

## Grassroots Efforts

### **Voices chime in on feral cats and the managed cat colony debate.**

*By Justin W. Sanders*

You've probably seen one before. Maybe you glimpsed four little white legs slinking down a darkened alley or saw a flash of calico scuttling under a car. Maybe you noticed its scrawniness, or its weepy eyes or the grease in its fur. Maybe you even wondered where the feral cat was going and what was waiting for it once it arrived.

"There's no good number on how many feral cats there are," says Karen Kraus, director of the Feral Cat Coalition of Oregon. "But just because you don't see them, doesn't mean they're not suffering."

Kraus and the Feral Cat Coalition strive to improve the quality of life for feral cats by diminishing their numbers and helping prevent them from spreading diseases to other cats. Using a technique called trap-neuter-return (TNR), they lend traps to caregivers of feral cats (the people who are feeding them), who capture the animals and bring them to the organization for treatment. Kraus and her team then sterilize the cats; apply treatment for fleas, mites and other ailments; and vaccinate for rabies and distemper. Upon picking up the cat or cats, the caregiver must promise to continue to feed and care for them from that point forth. In this way, the Coalition helps cultivate the "management" of feral cat colonies.

**\*\*For the full article, pick up the June 2007 issue of CAT FANCY.\*\***

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