

Living Together with Cats



Illustration: Keiko Nagasawa

GUIDEBOOK FOR STRAY CATS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

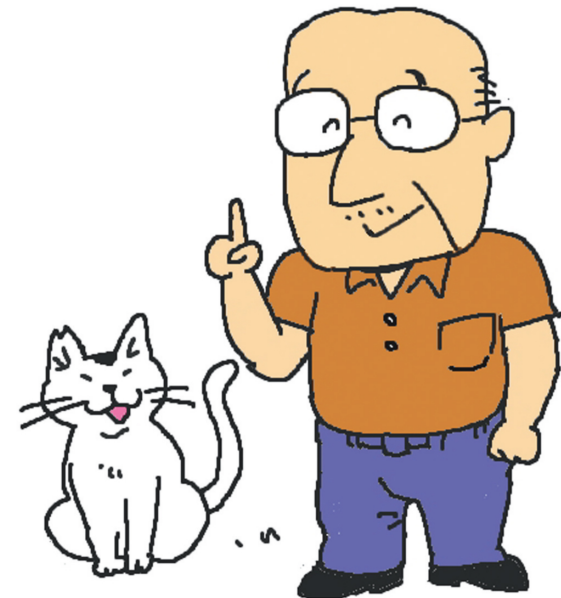


Illustration: Yoshio Arakawa

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Introduction

When stray cats cause problems in your neighborhood, what would be the best thing to do?

People, who have never dealt with stray cats in Japan, may not know how to deal with this issue.

If you would like to take part in caring for stray cats, you should get familiar with the present situation in your neighborhood, the tendency of public opinions, laws and regulations.

1

COMPLAINTS SURROUNDING STRAY CATS IN JAPAN



Guidebook for stray cats
Offspring of stray cats

People are becoming more aware of the increasing number of stray cats in their towns, neighborhood and communities.

Stray cats walk, urinate and defecate on our vegetable and flower gardens.

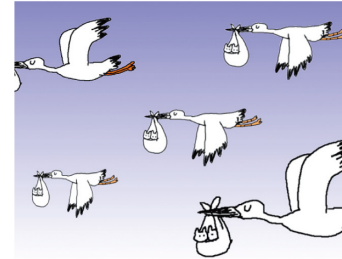
They also eat food from garbage cans. In addition, they scratch our car tires and hoses of air-conditioners, because they can't find trees where to sharpen their claws.

All these problems are quite common where cats are living.

When those complaints mount, the problem can't be ignored. Should we take some kind of action to solve the problem?

2

THERE ARE TOO MANY STRAY CATS



There are very few towns where there are no stray cats. If the number of those cats is small, most people will be tolerant in spite of minor troubles.

However, if it goes beyond a certain limit, people will start thinking about taking drastic measures.

The main reason for this intolerance is the increasing number of stray cats.

3

DO NOT DELAY TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM



ノラの出産

Offspring of stray cats

You may have seen a chart showing a highly fertility rate of cats in your neighborhood.

One female cat could have up to 2 litters of kittens per year and in theory, there could be more than 30 cats in one year and half.

Although the actual number is less than the figures shown above, due to the survival rate of cats, the increasing rate is remarkable without a doubt.

If we continue putting off the problem, the situation would become more and more serious.

It would be more effective and cause less trouble to start taking some actions while the number of complaints is not so high.

4

YOU CANNOT DISTINGUISH STRAY CATS FROM HOUSE CATS



It is very hard to distinguish at a glance whether a cat is a stray cat or not, because it is not mandatory for cats owners to have their cats wear collars with nametags.

Owners must be responsible for the trouble caused by their cats. However, if it is a stray cat, we don't know who we should complain to.

What should we do?

5

THE LOCAL AUTHORITY IS NOT ALLOWED TO CATCH ANY CATS



Guidebook for stray cats
Offspring of stray cats

They do not catch nor handle any cats, as this is not part of their job.

The only solution they came up with to solve this problem is posting signboards round town, such as:

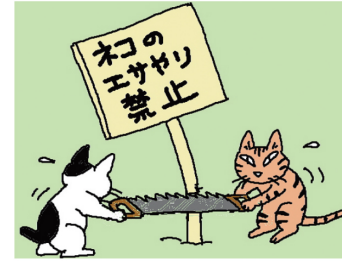
“It is against the law to abandon cats!”
“Neuter cats to avoid unwanted kittens!”

