



ALLEY CAT RESCUE

ALLIANCE FOR CAT PROTECTION

Alley Cat Rescue, Inc. is a 501c(3) non-profit dedicated to promoting the health and well-being of cats everywhere.

www.SaveACat.org • 301-277-5595 • PO Box 96499, Washington, DC 20077

WHY SPAY AND NEUTER?*

One of the main reasons Alley Cat Rescue is a proponent of spaying and neutering cats is to save lives and to reduce the intake at animal shelters. We advocate for low-cost sterilizations and we assist people through resources on our website. We also run our Annual Global Feral Fix where we ask veterinarians to join us in our endeavor to get more cats sterilized.

Despite progress made by TNR and other rescue groups over the last 30 years in reducing euthanasia rates in shelters, the numbers are still too high. At ACR, we are working to further reduce these numbers. We have formed partnerships with several groups across the country to help them sterilize community cats. Our Roanoke, VA project has been running for seven years and through that, over 4,000 cats have been sterilized. This year we have also worked with TNR groups in Florida, Hawaii, Minnesota, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania to sterilize almost 500 cats – and counting!

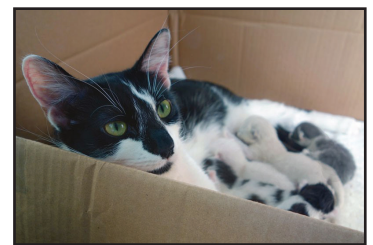
In addition to deaths through euthanasia, the number of cats dying in shelters from other causes is an issue that requires serious attention. The percentage of cats dying while being held in shelters in 2021 was actually greater than it was in 2010. A portion of the increase may be attributable to reduced euthanasia rates, which particularly affects kittens, seniors, and special needs cats who would have been euthanized a decade ago. These cats are more vulnerable to infectious diseases that are spread in densely packed shelters. The solution is to decrease overpopulation, which will not only decrease the spread of diseases in shelters as there will be less crowding, but will also cause each individual cat to be adopted out more quickly.

**Portions of this article are copied from ACR's 2022 Cat Report, which can be found at saveacat.org/newsletters.html.*

OUTDOOR COMMUNITY CATS

It is estimated that there are around 32 million community cats in the United States. A feral cat is considered “wild” because she fears people, and this fear usually presents as defensive aggression. A stray cat is one who is acclimated to people but has escaped from her home.

Trap-neuter-return is effective in preventing community cats from having kittens, and the suffering that would befall those kittens. For those who still dispute that it works, there is an increasing body of evidence that it does work at reducing the numbers.



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EXPANDING OUR WORK FOR CATS

At Alley Cat Rescue (ACR) we are fascinated by all cats and we care about all cats, everywhere. While we mainly focus on domestic and feral cats in the U.S. we have a program in South Africa saving the African wildcat, *Felis lybica cafra*.

Our project in South Africa has been funded entirely by generous grants from the Bosack Kruger Foundation and The Ayers Wild Cat Conservation Trust.

This project is two-fold—as it helps both the small wildcat and feral cats. The project sterilizes stray cats along national park borders, thereby ending hybridization between these two cats, and leaves wildcats in the Park pure.

Less than 1% of all wildcat funding goes towards the 33 species of small wildcats. Most goes to the 7 big cats, who need the money we know, but still small wildcats deserve money as well. We are hoping to get more people involved to do something to help our wonderful wildlife, especially our wild cats. There are steps you can take to help cats from your own home. We will show you how.

Felis lybica is the ancestor of our wonderful domestic cat, *Felis catus*, who sleeps in front of our fires and on our laps. In 2007 it was discovered that *lybica* is the ancestor of our domestic cat. Carlos Driscoll and colleagues examined genetic samples of 979 wildcats and domestic cats and discovered the ancestor of our domestic cats. Domestic cats originated 10,000 years ago from *Felis lybica* in the Near East and parts of Egypt, when farmers started storing grain, which attracted rodents and hence cats.

