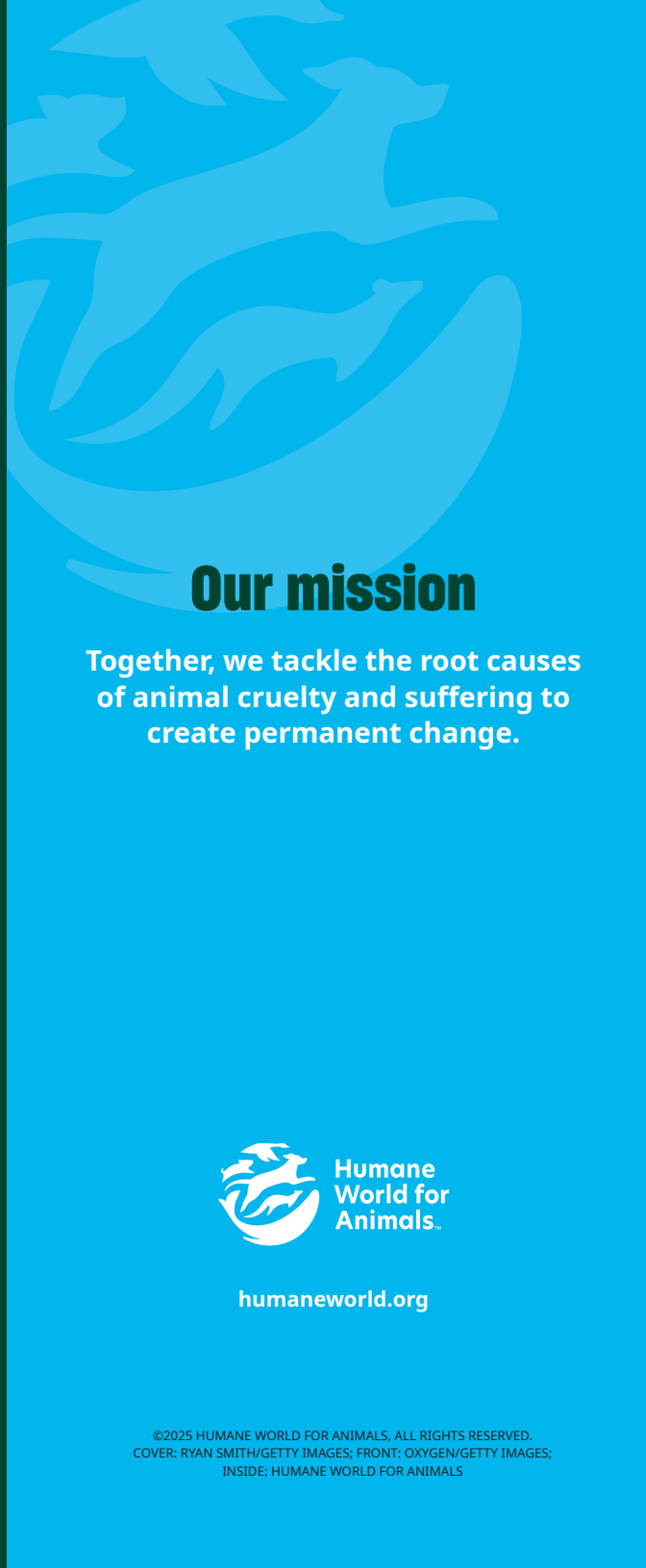




An indoor lifestyle benefits cats and wildlife

Most people care about both cats and wildlife and want to protect all animals. By reducing the number of cats who live outdoors, we can keep both cats and wild animals safe. And by giving our indoor cats plenty of enrichment, we can ensure they have full, enjoyable lives.



Our mission

Together, we tackle the root causes of animal cruelty and suffering to create permanent change.



Humane
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Humane
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Animals.

Formerly called the Humane Society of the United States

Cats, wildlife and you



Keep cats indoors.

Cats are curious creatures with a strong instinct to explore. You might believe they need outdoor access to lead fulfilling lives, but unsupervised outdoor time poses dangers to both cats and wildlife.

