

Decompression & Adjustment Period

Taking Home your Feral / Semi-Feral Cat

We are here to help! If you have concerns with your new pet, please get in touch and we can help you navigate this transitional period.

What does Feral / Semi-Feral Mean?

A cat born and raised in the wild, or who has had little-to-no contact with humans, is considered a feral cat. Feral cats are not accustomed to interacting with people and may be very fearful of being handled.

Feral / Semi-Feral cats can make strong bonds with their caretakers, and become wonderful companions, but may remain shy with new people and visitors. How social they become over time is a spectrum.

How to Make the Transition Easier:

- Fearful cats usually do best in quiet environments. Start by confining your cat to a smaller room in your home where there are no inaccessible hiding spots (inside couches, behind cabinets, etc.) to become their “safe space.”
- In their “space” provide safe and cozy hiding places, a fresh litter box, food, and water.
- As they become braver, gradually allow them to explore the rest of the home.
- Never attempt to pull your cat from their hiding place, or force them to be held. If they hiss, growl, swat, or bite, it is likely because they feel scared. Respect their space and give them more distance and time.

A Few Other Tips:

- It may take weeks to **months** or longer for your cat to become comfortable! **Don't expect perfection! It will take TIME for your cat to settle in, learn your routines and boundaries, and most importantly, to feel safe.**
- Don't panic if new behaviours arise during the first few weeks.
- Try to speak softly, move slowly, and get down on their level when interacting.
- Avoid staring, as this can come across as threatening to some cats.
- Use food as a tool to bond. Your cat can make a positive association between your presence and meals/treats!