We would like to expand our project. Hybridization isn't the only problem facing these wildcats. Just two weeks ago we got a report of a farmer shooting an African wildcat. He said the cat killed his chickens. We have to work with farmers to put an end to the indiscriminate killing of wildcats.

If anyone is interested in helping the small wildcats of the world, please contact ACR to see how you can support this vital work. We are looking for partners for this endeavor.

We are concerned that the need is greater than ever to fight for what is left of the remaining wildlife in the world.

Habitat loss poses the greatest threat to species. The world's forests, grasslands, waters, and other habitats continue to disappear. Humans keep expanding and we are constantly taking land away from the wild for farming, housing, roads, shopping malls, and the other features of human development. We need to spend more on creating protected areas and saving important ecological habitats.

We the people are the solution to saving our wildlife. You can take steps today.

- **Awareness of using resources.** There are environmental impacts on the food and materials you buy and use. Reducing your footprint on the planet is the biggest gift you can give back to the earth. One huge step is to eat lower on the food chain.
- **Become an advocate for conservation.** Governments have a say in how our resources and our lands are used. As a taxpayer, you can influence them by writing letters and signing Petitions supporting sensible policies to conserve wildlife and grasslands.

It doesn't help to blame domestic cats for the decline in species. While all of us are doing our part in reducing the number of cats by sterilizing them, others are demonizing them and making our work harder. Let groups know we need support to TNR as many outdoor cats as possible. This is the only effective way to reduce their numbers. And all of us, environmental groups and private individuals can contribute in small ways to ending the decline of species.



“You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of a difference you want to make.”—Dr. Jane Goodall.

Louise Holton
President/Founder

RESCUE STORIES



Chelsea & kittens

Chelsea and her kittens – This sweet mama cat and seven 2 day old fragile babies were dumped at a city shelter. Alley Cat Rescue saved the whole family. Chelsea was struggling to maintain her own weight while supporting such a large litter of kittens, and our vet said the poor condition of her body indicated that she had previously had many litters right after one another. Additionally, Chelsea only had five nipples, so our team provided supplemental feeding to the kittens and mama cat too.

The kittens had upper respiratory infections and required intensive care to help them recover and gain weight.



Holly and her kittens

Holly and her kittens – Holly was trapped and taken to a vet's office where she immediately went into labor and started having kittens. As she was unsocialized, she was moved to a foster home to provide a safe, clean, quiet place to nurse them.

Lemon – We responded to a shelter's urgent plea to rescue Lemon, who had been surrendered with a severe leg injury. Lemon was clearly in pain and her wounds were at risk of becoming infected, so we rushed her to an emergency vet clinic where she was given pain medication and X-rays were taken of her leg. The X-rays revealed poor Lemon had been shot; her right tibia was shattered and metal and bone fragments were scattered within the surrounding tissue.

Lemon had a metal plate and seven screws surgically affixed to the bone to stabilize it. For three months afterward, she had X-rays done every two weeks to monitor the bone's healing. She is doing well now, running and jumping on all four paws.



Lemon after



Lemon before

"Arctic Six" – A litter of six, 7-10 day old kittens was dropped off at a shelter in Los Angeles on a public holiday. As is almost always the case for nursing kittens, the shelter did not have the resources to feed these babies, who must eat every two hours, 24 hours a day. For this reason, shelter staff had very little time to try to find a rescue willing to take the kittens before they would be euthanized. When ACR got the urgent request, we knew six little lives depended on us to say yes.

Several of the kittens have required extra attention and medical care early on. Snowy Owl had an ear infection, Bear had a bad, painful eye infection, and Wolfie stopped eating and her growth slowed behind her littermates. We took each to the vet and painstakingly treated them until we had a full litter of healthy babies. Unfortunately, one month later, the entire litter broke out into some of the most severe ringworm infections we have ever seen. It took weeks of baths and ointment to get these little guys fungus-free. During that time, we cleaned their area twice a day, wiping and sanitizing everything from the floors to their toys and bedding in order to eliminate as many spores as possible.



Arctic Six

Special Needs Kitten, Frito – Frito was born looking a little different. He is a drastically undersized kitten with a cleft lip who was found outside of a business.