In the case of dogs, someone will be dispatched to catch them. As the local authority will take actions based on a law called “The Rabies Prevention Law”.

“This law does not apply to cats.”

6

IF WE DON'T FEED STRAY CATS, WILL THEY GO AWAY?



Do not feed stray cats

Some people might be bothered by the stray cat problem in their neighborhood.

The only way for them to feel satisfied is when they see a signboard, “Do not feed cats here”.

However, you cannot expect that those caring for stray cats will stop.

They would continue doing so, whether someone is around or not.

People who don't like cats expect them to disappear. Their frustrations will only increase as they don't.

Since there are no laws or regulations to prohibit the feeding of cats, we cannot expect significant results just by putting up signboards.

On the contrary, some people might even decide to abandon unwanted cats at these locations, because they know, someone will take care of the cats.

7

WHAT HAPPENS TO STRAY CATS IF NOBODY FEEDS THEM?



Even if people stop feeding the cats,
they would survive one way or another.

Strong cats may move to a new place where they can find food,
but weak cats may search in garbage bags.

Cats would not sit quietly and wait to starve to death.

Although feeding prohibited at most locations,
some damages could occur within the neighborhood.

8

IS THE PROBLEM SOLVED EVEN IF YOU DRIVE THE CATS OUT OF YOUR TOWN?



“No feeding” is not the best solution for stray cats to go away.

In the case of wild animals, they may return to the mountains
in search for food. However, for cats, this is not the same.

In other words,
we only hope that we can drive stray cats away from
our neighborhoods by letting them starve to death
or die from any diseases.

We cannot solve this problem by putting it onto someone else.
It is not fair to others.

Such an idea is too selfish.
Isn't it?

9

THE DEATH RATE INCREASES THE REPRODUCTIVE RATE TOO



If there is not enough food available, the lifespan of the cat will decrease. Cats can easily get sick, because their immune system will weaken. In addition, more cats will die from diseases.

However, when the survival rate of an animal is threatened, they will reproduce and generate many new offspring. The number of estrus cycles will increase, and the associated troubles with it will also increase. More kittens will be born and more of them will die year after year.

People will have to deal with disposing the bodies of the dead animals.

The garbage will be scattered all over the street, unhealthy and filthy cats will increase in your towns. Therefore, people will see your town negatively.

10

NOWADAYS SLAUGHTERING OF ANIMALS IS PROHIBITED

Most people do not approve the killing of animals anymore, because it is inhumane.

The number of cats may not decrease because cats move from place to place, and so we will continue dealing with the stray cat problem.

The only solution would have been killing the animal that is no longer reasonable.

Putting any animal down is only an idea from a few people who are cruel and have no perspective of the future.

If you kill any animals for profit, you will pay a heavy fine.

In Japan, you will be severely condemned by animal lovers and be criticized on social media.

You could lose your job and respect from others.

It would be very difficult to recover your reputation once it is lost. You will only make many enemies in society.

It is becoming more important for everyone to coexist and establish a good relationship between animals and people.

11

DO WE PUT DOWN KITTENS YEAR AFTER YEAR?



Abandoning cats is a criminal offence with a fine of up to one million yen

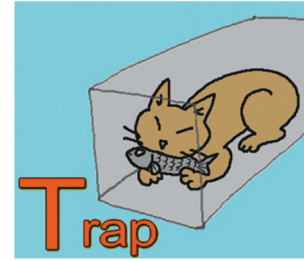
Although in Japan, abandoning cats is a criminal offence with a fine up to 1 million yen, some people still abandon unwanted kittens, leaving them to starve to death.

For some people, the only solution seems to put down unwanted kittens, which they take to the closest animal pound every time they are born. They don't want to put down kittens by themselves.

We should adopt more and buy less pets, because most animals taken to the pound will eventually be put down if they are not adopted soon enough. If you were a person with a good heart, you would feel some kind of sympathy for them.

12

LIVING TOGETHER WITH CATS: “TNR METHOD”



TNR is an abbreviation for Trapping/Neutering/Releasing, which means to catch, neuter and release the animals to their natural environment.

This method has become possible with the collaboration and understanding from vets as well as new safe surgery procedures.

