



## BEST FRIENDS CATNIPPERS

### The Feral Cat Problem and Our Mission

#### The Problem

Feral cat colonies are the result of pet cats that are abandoned or allowed to reproduce by irresponsible pet owners. Neither pets nor wildlife, they often lead bleak and short lives without the protection of traditional animal welfare societies.

Feral cats arise from these "throw away" cats. They roam farms, alleys, parks, hospitals, restaurant dumpsters, schools, or any other sites that might provide a source of food and shelter. Raised without human contact, they avoid people and form colonies in which they reproduce further. It is estimated that up to 50% of cats euthanized at many shelters are feral or offspring of ferals. In addition to the misery of the cats living a subsistence life-style, they may also become a public nuisance and public health concern. Trying to control these cats by eradication can consume a significant portion of local animal control budgets. Even young feral cats are difficult to socialize enough to be adoptable, so they are usually euthanized at shelters. The traditional approach to controlling feral and stray cats is repeated extermination attempts. This is often a futile strategy, since other unaltered cats quickly replace the killed animals, moving in to take over the food source and to begin the cycle of reproduction again. Public support for lethal measures is often lacking, and caretakers may interfere with official trapping attempts.

#### Mission Statement

Best Friends Catnippers believes that all cats deserve a safe and caring home. Unfortunately, many of the cats born each year are destined to be homeless. Many will be killed at animal control facilities; others will lead dismal lives as unowned strays.

The usual approach to controlling feral cats is repeated extermination attempts. Long-term studies have demonstrated the futility of such a strategy, since other cats simply replace the killed animals and begin the cycle of reproduction again. On the other hand, trap-neuter-return programs are a very successful method of decreasing stray cat populations. These programs succeed at the least cost to the public and provide the best possible life for the cats themselves. Therefore, Best Friends Catnippers devotes all of its resources, both personnel and material, toward increasing the number of unowned feral cats sterilized at our clinic.

Local animal control agencies routinely euthanize feral cats without making any effort to effect adoption or sanctuary placement. Extermination is thus the official public policy of Los Angeles, as well as the vast majority of cities and counties throughout the U.S.

***Our primary mission is to reduce the population of feral cats by sterilizing as many as possible. In addition, by consistently demonstrating the effectiveness of trap-neuter-return, we seek to bring about changes in public policy so that TNR universally becomes the officially sanctioned and government-funded approach to feral cat management.***

**Best Friends Catnippers  
Contact Information:**

P.O. Box 55663, Sherman Oaks, California 91403-5663  
Telephone: (818) 377-9700 [General] – (818) 377-2004 [Volunteers]  
e-mail: [info@bestfriends.org](mailto:info@bestfriends.org)