

Why are there cats on campus?



Walking around the campus, you may have noticed an occasional feline lolling in the grass or catching some zz's in the shade. What you may not know is that cats are attracted to college campuses and the vast majority of them are feral cats. This is a world-

wide phenomenon. One of the reasons for this is all of the human activity. People eat on campus, and there are ample crumbs and the smell of human food to attract them. Several Universities have adopted TNR programs including University of Tennessee, University of Florida and Southwest University among others.

How you can help.

- ◆ Donate money to Paws to Care for veterinary expenses.
- ◆ Donate food to Paws to Care for daily feeding.
- ◆ If you own a cat, have it neutered or spayed. The Humane Society has a low-cost program.
- ◆ Do not feed the on campus cats. They are fed daily.
- ◆ Restrict any cat you own to your home.
- ◆ Throw your uneaten food out in a covered trash bin.
- ◆ Do not approach any campus cats. They are feral and may scratch or bite if provoked.

History of Paws to Care

Prior to our establishment, there were more than a hundred cats on campus. Faculty and staff members at APSU saw the problem of cats living without care and breeding, leaving many hungry and unwanted litters of kittens who led miserable and unhealthy lives. Paws to Care was established by volunteer faculty and staff members with the approval of APSU leadership. Through tireless efforts, the volunteers organized feeding stations and began trapping and neutering the cats, bringing them in for veterinary care and releasing them back to their locations on campus. Where feasible, cats were re-homed. In the more than a decade since its inception, the population of cats on main campus, under the control of TNR, has been greatly reduced. This management is healthier for both the cats and the campus community.

To donate funds, please visit us at www.apsu.edu/paws-to-care/ or scan the QR code.



Scan. Pay. Go.

For Faculty/Staff volunteer opportunities & food donations contact: Corina Ravenscraft, PTC Organizer, at ravenscraftc@apsu.edu

To Join the Student Group, "Helping Paws" contact: Lsimpson13@students.apsu.edu

Campus Cats and Paws to Care at APSU



Paws to Care is a Trap Neuter and Release (TNR) colony that exists on the APSU campus and is managed and funded by volunteers.





Why TNR Works.

TNR, unlike trap and euthanize programs, maintains a stable colony that normally reduces the size of the population and keeps the local population healthy so that they do not harbor disease.

Trap and euthanize programs create a vacuum

effect that serves to draw in new cats from neighboring areas. A stable population of feral cats prevents other cats from taking up residence as feral cats are territorial and will normally chase away newcomers. Since the TNR colony is neutered, we have very few newcomers. This means that the cats that remain are neutered and cared for and the population does not increase.

What is a feral cat?

Feral cats have had little or no contact with humans and often demonstrate wild behavior. Feral cats are not the same as stray cats who are formerly owned by humans and exhibit tame behavior. They are often descendants of abandoned cats and are found in places where there is a lot of human activity. Because of this, feral cat colonies are mainly found in urban and suburban locations. Unmanaged feral cats subsist on food scraps scrounged from human waste in dumpsters, on the ground and in garbage cans.



Paws to Care Mission.

Paws to Care volunteers maintain feeding and watering stations for the campus cats. The cats are fed by trained volunteers 365 days a year which keeps them healthy. They are also provided with shelters that they can use during severe weather. We are in daily communication with our feeding volunteers and through them we monitor the feeding stations and the cat population, and do daily reports to ensure we are informed as to the status of the colony.

Paws to Care traps cats regularly and brings them into the veterinarian to have them neutered or spayed if they have not already been. They are also tested for disease, treated for worms and vaccinated. When new cats do wander onto campus it is a priority for us to get them trapped and neutered to control the population.

Please note that we are NOT a rescue NOR a sanctuary, therefore cats that are dropped off and abandoned on campus will be taken to the local shelter. Dumping animals is illegal and inhumane and in this case jeopardizes the stability of the colony's population.



Conservation Controversy.

Some years ago a flawed study attributed the decline of songbirds to feral cats which has led to negative PR for TNR programs. First, we must acknowledge as humans that we are responsible for the decline in songbird populations in many of our activities, chief among them: development, habitat loss, wide-spread use of pesticides, climate change and herbicide use are the greatest factors in songbird decline. That is not to say that cats never hunt and catch birds, but as feral cat colonies are almost always in urban and suburban settings, they do not typically affect the songbird populations outside of those areas and songbirds even in the most remote locations are declining in numbers due to causes other than cats.

Additionally, cats, when they do hunt, most frequently hunt rodents. This goes back to their wild origins; they are natural hunters of rodents, which may also have explosive populations in urban and suburban settings. Rodents are known carriers of major diseases.

