



Key Largo Woodrat



Key Largo Cotton Mouse



Lower Keys (Marsh) Rabbit



Silver Rice Rat

Above photos provided by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

In 2010, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service issued a Biological Opinion that determined free-roaming cats may result in the extinction of the endangered Key Largo Woodrat, Key Largo Cotton Mouse, and the Lower Keys Marsh Rabbit. In addition, they may further reduce the population of the threatened Silver Rice Rat.

Additional Resources:

Florida Keys SPCA, Key West:
305-294-4857 or www.fkspca.org

Humane Animal Care Coalition,
Key Largo: 305-451-0088

Safe Harbor Animal Rescue of the Keys
(SHARK): 305-743-4800

American Bird Conservancy:
www.abcbirds.org

American Soc. for the Prevention of Cruelty
to Animals (ASPCA): www.asPCA.org

Our Animal Family:
www.ouranimalfamily.org

FEMA and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service do not endorse any non-federal organizations.

REMEMBER

Don't feed cats outdoors.

Keep cats indoors.



FEMA



City of Key West

3140 Flagler Ave.

Habana Plaza

Phone: 305-809-3810

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**Free-roaming cats
in the Florida Keys**



KEEP CATS INDOORS

Keeping your cat indoors is much safer for both your pet and the local wildlife and birds.



Photo by Stavrolo*

What is a free-roaming cat?

A free-roaming cat is defined as a cat living outdoors at least part of the time. This may be a pet cat that is allowed to spend time outdoors, a lost or abandoned cat, a tame cat with no owner, or a feral cat.

Why are free-roaming cats a concern?

Free-roaming cats may injure or kill several species of endangered Keys mammals, of which few remain in the wild, as well as other native wildlife and birds.

There are estimated to be thousands of free-roaming cats in the Florida Keys.

A well-fed cat can still kill small mammals and birds due to its predatory instinct.

Free-roaming cats carry and spread many feline diseases, such as rabies, Feline Leukemia, FIV, heartworms, hookworms, and toxoplasmosis. Some diseases can be transmitted to other wildlife, pets, and people. (www.cdc.gov/healthypets/animals/cats.htm)

Free roaming cats are exposed to harsh weather and storms.

After a feral cat is trapped to be vaccinated or neutered, it may be resistant to trapping for future veterinary care, leaving it at risk for many diseases.

Indoor cats live healthier, longer lives.

What can I do to help protect the Key Largo Woodrat, Key Largo Cotton Mouse and Lower Keys Marsh Rabbit, as well as other wild creatures in the Keys?

- **Keep your cat indoors**
- **Never abandon your cat**
- **Spay or neuter your cat**
- **Do not feed cats or other wild animals outdoors**
- **Make sure your cat has fun indoor play opportunities**
- **Support local animal shelters and pet adoption programs**
- **Comply with all local animal laws**
- **Watch for animals while driving**
- **Plant native vegetation**
- **Secure your trash in doors**
- **Protect threatened and endangered species and habitat!**
- **Don't use rodent poisons or traps outside**



Photo by dr_relling *

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Federal Emergency Management Agency, and federally threatened and endangered species



Photo by dr_relling *

In 2011, the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida ordered FEMA to consult with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on FE-

MA's issuance of flood insurance, which the Court said encouraged development in the Keys. This increased development was linked to greater numbers of free-roaming cats and their predation on federally threatened and endangered mammals. Consequently, FEMA, FWS, and the communities participating in the National Flood Insurance Program must work together to protect the Lower Keys Rabbit, Key Largo Woodrat, Key Largo Cotton Mouse, Silver Rice Rat and other federally threatened and endangered animals and plants in the Florida Keys.

For more information on what you can do to protect listed species in the Keys, visit <http://www.fws.gov/verobeach/ConservationintheKeys.html>

For more information on free-roaming cats, contacts are provided on the back page.