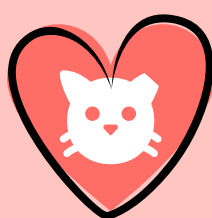


EARTIP ON OUTDOOR CATS

Why Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) includes an Eartip on Community Cats



A Sign of Care

If you notice an outdoor cat with the tip of the left ear missing, that's the sign of a cat who is healthy and receives care! An eartip is the universally recognized symbol of a cat who has been Spayed/Neutered. Eartipping is a standard part of most TNR (Trap-Neuter-Return) programs because it's simply the best method to let everyone know at-a-glance that a cat has gone through a TNR program.



Critical Safeguard

Most eartips can be seen from several feet away. Plus, anyone can all tell the cat has an outdoor home and is already Spayed/Neutered and vaccinated. That's a big deal when it comes to animal control agencies and shelters - having an eartip could prevent a feral cat from being admitted to a shelter and/or killed. An eartip also allows a caregiver who is setting traps to know this cat has already been Spayed/Neutered.



Safe, Clean, Painless

Because cats are eartipped while they're under anesthesia for Spay/Neuter surgery, everything is safe, clean and painless. The top 3/8 inch of the ear is removed. The ear heals quickly and no further attention is needed. You might be worried about the cat looking different, but the eartip doesn't hurt the cat, and it could actually save her life!



Universal TNR Protocol

There are hundreds of TNR programs in the U.S. and many more world-wide. The protocol of TNR programs includes the eartip to create a consistent indicator for not only veterinarians, but also for anyone who interacts with the cat-colony caretakers, animal control, concerned citizens, shelters, etc.



Why Other Methods Aren't Used

Other methods have been used to identify a Spayed/Neutered cat, but there are good reasons they're not accepted for use by TNR programs:

- Tattooing - you can't see a tattoo until a cat has been trapped, and it is usually unsafe to handle a feral cat until the cat is anesthetized. Plus, why put the cat through the trauma of being trapped again if the cat is already Spayed/Neutered?
- Eartags - these can cause infection, fall-off, or tear-off a cat's ear. Ouch!
- Ear-notch - the notch looks like a tear but is more difficult to identify because it could be mistaken for an injury from fighting.
- Collars - they could get too tight as the cat grows, get caught on something and injure or kill the cat, or just fall off.
- Microchipping - requires a microchip scanner to know if the cat was microchipped, and would also require re-trapping the cat. Microchipping is definitely beneficial, but not to identify Spay/Neuter status of a cat.