



# CATS CRADLE RESCUE REPORT

Website: <http://www.catscradlerescue.org/>

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Can you smell it? (No, it isn't the litter box!) **Spring is in the Air.** For most people in Southern California Spring means it is time to start getting the swimsuits and boogie boards out of winter storage or turning over the rich soil preparing gardens for summer flowers or vegetables. For **Cats Cradle Rescue** volunteers, Spring means we must rush to prepare for the spring flood of kittens from fertile local momcats as well as working to spay or neuter feral cat colonies created when people dump or abandon their inconvenient or unwanted cats... before those colonies also "rain" kittens.

Our small group of Cats Cradle Rescue volunteers work tirelessly to stem the flood of unwanted or abandoned cats and kittens in Ventura County. **We were able to find loving homes for 327 abandoned or orphaned cats and kittens during 2007.** In this issue we wanted to share some stories about our feral colonies and the people who "moonlight" to care for them.

Kitten season is just starting so we probably won't have many tiny kittens available for adoption for a while, but we still have lots of wonderful older kittens and cats for you to love and take home – please check the enclosed schedule for dates and locations, and check out our website and Petfinders.com for more adoptable cats and kittens.

## **We Now have Advertising space available!**

If you would like to advertise in this newsletter, please contact Phyllis at (805) 649-6913. It costs only \$25.00 for a business card/camera ready ad (see page 3) and since the newsletter will be posted on our website, you get a lot of bang for your buck!

Please email us at [adoptions@catscradlerescue.org](mailto:adoptions@catscradlerescue.org) or call us or stop in one day at an adoption if you can help. Adoption locations and times are listed in this newsletter or you can call **(805) 485-8811** for a recorded message about our adoptions. We also list our available cats and some kittens on Petfinders.com so let any friends know where to find us if they are looking for a new family pet.

Thank you so much for your generous help in the past (adopting a cat or kitten, helping out with fostering or adoptions, or by donating cat-friendly items or even cash!) and we look forward to hearing from you or seeing you at an adoption soon!!

## **DON'T BE A FAT CAT!**

Help your pets live healthy and long lives. This piece is adapted from the MSNBC Creature Comforts column and reprinted with permission from Kim Campbell Thornton, MSNBC contributor, and msnbc.com. Here is the link to the full article <http://today.msnbc.msn.com/id/21755451/>

### **Just like with people, diabetes rising in pets**

#### **But 'Catkins' diet, Weight Watchers-type programs and new meds can help**

As with people, the incidence of diabetes in cats and dogs is increasing. Not so much of a problem in decades past, diabetes now affects as many as one in 50 of the animals, some statistics show, especially pudgy pets.

"There is no question from what I know that is published in the literature that obesity is on the rise, No. 1, and No. 2, diabetes is on the rise right along with it," says veterinarian Robin Downing, hospital director of Windsor Veterinary Clinic in Windsor, Colo.

Diabetes results when the body doesn't produce enough insulin, a hormone that processes glucose (blood sugar), or properly use it. As a result, the body's tissues cannot use glucose for energy, and the sugar builds up in the blood and urine.

Veterinarians say that while obesity clearly is linked to diabetes in pets, it appears to contribute to the disease differently in cats and dogs.

Fat cats are prone to diabetes because they develop insulin resistance, meaning their bodies don't effectively use insulin. As a result, the pancreas pumps out more insulin as well as another hormone called amylin. "When you get too much insulin secreted, you get too much amylin secreted as well, and that tends to aggregate and destroy the insulin-producing cells," says veterinarian Richard W. Nelson, a professor at the University of California School of Veterinary Medicine in Davis.

*Continued on Page 2*

### 'Catkins' diet and other aids

Not every dog or cat that develops diabetes is fat, but any way you look at it, obesity and diabetes are linked. The good news is that obesity is preventable and reversible, and oftentimes so is the diabetes.

A change to a high-protein, low-carbohydrate diet — nicknamed the "Catkins" diet — can promote weight loss and make diabetes more manageable in cats, often sending them into remission so that they no longer require insulin injections. At the Windsor Veterinary Clinic in Colorado, three out of every four diabetic cats have their disease controlled through diet alone, says Downing.

Besides diet, improvements in insulin have made it easier for owners to manage diabetes in dogs and cats. Veterinarians now have two newly approved forms of insulin, one for cats and one for dogs, that make treatment better. Vets also are finding that some diabetic cats respond well to a long-acting human synthetic insulin called glargine, which appears to work best in newly diagnosed diabetic cats that are being fed a high-protein, low-carb diet.