When ACR first rescued Frito, he seemed basically healthy. However, due to his cleft lip, he ended up with aspiration pneumonia and needed two rounds of antibiotics. Afterward, Frito rebounded and was doing very well.

In order to live happily and pain-free, Frito will probably need several surgeries. His cleft must be fixed to keep him from recurring congestion and the possibility of



Frito

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RESCUE STORIES

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aspirating. He will also need his bottom canines removed to prevent them from cutting into the roof of his mouth due to his misaligned jaw. Then this surgery needs to be repeated once his adult teeth come in.

Frito also has tremors and falls over a lot. We took him to the vet and he has been diagnosed with cerebellar hypoplasia, or wobbly kitten syndrome. This is a lifelong condition that does not cause pain and with which many cats live comfortably.

With medical intervention, we see a lot more playing, cuddling, and joy in Frito's future!



OUTDOOR COMMUNITY CATS

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Spaying and neutering is really the best, kindest thing people can do for community and pet cats alike. It extends and improves cats' lives while sparing kittens from suffering and dying on the streets and in shelters.



SUPPORT OUR WORK SAVING LIVES

Planned Giving - Annuities

Annuities can help you reach your personal financial goals while serving your commitment to our work helping cats. Enjoy tax-saving and turn appreciated assets into income for yourself. Charitable gift annuities allow you to make a gift of \$10,000 or more and receive fixed interest payments for life, as well as tax deductions. For more information, contact your financial planner or get in touch with us:

Alley Cat Rescue
Phone: 301-277-5595
Email: acr@saveacat.org
Mail: PO Box 585, Mt. Rainier, MD 20712

Wills and Bequests

You can support our work for cats far into the future by including Alley Cat Rescue, Inc. in your estate plans. This will ensure that your love and care for cats continues on and provides you with the peace of mind that your legacy will help cats in need. Contact your financial planner to determine the best way to support Alley Cat Rescue, Inc. in your estate plan.

Suggested bequest language: "I give (specific dollar amount or property) to Alley Cat Rescue, Inc., having its principal office at 3906 Rhode Island Ave., Brentwood, MD 20722, for its general-purpose to help stray, abandoned, and feral cats and kittens. Tax ID: 52-2279100."

Stock Donations

Donating stocks offers great benefits; not only are stock donations income tax-deductible, they also enable donors to save on capital gains taxes. To request a Stock Donation Form, Email debbie@saveacat.org or download it from our website at saveacat.org/donate.html.



ACR'S RESPONSE TO HAWAII'S PROPOSED CAT "COUNT AND KILL" BILL

ACR got wind of bill HB1987 shortly before it was set to be heard by Hawaii's House Committee on Agriculture. This bill, nicknamed the "Count and Kill" bill, would have dedicated funds to counting all the feral cats across the state on June 30, 2023, after which they would be culled in an effort to eliminate all feral cats on Kauai, Maui and the Big Island, and reduce the O'ahu feral cat population by 50%, by the end of 2025.

With the hearing only a few days away, we raced to voice our opposition to the bill. The letter we sent to the Committee is reprinted below.

Our letter of opposition was one of about 1,000 submitted by individuals and animal and cat welfare groups across the U.S. The committee took the outcry seriously and deferred the bill (that is, killed it) for the remainder of this session! ACR will continue to monitor the situation in Hawaii and will alert our members should the bill be revived in the future.

Dear Legislators,

I am the founder and president of Alley Cat Rescue, Inc., an international nonprofit organization that practices and promotes humane treatment of cats. I have studied and worked with feral cat colonies for almost 40 years in South Africa, the U.K., and now in the U.S., and can personally attest to the effectiveness of population management methods that work in all parts of the world.

I urge you to reconsider your support for HB1987. Although the intent of the bill's authors is to better protect seabird populations, these policies are misguided and will cost many cats' lives unnecessarily.

