

# FERAL

VERSUS

# STRAY

## COMPARING THE 2 TYPES OF COMMUNITY CATS

"**Community Cat**" is a term used to describe feral, stray, and owned pets who roam outdoors. These cats live outside in our streets, alleys, yards, farms, abandoned homes, warehouses, or parking lots.

"**Cat Colony**" is a term used to describe groups of homeless cats that live together. These colonies form when there is shelter and a food source.

**Feral** and **Stray** cats differ in their experience and interaction with humans.

Cats born outdoors; free-roaming cats who have never had a guardian or "owner"

Former pets who are abandoned or lost

Have never been "socialized" or had any positive interaction with humans

Formerly cared for by a person or family, now trying to survive on their own

Lives in a "wild" state; very fearful and distrustful of humans; tend to avoid people and come out at night or dusk

Generally tame/friendly; may be skittish because they are scared by the experiences they have had with other animals or people since being outside

May show aggression, such as hissing and arching their backs; avoids eye contact and runs from people; crouches and crawls away

May allow you to pet them or pick them up; will move and walk like a housecat, such as with tail up - a sign of friendliness

Most likely to live in a group, known as a "colony"

Most likely to roam alone

Often dirty, matted, and may have visible injuries

Often still has clean, well-kept fur

Kittens - if socialized within the first 2-3 months of their lives - may be tamed but the older they are, the harder it becomes if not impossible, and may never be homed

With patience and care, can learn to trust humans again and be adopted as pets



May or may not have a tipped left ear, the sign that the cat has been through the TNR process

Most often does not have a tipped ear unless the cat was trapped in TNR process and returned to the outside rather than placed in a home or foster