Another important development has been the ability of owners to check a pet's blood glucose level at home using a blood glucose meter. That makes it a lot easier to ensure that a pet is receiving the right amount of insulin, without subjecting it to a stressful overnight stay at a veterinary clinic.

### A preventable disease

Downing wants pet owners to know that diabetes is almost always a preventable disease if a pet maintains a normal weight. She stages interventions — advising clients with fat pets about the risk their animals face — and runs a pet weight-loss program.

"We treat this just like Weight Watchers," she says.

"We have regular weigh-ins, we create a food program and an exercise program, and we give regular feedback to the owners about what a good job they're doing."



(Left to right: Morrisse, Herme, and Marles)

## OUR HAPPY ENDINGS!

### "Letter from a Happy Home"

by Devon Williams

I grew up in a family that has always had animals. The most memorable were our three very spoiled, much beloved house cats. When I went away to college and got my own apartment, I decided that I wanted to adopt a cat of my own. I have always felt that here is an appallingly large and unnecessary number of homeless animals in need of a permanent home, and decided that adopting a rescued cat truly felt like the best thing to do.

I found my first cat, a grey tabby I named Herme, at one of Cats Cradle's Camarillo PETCO adoptions. She was the last kitten left of her litter, her brother, an orange tabby having been adopted only moments before. She was alone in the little metal crate, quietly looking on and observing the other customers holding and cuddling their new orange kitten. I immediately asked if she was available for adoption, and was told that she was. I picked her up, and she tottered and wobbled around the folding table as I filled out the necessary paperwork to officially make her the first addition to my family.

That was a little more than two years ago. Since then, I have also adopted a grey and white tuxedo cat who I named Marles, as well as a kitten (Morrissey) that I rescued from a busy street corner one night while driving home from work. I recently got them a three-level carpeted cat house and a smaller one upon which they can perch to look out the window.

There is really no downside to being a cat owner. It has been incredibly rewarding to watch them grow up into large, friendly, curious, healthy animals whom I have come to regard as more family than as pets. They each have their own personality, and they have all been a blessing to my home. I am very grateful that there are people willing to volunteer to actively foster and take responsibility for the well-being of animals who might otherwise have lived a very short, unhappy life. Thank you for all you continue to do on behalf of these animals.

(Another Happy Ending on Page 3!)

## OUR HAPPY ENDINGS! (Continued)

(A bit about **Emma's** history with Cat's Cradle.)  
The Oxnard/Camarillo CCR Team adopted out a kitten named Emma. The day after she went to her adopter's home (Sunday), we received a call telling us that Emma needed to be returned to Cats Cradle.

The woman who adopted her complained that Emma was too friendly and purred too loud. We asked her to give it a few days to see if things would get better with time. On Thursday, CCR Volunteer Debra Polk had to go to the new home and pick up Emma. Emma's Cats Cradle foster mom was able to take her back and foster her again.

The Best News is that on the very next Saturday, Emma was readopted to a brand new family. Emma had her family sent us her letter to let us know just how well things were going. Emma is very happy in her new home and hopefully will be able to live a long happy life in her forever home.

### Emma



Dear Cat's Cradle,

As you can see I am very happy at my new house. I have settled in and I am learning about many new things. Can you believe that my new family put up a beautiful tree for me to climb! They also put shiny things on it for me to knock down! They really like me a lot but I am still getting used to my new Kitty sister, Jacki. She doesn't like me yet but I'm working on it. Thank you for finding me such a great family.

Love,  
Emma

*P.S. They don't think I purr too loud!*





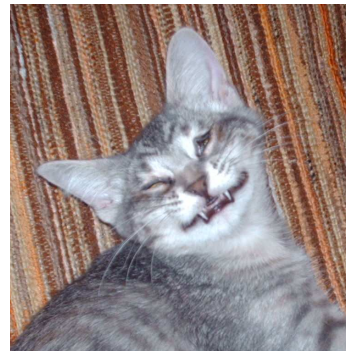
MARIA A. MINDER-FRIEND

**Ragrats Daycare**

Lic #566202628

8254 Shasta St  
Ventura, CA 93004

Telephone  
805-647-4864



Please Note:  
This is the editor's photo, NOT DeAnna's!!! She takes BEAUTIFUL PHOTOS!

## Smile for the Camera

DeAnna is bringing her computer and digital camera to the Ventura PETCO adoptions In February and March and will take and provide multiple photos of you and/or your pet on a CD for just a \$10.00 donation to Cats Cradle.

These photos would be great to use for holiday cards, custom tee-shirts, or family newsletters since they are digital and versatile.

