

FERAL CATS VS. HOUSE CATS

WHAT'S SO DIFFERENT BETWEEN THEIR VOCALIZATIONS?

In general, feral cats show significantly more aggressive behavior compared to house cats. In a study conducted by Yeon et al. (2011), they showed that feral cats have increased agonistic call rates (growl and hisses per minute) and increased durations in agonistic calls (growl and hissing time length) compared to house cats. House cats show much less agonistic behavior.

Yeon et al. (2011) also showed that feral cats have increased frequencies in their agonistic calls (higher pitch calls) compared to house cats. It is interesting to note that the frequency of an agonistic call is directly related to the amount of fear the cat feels. If a cat feels very threatened, it will emit a higher frequency vocal call (hiss/growl).

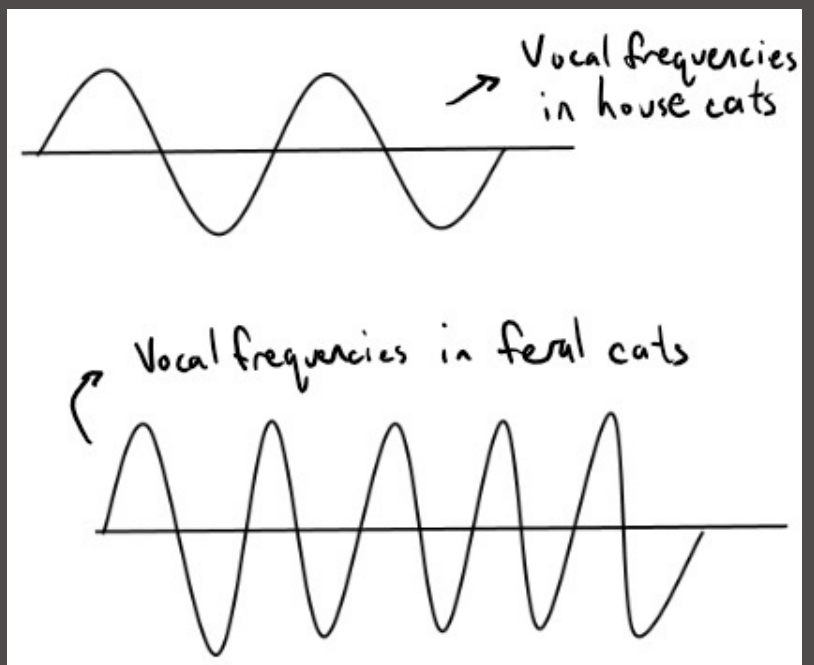
Vocalization that is the most common in cat-human interactions is the meow. This is rarely heard between cat-cat interactions, and much more in human-cat interactions.



Aggressive vocalization



Relaxed vocalization



Yeon et al. (2011) used **5 different tests** to test differences in vocal parameters between house cats and feral cats. These tests gave the results stated above.



Test 1: Friendly approach of caregiver



Test 2: Threatening approach of a stranger



Test 3: Approach of a doll (size of a child)



Test 4: Approach of a stranger with a strange dog



Test 5: Approach of a stranger with a strange cat

FERAL CATS VS HOUSE CATS



House cats are described as being tamed, fed, and kept by humans. House cats can be born inside a household or adopted by a human.



Feral cats are described as not being tamed, and not being fed or kept by humans. They are born in the wild and lack socialization.

Can feral cats be tamed?

Yes, feral cats captured or adopted at a young age are able to be tamed easily to become acceptable household pets. Adult feral cats on the other hand, are extremely difficult to tame due to their lack of socialization when they were young.



Socialization is a process in which the animal develops a social bond or relationship with conspecifics or members of different species.

Socialization in a cat's early life is extremely important in reducing aggressive and defensive behavior in the future. It has been shown that cats who continuously socialize at a young age will have less fearful, defensive, and aggressive behaviors as adults.

