

Trap/Neuter/ Release Pilot Program

Cap Juluca

In August of 2004 after receiving an email from former guests at Cap Juluca concerning two cats that they fed while at the resort, I forwarded the email to the manager of the resort, Eustace Guishard with a proposal for a trap/neuter/release project.

A meeting with Lloyd Gumbs, one of the managers at Cap Juluca, AARF President Jackie Cestero and me was held in late August and in early September Cap Juluca agreed to work with AARF on a pilot Trap/Neuter/Release program.

Description of Trap/Neuter Release Program

It was agreed at the meeting that the program would include the following phases:

- Set up of feeding stations away from the villas to feed the cats & accustom them to a specific area - eventually allowing AARF to trap
- Trapping and transportation to Morlens Veterinary Clinic for surgery
- Identification of cat as altered
- Approximate 24 hour recovery time after surgery at Morlens
- Return of the cat to Cap Juluca
- Continued monitoring and feeding of the colony by Suzie Donahue

Advantages for Cap Juluca

- Eliminate guest complaints concerning cats in villa
- Control of indiscriminate breeding/overpopulation of feral cats on property
- Continued rodent control
- Positive publicity of project for guests of CJ and island
- Educational opportunity for the public & staff on importance of feral cat control

Responsibilities of Project:

- Cap Juluca will provide the food for the colony - current estimate approximately \$25 US per week (\$1 per week per cat) would depend on the actual number of cats on site.
- Cap Juluca will set the traps and then check daily as well as transport the trapped cats to Morlens for surgery
- AARF will feed the cats each day.
- AARF will compensate Morlens Veterinary Hospital for the surgery
- AARF will continue to monitor the colony to make sure no cats are missed.

On September 13 after receiving approval from Cap Juluca, I began setting up the feeding stations at the resort. As there were no guests at the hotel it was felt that it was a good time to begin the project, as food was not as readily accessible.

On Tuesday September 28 I began setting the cat traps with sardines.

On Friday October 1, I was able to trap a black and white male at the Back Gate feeding station! On Oct 3 another male was caught at the Water Sports area. Both were neutered on Oct 5th and released back at CJ on Oct 7th 2004.

Unfortunately Cap Juluca did not have the staff to trap, check or transport the cats as agreed, so I took over those responsibilities as well. This included feeding and setting the traps in the evenings and then checking the traps in the mornings and if necessary transporting the cats to Morlens, as well as returning them to the resort after the surgery and recuperation time. At this point the project became more time consuming then projected as feeding took approximately 40 mins each day as the traps had to be cleaned of the old food and reset. The morning check took 20 minutes unless a cat was trapped and if so another hour to transport the animal to Morlens and return home. If no cats were trapped the time spent on the project was approximately 7 hours per week. If a cat were trapped another 2 hours for transport back and forth was added.

Listed below are the sex and date of the surgeries of the cats from Cap Juluca. In addition there is a female cat that has returned to the resort where she once lived from my home and she has also been spayed.

AARF/TNR			Cat	M	5-Oct	Completed
AARF/TNR			Cat	M	5-Oct	Completed
AARF/TNR			Cat	F	23-Oct	Completed
AARF/TNR			Cat	M	13-Nov	Completed
AARF/TNR			Cat	M	26-Nov	Completed
AARF/TNR			Cat	F	11-Dec	Completed
AARF/TNR			Cat	M	11-Dec	Completed
AARF/TNR			Cat	F	17-Dec	Completed
AARF/TNR			Cat	M	17-Dec	Completed

Our totals for the Trap Neuter Release Program as of end of 2004 are

Total Spays = 4 (including Luca)

Total Neuters = 6

As of Feb 6 no more cats have been trapped at the resort after an approximate 3 week break over the Christmas holidays and into Jan. I am pretty certain that there are still 2 males – a yellow and a gray tiger that have not been caught, as

well as a small black and white cat of unknown sex. Trapping attempts have not been successful since mid December but will continue for at least another month. At that time if no more cats have been trapped the trappings will be terminated and the resort will make the decision to continue the daily feedings – with the possibility of resuming the trapping when the hotel closes again in Sept of 2005.

In conclusion:

- There will be a decrease in the cat population at Cap Juluca.
- At the beginning my feeding and trapping was met with many questions and unusual looks. As my efforts continued I was often greeted on the property with reports of cat sightings or “you got one”, as well as asked information about other AARF’s projects.
- I was also able to add some of the staff’s own pets to our spay/neuter project.
- As the project continued, I began to notice that in some areas where the feeding stations were located employees were leaving tidbits from their lunches for the cats.
- Eventually, a manager informed me that some of the maintenance men were concerned that the ginger cats be taken good care of.
- This project has been a success not only in reducing the number of feral cats on the property but also in educating the staff by showing them that cats deserve to be treated humanely not only by the “crazy cat lady” but by everyone!