Despite the potential for outdoor cats to prey on grounded birds, the protection they provide for birds' eggs and chicks from rats must be considered. Island birds are not only eaten by cats, but they are also largely consumed by introduced rats. Rats destroy nests, eating eggs and feeding on fledglings. The removal of cats from islands subsequently results in the rapid increase of rat populations. Mesopredator release has provided management lessons for eradication efforts that target both an invasive apex predator and an invasive mesopredator. For example, after cats were eradicated from Macquarie Island, near Antarctica, the rat population exploded, decimating the ground-nesting bird populations. After cats were eradicated from Macquarie Island, near Antarctica, the rat population exploded, decimating the ground-nesting bird populations.*

It is tragically unjust that feral cats, who exist on the islands because of human actions, will face hardship and death at the hands of those who brought them there. Poisoning animals is not humane. There is a better, truly humane way to control and vastly decrease the threat of cat predation.

TNR stands for "trap-neuter-return," which is the process of trapping, spaying/neutering, vaccinating, and then returning feral cats back to their outdoor homes. TNR is effective because it stops the breeding cycle of outdoor cats. TNR programs also remove kittens and cats who can be socialized from outdoor cat groups and stray cats who have become lost, further reducing group size. Mature and senior cats, who studies have shown hunt less, become the remaining group residents and will discourage new cats from moving into the area. Additionally, being that these remaining cats are sterilized, the number of cats within each group will fall over time as the cats die naturally.

A wealth of research and links to studies on the efficacy of TNR, particularly in comparison with other methods of outdoor cat population management, is available on our website at www.saveacat.org/cats-and-wildlife.html. I hope that you will take the small amount of extra time required to look further into the science behind TNR; if not for compassion for the feral cats of Hawaii, who are as much sentient individuals as the wildlife you want to protect, then for purely practical reasons because TNR truly is the most-tested, best-proven method of controlling and reducing outdoor cat populations.

I would be more than happy to answer any questions you may have on this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me at laholton@aol.com, or through my assistant at debbie@saveacat.org.

Sincerely,

*Louise Holton
President / Founder
Alley Cat Rescue, Inc.*

**Strickland, Eliza. "Attempt to Control Invasive Species Backfires Spectacularly on an Antarctic Island." Discover Magazine, 12 Jun. 2009, www.discovermagazine.com/planet-earth/attempt-to-control-invasive-species-backfires-spectacularly-on-an-antarctic-island.*

ASK YOUR REPS TO SPONSOR AN ANTI-DECLAW BILL

More and more, people in the U.S. seem to be waking up to the understanding that declawing cats is cruel, painful, and often has negative long-term effects on cats' behavior and quality of life. On April 21st, a bill prohibiting declawing cats was signed into law in Maryland. Four other states - Arizona, California, New Jersey, and Rhode Island - have similar bills moving through their congresses this year.

Residents of those states should urge their representatives to vote YES on the bills (links to

representative contact information is available at savecat.org/action-alerts.html).

Declaw bans will benefit cats, whether they are state-wide or more local. You can be a voice for change in your city, county, or state. Check to see if your community has a declawing ban in place. If it does not, contact local representatives about the need for one! You can share resources from ACR's website that detail the upsetting realities of declawing.

ACR PARTNERS WITH MI GROUP TO PROVIDE TNR FOR LEECH LAKE LEGACY RESERVATION

Alley Cat Rescue partnered with Leech Lake Legacy in Minnesota to help enrich the lives of animals by providing resources and sharing information about community cats and companion animals and people of Leech Lake Reservation. The program has already been used to run a weekend-long Trap Neuter Return (TNR) clinic, during which they sterilized and vaccinated cats, and distributed food. More TNR weekends are already planned.



CALL TO ACTION!

HELP US STOP THE INHUMANE KILLING OF CATS ON KANGAROO ISLAND

The Australian government has been working to eradicate cats from Kangaroo Island through lethal methods since 2016. The government claims that cat predation is seriously depleting the population of native species. They have been singing this same tune about species conservation throughout Australia for many years, and their solution is always killing cats. Following the 2019-2020 wildfires on Kangaroo Island, which decimated the populations of many species there, **the government and environmental groups such as Kangaroo Island Land for Wildlife are now persecuting cats with even more fervor**, panicked by their belief that feral cats will finish off the surviving native animals.