Cats who roam outdoors freely risk predation or injuries by wild and domestic animals, being hit by cars, contracting diseases, ingesting poisons/toxins, or getting lost. Keeping cats indoors is safer for all animals—but indoor cats need enrichment to prevent boredom, health issues and stress. Try these approaches:

- Bring nature a little closer by offering pots of cat grass, parsley, basil or other cat-safe herbs. You can even bring inside a handful of fall leaves for your cat to sniff and explore.
- Let your cat emulate hunting and foraging behaviors—safely. Wand toys, puzzle dispensers, and laser pointers can provide plenty of fun. Even watching the outdoor world from a tall cat tree or window perch can entertain your feline friend, in part because staring is an essential part of a cat's prey sequence.
- Provide safe access to the outdoors. Take your cat for walks in a specially designed pet stroller, or help her get used to wearing a harness so she can go for supervised outings. If you have the resources, consider installing a catio—learn more at humanepro.org/catios.



If keeping pet cats indoors full-time isn't possible, limit their outdoor time: Avoid letting them roam at dawn and dusk, when birds are most active, or in the spring, when many wild species raise their young. Always feed cats indoors and keep their food inside to avoid attracting wildlife.

Set wildlife up for success.

Free-roaming outdoor cats can have a considerable impact on local wildlife, particularly birds and small mammals. Besides keeping your pet cat indoors, you can take steps to reduce the impact of other free-roaming cats in your neighborhood.

Birds eating at feeders are especially vulnerable to attacks by outdoor cats. Position bird feeders at least 12 feet away from grass and shrubs (under which cats can easily hide), or hang feeders on a wire strung at least 8 feet above the ground between two trees that are at least 8 feet apart.

Better yet, replace traditional bird feeders with native berry-producing shrubs and plants. They will attract birds by providing food and hosting caterpillars and other insects that birds eat.

If you encounter any wild animal who has been captured by a cat, place the animal in a safe container (e.g., a box with air holes) and contact a licensed wildlife rehabilitator (visit humaneworld.org/injuredwildlife). Cat bites create tiny puncture wounds that are hard to see but can become infected quickly, so they must be treated right away. Do not feed the animal or attempt to treat the animal yourself; improper care could cause further harm or violate local wildlife protection laws. Transport the animal to a wildlife rehabilitator as quickly as possible, keeping the animal in a warm, dark, quiet place in the meantime.

Get involved with trap-neuter-return.

While keeping pet cats indoors is an easy solution, it's not practical for the large number of cats who don't have owners or indoor homes. Trap-neuter-

return (TNR) is a humane and effective approach to managing and eventually eliminating these community cat populations. With TNR, cats are humanely trapped, spayed or neutered and vaccinated by a veterinarian, given an ear-tip for identification, then returned to their outdoor homes. Effective TNR programs stop the breeding cycle, decreasing the number of cats living outside over time, which in turn benefits wildlife. Contact your local animal shelter to learn about TNR efforts in your area—and how you can help.

If you feed community cats, take the following steps to reduce disease transmission and harmful interactions between cats and wildlife.

- Follow a schedule. Feed cats at the same time and place each day, using clean bowls or plates. Schedule feeding times when wild animals are less active, typically during daylight hours, and remove dishes and uneaten food after 30 minutes.
- If necessary, use feeding stations, which provide shelter and restrict access to cats only. This helps prevent wild animals from accessing the food.
- **Do not feed wildlife.** Be sure you're not intentionally or unintentionally leaving any pet food for wild animals to find. Feeding wildlife can lead to dependency, alter natural behaviors and increase the risk of disease transmission.

Despite your efforts, wild animals may still approach community cat feeding areas. Try using humane hazing techniques to startle animals and encourage them to leave; you can make a loud noise (by clapping or using a whistle or air horn) or spray a quick burst of water from a hose. Using these techniques consistently will help wildlife associate the area with unpleasant experiences.

Learn more best practices at humanepro.org/catsandwildlife.