



Ideas for Feral Cat Shelters

There are many simple ways that you can provide shelter and warmth for feral cats, even if you aren't a carpenter. Often, many of these items are discarded in the landfill, but can be recycled and used to protect feral cats from the elements and the cold.

Coolers

A cooler is perfect, because it's already insulated! Find someone who can cut a hole in the cooler no larger than five or six inches in the front, off to the side a little.

Styrofoam Coolers

Again, Styrofoam coolers are already insulated. You can purchase them in the store, but they might be expensive. Grocery stores use Styrofoam coolers to ship seafood, or you may be able to obtain them through a hospital or a business.

Storage Totes

You can buy storage totes anywhere, and line them with foam insulation, cut and placed around the inside perimeter and also on the bottom of the tote. You may need to weigh them down with a flat stone under the floor--before you put the foam in--or place something heavy on top.

Insulated Wooden Structures

If you are handy, or you know someone who is a carpenter, you can construct your own (insulated) shelters.

It's important that you add a layer of straw to any structure you use, which creates added warmth, and the small space will permit the cat to curl up and retain its body heat.

If you have a barn, a garage, or even a lean-to, you

can place the shelters inside. If not, you can situate them near a hedge, or cover them with tarps weighed down with stones, leaving a place for the cats to enter and exit. Always insure that they are in a safe place.

These are a few ideas to get you started, but the Internet offers endless information. Simply do a search for "feral cat shelters." You can even watch step-by-step videos that show how you can create simple shelters without spending a lot of money or time. A great online resource for constructing shelters is Alley Cat Allies at www.alleycat.org

It's a great feeling to know that with a little effort, you are adding so much to the lives of these animals.



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Special points of interest

- *Feral cat shelters*
- *Community Relations*
- *The Gift of Giving*
- *My Short Little Life*
- *Upcoming Events*

Oreo's Second Chance

Oreo was trapped as a feral kitten in July 2011 at approx. 3 months old. She was frightened and clearly had suffered some damage to her left eye. Her eye appeared to be a cloudy blue and was constantly draining. After her visit to the vet clinic it was determined that she had an ulcer of the eye that had since healed. After applying several rounds of medication to her left eye, nothing seemed to help with the drainage. We were concerned that this may hurt her chances of finding a FURever home. But, we



Before



Oreo settled into her new home

didn't give up on Oreo because she deserved to have a loving family to love her. She was taken to the Petsmart Adoption Center on February 23, 2013 in hopes of getting adopted within 3 weeks. As her 3 week stay at Petsmart came to end she was scheduled to be placed back in foster care on March 20. Fortunately, the day she was to return to foster care we received an application for Oreo. Oreo has settled into her new home nicely and likes to play fetch with her human companions. Her mom says she loves her belly rubbed and loves to purr. She is adored!!!

Give the Gift of Life

Simply do good when you shop! By simply shopping at the online stores that you love you can help us save more lives. Every time you shop Focus on Ferals receives a percentage of your purchase at no cost to you. The hardest part of this adventure is choosing or listing a charity or cause when registering but we have made that an easy choice for you. Shop online at

2,800+ stores such as Amazon, Expedia or Staples when you shop at www.goodshop.com. Don't see

"Save more lives by shopping online this holiday season. It's as easy as 1...2...3!!!"

your favorite store at Good Shop, simply go to www.givebackamerica.com and find your store with over 1,000 online retailers. Over 1,300 retailers at www.igive.com and the iGive button makes it easy, free and automatic.

1. You shop online
2. We receive a donation
3. At no cost to you

They need a home too....

Sometimes we take in cats and kittens who may be perceived as not adoptable because they have a cosmetic flaw, a minor medical condition, they are considered special needs or they may need some emotional support because they are shy or frightened. They wait patiently in foster care for that special someone to understand their needs and are willing to give them a second chance. Will that be you?



Jack & Magoo



Avery



Tiffany



Savannah



Sweetie



Mia



Elsie



Lexie



Mama



Carson



Jesse



Tripper



Brooke



Carnie

My Short Little Life (through the eyes of a kitten)

I'm not feeling very good today. I can't eat, and I'm covered in fleas, my skin itches from the fungus that is covering it and I have a really bad upper respiratory infection. My eyes are closed from infection and I can't breathe through my nose. I just want to stay warm and be held and comforted. Here comes my human to pick me and my siblings up. Wow! We are all going together for a ride! Wonder where we are going, maybe to the vet for some medicine because my siblings are sick too. Two of them can't open one eye and it is really swollen and sticks out really far. Two others are just as sick as I am and they can't breathe either.

We are in the car now and going down the road, suddenly we stop. Hey, there aren't any houses around here so this can't be the veterinarian's office. I wonder why we stopped? We are being taken out of the car and our carrier, we are being set down in the dirt, that's strange. I guess the human knows what he's doing so we will wait here. There goes the car!! Wait for us!! You can't just leave us here like this! We are too little and we are sick, help us!

Oh no, one of my siblings just died! How sad, no one was here to comfort us and he just died. The last thing a human did for him was dump him on the side of the road! Here comes a big

dog. Oh my, we are all scared of it! Help us! A human is with the dog, maybe she can help us. Oh, she is picking us up, thank God, someone is nice. We are going to her house, she will help us now. Another sibling is too sick to survive, he dies overnight. She is

"Wait for us!! You can't just leave us here like this, we are too little and we are sick, help us!!"

feeding us some cat food but I just can't eat and my belly hurts, I'm hungry but just too sick to care about eating. We picked up more fleas while we were out there and they are sucking the life out of me.