Give DeAnna a call if you are interested in photos and a CD.



**Katz Creations**

katzkreations@gmail.com

**DeAnna Scott**  
805.258.3173

## 1001 Kitten stories:

### **Kitten Story #7 (shared by Monica Harrer)**

Linus was born with a deformed chest cavity. He appears normal and is active, playful and loving. His birth defect came to light when he went in to be altered. His lungs cannot expand completely. When they put him under anesthesia, he showed signs of distress. He almost died. Dr. Chong, DVM, examined him and found the defect. It does not seem to affect his daily life but odds are that he won't survive another surgery, even a teeth cleaning. I have him on Lysine to boost his immune system and Plaque Off to help stop plaque from forming on his teeth.

We have Linus's birthday as 4/21/2007. He came to us at about six weeks of age with his mom Libby and three littermates, Shannon, Juliet and Boone. His mom and littermates have all been adopted. Linus is outgoing, usually one of the first to greet guests. He is loving with me, the dogs and the other cats. He especially likes my Labrador Isabel. He can play for hours with a catnip mouse.

### **Kitten Story #8 (also shared by Monica Harrer)**

This litter of kittens was rescued from under a house in Oxnard. My sister Robin, and Cindy Haith conquered their fears and claustrophobia to go into and 18 inch crawl space full of spiders and other critters to rescue the litter.

It was a litter of six white kittens (2 girls and 3 boys) with gray spots on their heads. They are being fostered by Sharon (see "Living the Feral Life" on the next page) and are all still available at our upcoming Camarillo PETCO adoptions. (3 kittens from the litter shown at right). Meet these kittens at our Camarillo PETCO adoptions on Saturdays.

### **Kitten Story #9**

This is a BIG kitten story. These "kittens" are around 6 years old. Four declawed female cats came into the care of Cats Cradle Rescue volunteers when their owner could no longer care for them properly due to health reasons. Two were Himalayans, the other two were Persians. All needed baths and 3 of the 4 were so badly matted that they had to be "shaved" down.

Cilla is gray and white (Blue Persian), Norma is a flame point Persian who has a slight birth defect that gives her a wobbly gait in her back legs – she is a sweetie and very clean in her use of the litterbox spite of her disability. The Himalayans are Cashmere, a lilac point who had to have a benign tumor removed from her neck soon after arrival and is currently residing with Jennifer, a CCR foster. Sadie, the seal point, has already been adopted to a loving home in Goleta. The Persians are at PETCO every Saturday from 12-4 and you can see their photos are posted on Petfinders.com or [www.1-800-save-a-pet.com](http://www.1-800-save-a-pet.com).



Linus



Aden



Annie & Priscilla



Priscilla



Cilla & Norma

# Living the Feral Life

## What is a feral cat?

The term “feral” means wild and not socialized. Feral cats are usually born without human contact, although some may be cats that were previously owned and abandoned. Very often they lose any trust that they had of humans.

## How do you recognize a feral cat?

Cats that do not respond to humans – cats that run away when approached may be feral. Feral cats tend to be nocturnal because it feels safer to be out and about when there is less activity and fewer humans around. If they don't have a regular food source, they tend to be thin and badly groomed. The unaltered males usually have big shoulders and thick necks from long-term breeding.

## Where would you see them?

Feral cats usually live in colonies and gather in places where there is shelter - commercial lots with abandoned cars, equipment, and in backyards. The primary need is some kind of food source. This can be near markets and restaurants where they can “dumpster dive”. Agricultural areas that have a plentiful supply of rodents are often a seasonal option. A female about to give birth to her litter will look for a safe place away from the colony. She and her offspring are often found in someone's backyard or in an abandoned car.

## How do feral cats survive?

The average life span of a feral cat is **2.5 years**. They must deal with the hazards of day to day living and the dangers of fighting other cats, dogs, cars, starvation and diseases. Unaltered females can have as many as three litters per year. If she does not find enough food to for herself and to nurture her litter, their chances of survival are slim. Once her kittens are weaned or if she can't produce enough milk to support them, she will desert them to fend for themselves.

## What can we do to help?

Once a colony has been identified, all the cats must be sterilized in order to stabilize the colony. This process is known as Trap-Alter-Release (TNR). The colony members are trapped humanely, spayed and neutered and then released. Food and water are then provided on a regular basis. Cats Cradle and other rescue organizations try to educate the general public about overpopulation and that the responsibility for getting your animals spayed or neutered and keeping them safe falls on pet owners as well as the caretakers of feral colonies.