Although there are no magical solutions for the stray cat problem, this method is ethical and legal; so many people support it.

After completing the surgery, the cat will be looked after by people who will take care of them every day, so that new babies would not be born.

In Japan, neutered stray cats are marked on their ear for identification.

There are two ways to mark the cat on the ear.

* Cutting a V shape or horizontal line on the ear by laser scalpel.

* Advantages of TNR

The cats that have gone through surgery will protect their territory from the newly coming cats that have not been neutered, as well as chasing out rats.

Since the number of stray kittens will not increase due to TNR, will help decreased the number of kittens on the street.

The budget of local authorities that is used to deal with stray cats can allocate to other matters effectively.

Complaints from people who suffer from loud noises when male cats fight over female cats who are in heat will decrease.

In addition, male cats will stop marking their territory; therefore any bad smells from their urine will decrease.

* Disadvantages of TNR

It will take time to see the result.

Although the number of stray cats will slowly decrease within several years, it may be difficult to persuade people who hate cats to understand the situation.

It cannot meet their demand to a satisfying result.

You have to keep explaining patiently that they will see the result soon or later.



Stop the breeding of stray cats

First, we suggest knowing the number of stray cats in your neighborhood. For example, one of the best ways is to ask people who take care of the cats.

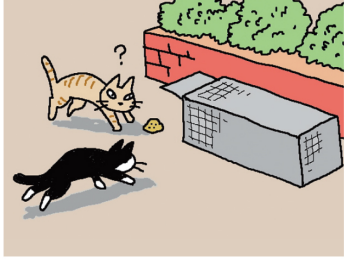
Second, how many people are there who feed the cats in your neighborhood or town?

Third, when and where do they feed the cats?

In addition, you should collect information in advance, about which vets neuter stray cats and how much does the surgery cost.

14

WHAT TO SAY TO WHOM IS FEEDING STRAY CATS



When asking for information about stray cats from people who feed them, you should enquire about TNR and ask for their help with it.

Please do not blame people for caring about stray cats. What you should say is “neutering is the solution”, because regardless whether anyone is around or not, people will continue taking care of the cats.

Most people who care for stray cats have realized the necessity for TNR. When you talk to them, they will most likely be cooperative and understanding.

The key to the success of TNR depends on these people. The most important mission for them is preventing any further breeding of stray cats.

“You really have to make this point clear.”

This is the only way to reduce the number of stray cats without putting them down.

15

YOU CAN START WITH A RENTAL TRAPPING CAGE



The most difficult part of TNR is to catch stray cats.

It is easier to find a trapping cage at any animal shelter center or vet clinic. They will lease and manage the trapping cage for you. Try to contact them first instead of purchasing one at the local homeware store.

You have to take good care of the trapping cage when it is under your possession, you may be legally responsible for it when it is stolen or lost.

16

THE HANDLING OF STRAY CATS AFTER CATCHING, IS UP TO THE VETS



Each vet has his/her strong and weak point just like any doctor who practices medicine.

Vets don't advertise the cost of neutering stray cats.

If you would like to find a vet near you, research on line or ask a person who volunteers to help stray cats.

17

HOW TO RAISE FUNDS FOR TNR



Flea market

How should we manage the expenses for TNR?

It would be better if you rely on the budget from your local government or donations from any pharmaceutical company. However, in most cases, this may not be possible.

There are various ways for raising funds.

- * To raise funds ,visit a neighbor door to door with leaflets.
- * Ask stores to put donation boxes at the counter.
- * Hold bazars, flea markets or garage sales with the help of volunteers.
- * Participate in local events to raise awareness of people.
- * Fundraising at a public place:
“You have to apply for a permit from the police.”
- * Subsidies: Some local authorities grant subsidies for neutering with proper documentation.

18

HOW TO MAKE CATS “NOT BE TROUBLE”: RULES FOR FEEDING



*The reason why some people hate stray cats
Noise during heat/Flies/Diarrheal poop/Left
overs/Marking/Attracts crows/Lice/Fleas/Skin diseases*

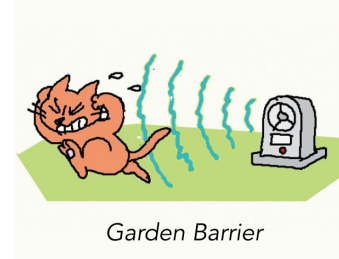
When people see stray cats, most may not care about cats, if they are not trouble.