This kind lady doesn't know how to help us but does put out a call for help on Craig's list and her prayers are answered. Another lady comes to get us and takes us to her home. We are given a bath with smelly stuff for the ringworm we have, given antibiotics to fight the upper respiratory infection, we are combed for hours to rid us of the fleas that have made us anemic, food is offered and my siblings really like it but I am still too sick to eat even if it is forced into me. She has to give me fluids

somehow so she does it with a needle under my skin. I don't like it but it helps me so I have to tolerate it.

For two days, we are kept warm and fed and are given our antibiotics and I am carried around in a soft warm blanket because I cry if I am put down. I like being held close to her. Monday morning comes and I really feel rotten. I know I'm not going to survive. She calls the vet for an appointment for us but I won't be making the trip. She holds me close and continues to talk to me and stroke me. She tells me she is sorry but I don't know why she is sorry, she did everything she could and was very good to me. I am tired and I hurt from being hungry and sick. I want to keep fighting but I am so tired and weak I just can't fight any more. She is cuddling me and tells me to cross the Rainbow Bridge where I will no longer hurt or be sick. I trust her so I will do as she says. I take another breath and go to sleep.....I cross the Rainbow Bridge, I no longer hurt, and it is peaceful and beautiful. I am not afraid or in pain.

Written by Sara Besaw

A Successful Year...

We applied for and received three grants in 2013 to assist with our TNR & Spay & Neuter Programs. In June we received a grant from Petsmart Charities® in the amount of \$3,250 to spay/neuter and vaccinate for rabies 55 free-roaming cats. Also, in

June, we received a grant in the amount of \$2,000 from the Onyx & Breezy Foundation which assisted us in spaying and neutering 41 cats and kittens. In September the ASPCA awarded us \$2,000 which helped us spay & neuter 41 cats and kittens. Additionally, a

sincere thank you to all who generously donated toward our cause of 'saving lives.'



Devlyn (adopted), just a few days after rescue, resting peacefully.

GOT OUTDOOR CATS? HOW TO ENSURE NEIGHBORHOOD HARMONY

Quick and easy ways to make peace with the cats in your community!

So, you're seeing cats in your backyard. Chances are you are not alone. Stray and feral cats are found in nearly every community, including yours.

Both stray and feral cats live outdoors, where they can find food and shelter. Stray cats are usually lost or abandoned house pets—cats who are friendly with humans and can often be re-adopted. Feral cats, on the other hand, are not socialized to people, and instead live with other cats in groups called “colonies.”

Feral cats—who cannot be adopted—are accustomed to life in the great outdoors. And, they actually prefer it.

Sometimes these outdoor felines behave in ways that their human neighbors don't like or understand. Not everyone likes having cats and other animals in their yards, but the fact is, the animals are there and it is their home, too.

Here are simple, inexpensive ways to ensure a peaceful coexistence with feral cats.

Cats are hanging out on my porch and in my yard.

Try liberally sprinkling cat repellents, such as a non-toxic powder, spray, or fresh citrus peels, around the edge of the yard, the tops of fences, and on any favorite digging areas or plants.

An ultrasonic repeller or a motion-activated water sprinkler will work, too.

Cats are digging in my petunias.

Cats have a natural instinct to dig in soft or loose soil or sand and bury their waste. Scatter known cat repellents including fresh citrus peels, coffee grounds, or pipe tobacco.

Another great deterrent is a product called Cat Scat™, a plastic mat that you cut into smaller pieces and press into the soil. Each mat has flexible plastic spikes that are harmless to cats and other animals, but discourage digging.

Cats are rummaging through my trash.

They are looking for food. Make sure you have a tightly fitting lid on your trash can.

Be aware that scavenging cats may not have a regular source of good food. If neighbors are feeding, ask if they are doing it on a regular schedule. Feeding outdoor cats on a regular schedule will keep them from scavenging.

Establish a regular daylight feeding time. The cats will adjust quickly. Put out only enough food for one meal and remove leftovers after about 30 minutes. Leftover food, like unsecured trash, attracts insects and wildlife.

Cats are yowling, fighting, spraying, roaming, and having kittens.

The cats need to be spayed or neutered. All of these behaviors will virtually cease soon after the cats have been altered—and there will be no more kittens.

See www.alleycat.org for more information about Trap-Neuter-Return, a proven and humane option that ends the breeding cycle and stabilizes the population of outdoor cats.

Are you feeding outdoor cats?

For information about how you can help protect the cats in your community, and nationwide, please visit www.alleycat.org. Alley Cat Allies provides free information and videos about the care and protection of feral and stray cats.



Domino
(adopted)
just a few
days after
rescue. She
was very tiny
for her age.

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Adopt, Don't Shop

Focus on Ferals is a charitable, non-profit organization working to create awareness and support within the community for the humane treatment of animals. We are funded through public donations and grants. We currently have 78 cats & kittens that need to be spayed and neutered so any financial help you can provide is greatly appreciated. We operate a growing network of foster homes for animals. No animal is euthanized because their time to find a home has run out! We provide TNR assistance, placement and adoption services for unwanted animals, sponsor educational programs and provide free information to the public. We need your support to continue our work. For more information call us at 518-483-8189 or email

[www.focusferalstoday.com]

savinglives@focusferalstoday.com

2013 Upcoming Events

Petsmart Adoption Weekend

Nov. 15-17

Petsmart Santa Claws Photo Shoot

Dec. 7th

Petsmart Santa Claws Photo Shoot

Dec. 14th

We are always in need of the following items:

Dry/canned cat food

Puppy pee pads

Temptations

Litter