## **Feral Cat Caretakers in Ventura County** (Information provided by CCR Volunteer Sharon Stover)

Several of our dedicated CCR volunteers have been working to stabilize feral cat populations. Cats that have

been abandoned or have been born and grew up without human contact gather together at sites where Cats Cradle volunteers provide food and water on a daily basis. They keep the population is healthy, trapping any newcomers to make sure a spay or neuter is done before re-releasing them to the site.

Cats Cradle provides care at more than 25 feral sites in Port Hueneme, Oxnard, Ventura, and Oak View. Over one lb of food is distributed at each site at every feeding. That is over 30 lbs of cat food every day, 365 days a year. Our Oxnard/Port Hueneme CCR volunteers are Sharon, Gina, Deb, and Monica. They also foster cats and kittens in their homes and volunteer at our Camarillo PETCO adoptions. Stop by sometime and say “Hi”!

Sharon Stover oversees 17 feeding sites in the Port Hueneme and Oxnard area. Each site has from one to 25 feline residents and she provides food and water daily. In the last 10 years, she has trapped and transported 150 cats to the vet for their operations from these sites, then released and watched over them. She has also found homes for 60 kittens that were rescued from these sites, fostered, socialized, and at 2 lbs, spayed or neutered and then shown at our adoptions. She has been working to stabilize our Ventura County feral cat population for 17 or 18 years.

The typical feral cat only survives only a few years from its birth, but in Sharon's stable feral colonies, there are cats that are 15 and even older since they receive better nutrition and the spay/neuter operation reduces fighting and injuries in the males and deaths from constant pregnancy, delivery and nursing in the females.

The dangers facing feral cats include – stray dogs, coyotes, hawks, owls, cars, and people who throw rocks, shoot, and sometimes capture and torture stray cats. Some people even feel that feral cats shouldn't be fed, that they should just catch mice, rats, and gophers to survive. That catching “vermin” is their only purpose for being. (Did you know that well fed cats are actually much better hunters than starving ones?)

Sharon says that at her first site those many years ago, all the cats were skinny and starving. She began feeding and trapping and found that the cats were also badly infested with mange mites. Dr. Christie, DVM, now retired, developed a treatment that could be used on feral cats (who are notoriously difficult to handle). Her first cat trapped at the site was a white cat she named Snowball.

Here is a great website online where you can learn about feral cats and how to help them.

<http://www.alleycat.org/visitor.html>

***When you donate and check the box on the donation slip that says “Feral Food Fund”, you are helping to provide nutritious food to Ventura County feral cats.***

*Please see the next page for photos of a feral feeding site.*




## Microchips

Microchips are a low cost and easy way to protect your cats (and dogs). A microchip is a tiny electronic device about the size of a grain of wild or long grain rice. It doesn't have a battery, but is activated by a scanner (like a barcode at the market). Each chip is assigned a unique identifying code that is linked to contact information in a database. Most vets and shelters now have equipment to read most of the chips available. The chip is implanted using a very sharp preloaded sterile needle. It only takes a few seconds and most cats don't even flinch. It is injected much like a vaccine shot under the loose skin above the shoulders on the back.

Cats Cradle Rescue has a microchip display at each adoption so you can see a sample microchip. We microchip our kittens and cats as they are adopted to their forever homes. The microchips we use are registered to Cats Cradle, but it is an inexpensive and easy process to re-register them.

An older adult orange tabby was found by CCR volunteers last year in Ventura. We scanned him and he had a microchip. We were able to locate and call his family and it turned out that he actually lived in Camarillo. It remains a mystery how he got to Ventura, but his family was VERY happy that he had the microchip that enabled him to come home!

If you microchip your pets or adopt a microchipped animal, please, please be sure to change the address with the chip's database when you move so if your pet goes missing, the person who finds and rescues your animal can find YOU!

Cats Cradle Rescue uses the **InfoPET** brand of microchips. More information about them can be found at <http://www.infopet.biz/Pet%20Owners.htm> The microchip is only about this  big.

## CCR is ONLINE!

Please view our latest newsletter in color at

<http://www.catscradlerescue.org>

With the cost of printing and postage increasing every year, we are working hard to use email delivery for newsletters so we can redirect those \$\$ to rescue.

If you truly enjoy reading our newsletter and need to receive a hard copy of the newsletter, please let our editor know. If you would prefer to receive it via email, please let us know and share an email address with us. **We promise not to sell, loan, or share email lists with any other organization.**

Please email our editor at [Editor@catscradlerescue.org](mailto:Editor@catscradlerescue.org), or send a note to **Cats Cradle Rescue, P.O. Box 5774, Oxnard, CA 93031.**

You can also call and leave a message at (805) 485-8811, or just check the box of your choice on the enclosed donation coupon and mail it back with your donation. Any money we save on printing and postage goes directly to our feline friends and please keep in mind that every \$.41 stamp = a can of cat food!

