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(credit: Catio Spaces™)

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National Catio Day and Spring Fever:

Tips for pet-friendly spaces to protect cats, birds, and wildlife in your backyard

SEATTLE, Washington (January 27, 2025) -- Pet lovers do not need a calendar to know their beloved cat has feline spring fever, but they do need to be mindful of their well-being.

March 15 marks the third annual National Catio Day in celebration of catios (outdoor cat enclosures) to bring awareness to the dangers of free-roaming pet cats. To commemorate the March 15th observance, the founder of Catio Spaces, whose mission is to keep cats safe, provide peace of mind, and protect wildlife, is sponsoring a "spring fever giveaway" through March 31, 2025 when 15 lucky cat owners will win their choice of a Catio Spaces DIY Catio Plan. (See giveaway details on next page.)

Early morning wake-up calls, meowing, and a fervent desire to be outdoors are among the telltale signs of spring fever and a cat's natural urging to be outside. Allowing cats unrestricted outdoor access could expose them to poisons, predators, diseases, attacks by other animals, getting lost and other risks. Additionally, as instinctive hunters, cats might prey on birds and other small wildlife, cautions Cynthia Chomos, the founder/designer at Catio Spaces.

For cat owners, balancing the "indoor/outdoor" dilemma can be solved by providing a protected outdoor space for their furry friends.

Catios are one such solution, says Chomos. These "cat patio" enclosures provide a secure space so cats can enjoy the sights, smells, and stimulation of nature while being shielded from hazards. At the same time, catios protect birds from a potential predator.

"Providing cats with outdoor access in enclosures ensures we are good cat owners and good neighbors," says Jennifer Hillman, VP Wildlife Protection, The Humane Society of the United States. "It means being responsible for wildlife, responsible for community space, and responsible for the safety of our cats."



BirdTipper, the founder of National Catio Day, cite statistics saying cats kill around 2.4 billion birds in the U.S. alone every year. A desire to protect birds and provide safe outdoor enrichment for their cats inspired them to build a catio that overlooks a bird feeding station and birdbaths. They started the event to "encourage cat owners and enthusiasts to create, appreciate, and advocate for catios."

"Every bird counts, and I'm committed to educating cat parents about the many <u>benefits</u> of catios, as too many feathered 'gifts' are brought home and left on the doorstep," Chomos said. "With loss of habitat and other factors affecting bird populations, catios are a great way for cat parents to support bird conservation in their own backyard."

Chomos, an avid supporter of animal welfare organizations, has worked with the Humane Society of the United States, National Wildlife Federation, American Bird Conservancy and other groups to build awareness of ways to keep both cats and wild birds safe. Animal shelters, rescue organizations, veterinarians, and wildlife advocacy groups have applauded catios.

Last month, PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) presented Catio Spaces with its "Friend to Felines" award. The Conscious Cat (now part of Catster) chose the Catio Spaces DIY catio plans as one of the "10 Best Cat Products of the Year."

"There are many ways to create safe and stimulating environments for cats, with catios being an increasingly popular solution. What better time than spring and National Catio Day to undertake a fun DIY project for these valued family members," said Chomos.

Chomos founded her business 10 years ago to provide aesthetically pleasing enclosures that complement a home and garden. To keep cats safe, healthy, and happy outdoors, she offers a variety of resources including free catio tips, DIY catio plans, 8 Catio-Building Mistakes to Avoid, the Catio Cats' Guide to Birdwatching, and How to Create a Cat and Bird-Friendly Garden.

With spring fever and bird breeding season underway, building a catio can be a fun and rewarding home improvement project for do-it-yourselfers, suggests Chomos.

About the Spring Fever Giveaway

Cat enthusiasts can enter the <u>"Spring Fever" free drawing</u> on the Catio Spaces website through March 31. Fifteen winners will be selected in a random drawing and notified via email on April 4.

Catio Spaces' downloadable design options range from compact window boxes to larger structures with room for human seating, climbing shelves, cat-safe plants, and other feline enrichment. Each plan includes a list of materials and tools, step-by-step instructions, and detailed diagrams.

"We're all-in for National Catio Day," proclaims Chomos, adding, "We celebrate cat safety every day!"



Catio Spaces is dedicated to animal welfare and sponsors "Catio Tour Seattle," an annual educational event, and also offers an <u>Affiliate Program</u> whereby animal welfare organizations and their advocates can generate revenue for their cause. Using a unique promo code, organizations can earn 10% and cat parents save 10% off their purchasers of a DIY catio plan.

About Cynthia Chomos

Cynthia Chomos is a Feng Shui consultant, cat lifestyle expert, catio designer/builder, and the founder of Catio Spaces, creating harmonious indoor and outdoor spaces for her 4-legged and 2-legged clients. She lives in Seattle with her adorable tabby Serena (who has <u>four catios</u>) and is the inspiration for <u>Catio Spaces</u>.

As a proponent for the health and happiness of animals, Chomos combines her experiences and passions to promote pet safety and wellness. She is a general contractor and member of the Master Builders Association of King and Snohomish Counties.

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