To avoid disturbing anyone when feeding stray cats, we would strongly advise the following:

- * Do not leave any food at the feeding place.
Promptly put away leftovers.
- * Take care of their poop and clean up after them.
Make a proper liter for stray cats.
- * Distribute the food evenly at several places,
so that cats don't gather at one place.
- * Feed cats either early in the morning and or late in the evening,
they might not bother neighbors.
- * Be sure to take enough care of the cat's appearance,
so it doesn't make other people uncomfortable.
- * Neutering should be done to both male and female cats.

19

ITEMS TO REPEL CATS: QUICK SOLUTION FOR DRIVING AWAY UNWANTED CATS



Although there are no instant solutions, some people want to solve the problem immediately. Here are some suggestions to help ease with the stray cat problem.

- * Cat repellent sheet “Don't Cat”
Place it at your garden or flower bed to repel cats.
It uses soft, polypropylene resin spikes.
It doesn't hurt cats.
- * Cat repellent by scent.
You can drive away cats with lemongrass and wood vinegar.
- * Repelling by using ultra sonic wave: “Garden Barrier”
It catches the movement of cats with infrared sensors.
It takes about one or two weeks for cats
not to return around your home,
because they learn that this machine makes them feel uncomfortable.

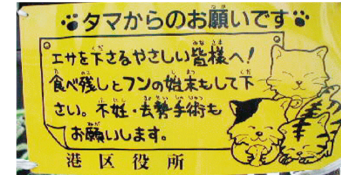


You can find these products in the garden section at almost any homeware stores.

These items do not harm the animal’s welfare.

Spraying of chemicals such as highly concentrated disinfectants or agricultural insecticides are harmful to both human and animals. Japanese Animal Welfare Law prohibits the usage of these.

It is also illegal to use any cruel trapping methods that can hurt the animal.



FROM TAMA, The stray cat
“To kind people who feed us: Please clean up after our leftovers and our poop after we finish. Please neuter us. Thank you!”

At this moment, not all animal shelters deal with the stray cat problem in the same way.

Until now, the local authorities had been suggesting the following:

- “Neutering of house cats”
- “Prohibition of abandoning cats”
- “Prohibition of feeding stray cats”

However, recently their policy is beginning to change.

The local authorities want their citizens to be well- informed of their campaigning on handling stray cats.

Therefore, the government is currently insisting the following:

- “Clean up if you feed”
- “Neuter if you feed”

People in the community would like to keep the number of stray cats on the streets to a minimum.

The regional and local authorities have realized that the easiest solution to this problem is not prohibiting people from taking care of cats. Rather making everyone aware, neutering is a big part of the solution.

THE GOAL FOR COMMUNITY WELCOMED CATS



Community Welcomed Cats

If you practice all these matters,
stray cats would be welcomed in your community.
This is achievable by taking one more step forward.

What does “a step forward” mean?

*Improving communication with your neighbors.

In addition, we should come together as a community,
in order to develop a better relationship with your neighbors
and try to solve the stray cat problem.

Also, let's not forget that we all should take into account
these suggestions.

In Japan, we should be role models in our communities and
report any issues to the local authorities regarding stray cats.

GUIDEBOOK FOR STRAY CATS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

<https://noranekogaku.web.fc2.com/>

Reference HP

- *NEKODASUKE(HELP CAT)
- *HELLO NYANKO!
- *SUMIDA CHIIKI-NEKO NO KAI(Sumida Community Welcomed Cat Association)
- *NHK GOKINJO NO SOKODJIKARA (The Potential Power of Neighborhood)
- *TINA NO PAJAMAS (Tina's Cat Pajamas)
- *NEKOMATA KURABU (Nekomata Club)
- *CHIISANA INOCHI WO TASUKETAI(Save Little Lives, Our Wish)
- *NORA NO HEYA(Nora Stray Cat's Room)
- *DOUBUTUTACHI WO MAMORU KAI KERUBIMU(Cherubim, Protect Animals Association)

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*The purpose of this pamphlet to be made use of people or societies who are working to protect and taking care of stray cats.
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