These organizations are introducing new technology to cull cats, with no regard for humaneness. One specialized machine called a Felixer trap uses artificial intelligence to identify passing cats by their size, shape, and speed and then sprays the cats with poison. The cats ingest the poison when they groom themselves – supposedly enough to kill them. There is of course the potential for a cat to ingest only enough toxin to make them seriously

ill, in which case they would suffer for a prolonged period of time. Strangely, the people condoning and setting Felix traps are not worried about that. Their concern seems to be only for the welfare of some animals.

If the cruelty of killing large numbers of cats isn't upsetting enough, the plan is entirely misguided! Every previous attempt at culling cats on islands has resulted in rats and mice no longer having a predator to control them and then overrunning the islands. Then these animals have to be poisoned. The ACR website offers more information and examples of this at <http://www.savecat.org/cats-and-wildlife.html>.

Culling is not even a practical solution. There are an estimated 1,600+ cats on the island. During the time it takes to kill all of them, more will be born, and then more. Kittens are able to become pregnant by four to five months of age, and cats have short gestation periods so there is no way to overtake their numbers by killing off individuals. The campaign of killing could go on

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These items and MORE can also be purchased through our online store:
<http://www.saveacat.org/store.html>

ORDER FORM

Name _____ Order Total \$ _____
 Address _____
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#	ITEM	PRICE	SIZE (Please Circle)	COLOR (Please Circle)	# OF ITEMS	\$ TOTAL
1	Black V-neck T-shirt	\$20	S M L 2XL			
2	Black Long Sleeve Shirt	\$25	S M L XL 2XL			
3	African Wildcat Shoulder Tote Bag	\$10	S L			
4	Smoke Gray ACR Cat Silhouette Long Sleeved Shirt	\$30	S M L XL 2XL			
5	ACR Cat Silhouette T-Shirt	\$25	S M L XL 2XL	lilac, teal, white, storm		
6	Charcoal Zip-up Hoodie	\$35	S M L XL 2XL			
7	Single ACR Mask	\$7				
8	Two ACR Masks	\$13				
9	African Wildcat T-shirt	\$13	M L XL			
10	Canvas Tote	\$12		Blue, Gray		
11	Cat Rescue's Guide to Managing Community Cats Paperback	\$6				
12	Blue ACR Bracelet	\$10	S M L			

Please send checks made out to Alley Cat Rescue or provide your credit card information below.

Sales Tax: 6% for Maryland residents. 7.25% for California residents.

**There is a flat shipping rate of \$7.00 for ALL purchases.

All donations are tax-deductible.

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HELP US STOP THE INHUMANE KILLING OF CATS ON KANGAROO ISLAND

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forever. There really is no upside to the plan; TNR will be every bit as effective in controlling the feral cat population there in the next few years, and much more effective in the long term.

A controlled (TNRd) population may even be more beneficial than eradicating all cats. Marion Island killed all their cats in the 1990s and since then mice have taken over without cats to control their populations and the mice are preying on the island's chicks.

Lack of reason aside, if one is determined to believe cats endanger the existence of native species on Kangaroo Island, or anywhere else in Australia, one really should place the blame where it is due. In the early 1800s, humans purposely brought cats to the country, starting in Sydney, in order to control rats. People introduced *Felis catus* to Australia, yet the cats are the ones being punished.

We want the unjustified killing of cats on Kangaroo Island to end! Alley Cat Rescue is going to send this message to Kangaroo Island Council CEO, Greg Georgopoulos, and we want to make it LOUD.

Please go to www.saveacat.org/action-alerts.html to sign our petition condemning the cat culling plan. The more people around the world who oppose it, the more likely the Council is to pay attention!

[†] Rosemary Hohnen et al. "Pre-eradication assessment of feral cat density and population size across Kangaroo Island, South Australia." *Wildlife Research*, 47(8), 18 March 2020, pp. 669-676. CSIRO, <https://www.publish.csiro.au/wr/WR19137>.

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