

# House Cats and Wildlife



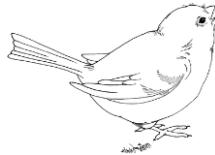
## SHARE THE WILD

House cats, due to their predatory nature, do pose a threat to wildlife populations such as songbirds and small mammals. Free-roaming house cats can be an attractant to bring wildlife, like coyotes, into a neighborhood. The cats themselves are often at risk of being preyed upon by larger predators like coyotes, foxes, raccoons, cougars, skunks, raptors and domestic dogs. The human safety risk is higher once wild animals find a food source close to urban areas. Cats can also contract diseases like rabies, from coming in contact with wildlife.

## Training Your Cat to Become an Indoor Cat

To protect our pets and wildlife, here are some tips to turn an outdoor cat into a happy indoor cat.

- When acquiring a new cat, keep it inside from the start.
- Gradually decrease the amount of time your cat spends outdoors and increase the time indoors. This may be easiest to do during the winter months.
- Provide indoor activities such as cat condos, window perches, interactive toys, and scratch posts.
- Offer fresh cat greens often.
- Provide an outdoor enclosed and covered room, patio or run. The cat can access the safe outdoor area through a cat door or window door. There are several commercial cat runs and outdoor cat exploring cages available at pet supply companies.
- Consider leash training to supervise the cat's time outside.



**Be Wild Aware!**  
[wildawareutah.org](http://wildawareutah.org)

## Protecting Pets:

- Keep vaccinations current
- Spay and neuter
- Do not leave pets outside at night
- Provide a reflective collar with identification and a loud bell to warn wildlife of the cat's presence
- Keep cats indoors during the spring baby bird season.
- Trim the cat's nails every one to two weeks

Note: if behavioral problems arise once a cat is denied access outdoors, they can usually be attributed to boredom. Be patient and review the steps you took to keep the cat indoors. Talking with your veterinarian or a cat behavior specialist can be helpful.

If you have an encounter with aggressive wildlife, please alert the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR) office near you. If the encounter or sighting occurs after hours or on the weekend, please call your local police department or county sheriff's office, who can contact a conservation officer to handle the situation.

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