We are now offering advertising space to individuals and companies who would like to purchase small (only \$25.00 for a business card/camera ready ad!) or larger advertisements in our next issue.

Please call 485-8811 or email [phyllis@catscradle.org](mailto:phyllis@catscradle.org) if you are interested in purchasing ad space in the Summer or Fall issues of this newsletter.

☐ Yes, I would like to make a donation to Cats Cradle Rescue in the amount of:

\_\_\_\_ \$10  
\_\_\_\_ \$25  
\_\_\_\_ \$50  
\_\_\_\_ \$100  
\_\_\_\_ Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

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Please direct my donation to ☐ **The Feral Food Fund** ☐ **The Louie Fund**

I prefer to receive my newsletter:

☐ US Mail ☐ view online ☐ via email \_\_\_\_\_

**Please check one box**

Email address – please print clearly

Then clip and mail your tax-deductible donation to:

Cats Cradle Rescue, P.O. Box 5774, Oxnard, CA 93031

We are a non-profit 501c3 organization. EIN: 77-0552733



**Thank You  
for Saving a Life!**

## Our Adoption Events (please share with a friend):

Camarillo **PETCO**  
177 West Ventura Boulevard  
(Las Posas exit)  
Saturdays, 12-4 pm  
(except holidays)  
Call Sharon (805) 487-2702

Ventura **PETCO**  
4300 East Main St.  
(Next to Kinko's)  
Saturdays, 12-4 pm  
(except holidays)  
Call Phyllis (805) 649-6913

**We would like to take a moment to thank several organizations that help us immensely in our rescue efforts.**

- The **PETCO Stores in Camarillo and Ventura**, who generously provide space for our weekend adoptions and along with the **Port Hueneme PETCO**, recently donated many bags of dry cat & kitten chow to help us feed our hungry foster cats and kittens.
- **Dr. Chong, DVM** and her friendly assistants in Camarillo who work tirelessly to heal many of the sick and injured cats and kittens we encounter in rescue.
- The caring staff of the **Mercy Crusade Low Cost Spay and Neuter Clinic** at the corner of Vineyard and Oxnard Blvd. in Oxnard where almost all of our cats & kittens receive their spay or neuter operations.
- **All Cats Clinic** which recently donated two large 6-compartment display enclosures that are just purrrrrrrfect to show off our adoptable cats and kittens at our adoption sites.



(805) 656-2190  
FAX (805) 650-1405

**ALL CATS CLINIC**  
(Full Service Hospital For Cats)

CAROLINE L. GEORGE D.V.M. • EDGAR M. CHURCH D.V.M.

www.all-cats-clinic.com  
4587 Telephone Road, Suite 105 • Ventura, CA 93003

**THANK YOU  
PETCO!**

**Camarillo PETCO  
Manager – Duane**

**Ventura PETCO  
Manager – Chris**



**CAMARILLO VETERINARY HOSPITAL**

S.H. CHONG DVM.  
258 Dawson Drive  
Camarillo, CA 93012



Telephone: (805) 482-9865



Cats Cradle Rescue  
P.O. Box 5774  
Oxnard, CA 93031



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[Editor@catscradlerescue.org](mailto:Editor@catscradlerescue.org)

## Can You Help?

Any donation, large or small, helps our all-volunteer group provide food, veterinary care, spay and neuter programs, vaccinations, and emergency care for **Cats Cradle** cats and kittens. All donations are tax deductible, and will be acknowledged. 100% of what you donate goes directly to benefit our rescued cats and kittens.

## Our Wish List:

Cat & Kitten Food – always needed!

**Cat care items** (scratchers, carriers, beds, towels, blankets, etc.)

**Financial Support** (every dollar and cent helps!)

**Safe sites** for feral cats to call home

**Foster homes** for cats/kittens until “forever” homes are found

**Volunteers** to help with:

**Adoptions** (staffing, set-up, take-down)

**Transportation** (to and from vet clinics)

**Temporary care** for rescued cats and kittens

Please bring any items you wish to donate to an adoption site (see inside newsletter for adoption schedules) or send your financial support to

Cats Cradle Rescue, P.O. Box 5774, Oxnard, CA 93031

Website: <http://www.catscradlerescue.org/>

(805) 485-8811