

A photograph of the Caribbean Beach Club entrance, showing a paved road leading through a lush green landscape with several buildings featuring green roofs. The word 'CARIBBEAN' is visible on a building in the background.

Caribbean Beach Club

NEWSFLASH BULLETIN

www.caribbeanbeach.co.za

Feral Cat Programme

Background

We are currently inundated with feral cats at Caribbean Beach.

As always there are two factions – those who love cats and those who despise them.

There is also a rumour doing its rounds that we, the HOA, are killing all cats on the estate. This is not true but we do need to do something about the feral cats. There are between 150 to 200 feral cats on the estate.

Contributing Factors

- Residents bringing cats onto the estate (un-neutered and not spayed). This results in residents' cats breeding with feral cats.
- Residents abandoning their cats when they leave the estate. This results in the domestic cats joining colonies when abandoned and because they have been domesticated they have no fear about going into homes where food can be obtained due to the fact that they are not being fed consistently. This also leads to an abandoned cat marking homes in an effort to create its own territory.
- Residents not looking after their cats properly – (not feeding them consistently). We have received complaints where a known domestic cat goes into other homes because its owner has partially left the estate and it is not being looked after or fed consistently by the current resident or its minder.
- Residents feeding feral cats randomly.

What the Experts Say

- Primarily a cats' main concern is food.
- In order to keep them away from homes it is ideal to establish feeding stations away from the home wherever that is possible.
- In a large area such as a business park or residential estate there is likely to be more than one colony.
- They require a regular source of food and water.
- Where a feeding programme exists only about 70% of their requirement should be supplied. This approach will ensure that they stay healthy enough to keep rodents and strange cats at bay.
- Sterilisation is enormously important as it keeps cat numbers under control and the female population do not need to share their limited resources with litter upon litter of offspring. *A single fertile female cat can produce about 16 kittens per year. If only half of the little ones are female the descendants can multiply to a staggering population of thousands of strays.*
- It also means that the male cats are less involved in mating fights which in turn reduces the spread of feline AIDS.
- Feral cats should be wisely maintained. They will keep cats not belonging to the colony out of the area.
- Although female cats can start producing litters from around six months, it has been known that cats as young as three and a half months have produced litters and they can carry on for up to nine years. Feral cats have a 65 day gestation period and can go into heat immediately after giving birth and can

fall pregnant even while nursing. Fortunately, disease and other mishaps has the effect of keeping the population numbers down.

- Attempting to eliminate the total feral cat population will prove to be an exercise in futility.

The Programme

The HOA has existing rules governing animals on the estate. Rule number 2.2.9.4 requires residents to register their cats and dogs. The following is required: The breed, age and proof of rabies inoculation. Please read the rule as it is pivotal to the above programme. A photograph of your cat/s will be helpful so that we will be in a position to identify your cat if need be.

Registration starts immediately, so the sooner you drop us an email with the above detail and copy of the rabies certificate the less likelihood of your cat being caught in the dragnet. If you do not have a current rabies certificate please still send the required details and advise that the certificate will follow. Please email admin@caribbeanbeach.co.za

All new arrivals of domestic cats to the estate will have to be sterilised.

We, in conjunction with HAWS will commence trapping feral cats shortly. The programme will be as follows:

- There will be three or four feeding stations set up not too close to residential establishments.
- Feeding will take place in the evenings only so that the birds and monkeys are not attracted to the food.
- No feeding will take place on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings once the programme is in full swing.
- Trapping will take place on Tuesday's and Wednesday's.
- All trapped cats will be taken to HAWS the following morning.
- Babies will be held by HAWS who will look to find suitable homes for them.
- Adults will be sterilised and returned to the estate and united with their respective colonies the day after they have had their operation.
- All sterilised cats will be tagged to avoid wasting time and money.
- Feral cats that are diagnosed sickly will be euthanized.
- Up to now we have only caught a couple of cats where it has been obvious that they are very ill.

Please Note: It is important that you treat the registration your pets with the HOA as URGENT. We also strongly suggest that all domestic cats currently living on the estate should be sterilised and be fitted with a collar with an ID tag or address so that we can distinguish between domestic and feral cats.

The HOA will not hold itself liable for treating domestic cats as feral if they have not been registered and do not have an ID collar.

Chairman of the Board

Caribbean Beach Club Home Owners Association.

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