t work, consider purchasing “Cat Scat Mats”, a motion-activated repellent such as “Cat Stop” or a motion-activated sprinkler. Most of these can be found in larger pet-supply or garden stores.

For cats that are living under a house or other building: When you are sure that the cats are not under the building, block access with lattice or chicken wire. Be sure to search for kittens first, especially during spring and summer, which is peak “kitten season”.

For cats urinating on your property: Urine from un-neutered cats has a strong odor, which is much less noticeable once they are altered. The odor can be minimized by spraying the area thoroughly with white vinegar, which can be purchased inexpensively in gallon containers.

For cats that are yowling, fighting, spraying, roaming, and having kittens:

- These are all mating behaviors displayed by cats that have not been spayed or neutered. Cats reproduce quickly, and can have several litters a year.
- Spaying or neutering will stop these behaviors. Male cats will no longer fight or spray. Females will stop yowling and will not produce kittens. After spaying or neutering, hormones leave their system within three weeks and unwanted behaviors usually stop entirely.

If you are interested in helping to trap and spay/neuter “community cats” in your neighborhood, contact Northwest Spay and Neuter Center: www.nwspayneuter.org