Cat Demographics

by

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As of October, 2010
Cat Intakes at ASPCA
(1896-1994)
Historical Cat Intake Data - NYC

- Very high cat intake into ASPCA shelter in first half of 20th Century.
USA Trends

- In 1970, 25% dogs were strays, very low sterilization rates (ca. 10-20%).
- In 1973, ca. 13 million dogs & cats (20%) ex 65 million owned are euthanized.
- In 2008, ca. 4 million dogs & cats (3%) ex 140 million owned are euthanized.
- In 2008, approx. 85% of owned cats and 65-75% of dogs sterilized.
- Shelter numbers dramatically down since 1970, but, relatively, stray cats still a problem.
## US Owned Cat Numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total US HHs (mill)</th>
<th>% HHs with cats</th>
<th># Cats per HH</th>
<th>Total # Cats (mill)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>88.1</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>54.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>92.5</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>57.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>98.6</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>59.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>107.3</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>70.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>115.6</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>81.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
US Owned Cat Population Trends

- Graph based on three data sets – AVMA, APPA, PFI.
- Cat population growing at about 1.6 million a year
Cat Location Trends - Daytime

- APPA surveys show indoor cat proportion growing fast.
Indoor Cat (Daytime) %s

Cats - Indoors Only - Daytime (%)

1994 Datapoint for California (Johnson, 1994), remainder from APPA Surveys
Where Cats are Kept (%)

From APPA Surveys
Outdoor Access & Time Outdoors

• Of the cats with outdoor access, only around 10% (of a total of 35% during day and 25% at night) are outdoors all the time = 1 Outdoor Cat FTE.

• Cats who are not outdoors all the time probably spend about one third of their time outdoors.

• Therefore, outdoor cat FTEs amount to about 0.15 of the total cat population FTEs during the day and about 0.12 outdoor cat FTEs during the night.

• Therefore, owned cat “predation number” is only around 12-15% of actual cat population.
Owned Cats & Outdoor #

- # owned cats has increased substantially.
- Increasing # confined indoors all the time.
- # of cats with outdoor access (29 mill) actually lower today than in 1990 (37 mill).

Must continue tracking indoor/outdoor #s – Actual # outdoors very sensitive to % indoors – at 50% indoors, # outdoors is then 44.8 million in 2010.
The range of estimates for feral/stray cat numbers is rather wide – ranging from around 10 million to over 50 million.

High estimates based mainly on studies of outdoor cats in Florida and California where outdoor cat population estimated at 80% of owned cat population.
But there do appear to be substantial differences in outdoor cat populations in states with mild winters compared to those with severe winter climates.

In Maine, the outdoor cat population appears to be no more than 10-15% of owned population.
U.S. Stray Cat Population Estimates

• 13 million in winter, 24 million in summer (Clifton, M., Where cats belong – and where they don’t, ANIMAL PEOPLE [June 2003].) Since revised down to 7.5 million in winter and 15 million in summer.

• 50 million (Levy, J., Humane strategies for controlling feral cat populations [2004], Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association, Vol. 225, No. 9.)

• 60 to 100 million (Alley Cat Allies, Tracking Our Success [2005].)
STRAY/FERAL POPULATIONS

- **1992** – Extrapolations from HSUS Survey – 12.5 million households feed an average of 2.62 stray cats each = total of 32.7 million (AZ 6:203-4, 1993)
- **1995** – Santa Clara, CA (AZ 8:178-9, 1995)
  - 250,000 “owned” cats and 170,000 strays
- **1996** – San Diego, CA (AZ 9:117-9, 1996)
  - 366,000 “owned” cats and 202,000 strays
- Stray/feral populations are about 60% the size of the owned population, or about 40% of all cats.
Stray/Feral Cat Numbers - 3

• One possible source of trend data could be shelter intake data.
• Over past ten to fifteen years, cat intakes into shelters appears to have been stable or showing slight increases.

![Colorado: Large Shelter Cat Intake](image)
But, over longer time-span, there has been a substantial decline in shelter cat intake numbers.

Decline of about 80%!
New Hampshire Cat Shelter Intakes

- NH cat shelter intakes unchanging until s/n program started.
- But again reached a plateau.
Trends in Shelter Euthanasia & Handling Rates - “Normalized”

Animals euthan. & handled/1,000 people

- Euthanized
- Handled
Current Shelter Trends
(using data from one CA shelter)

Dramatic decline in animal intakes in 1970s – nationwide trend

Cat intakes decline again in mid-1990s as TNVR becomes more widespread

Cat intakes at 25% of 1970 value
Policy Issues

• Two main approaches proposed
  – Trap and kill
  – TNR – manage populations to reduce breeding and the number of cats.

• Volunteer support
  – High for TNR – potentially millions of people
  – Unknown for Trap & Kill, but likely low
Conclusions

• Require much better understanding of cat populations
  – Regional variations
  – Historical trends
  – Population management
  – Hunting behavior and prowess

• Better data will permit better analyses leading to improved policy suggest