

# ENHANCING THE STRAY ANIMAL CARE EXPERIENCE FOR ELDERS

**INTENDED USERS:** Elderly and/or retired people

## INFORMATION AND INSPIRATION:

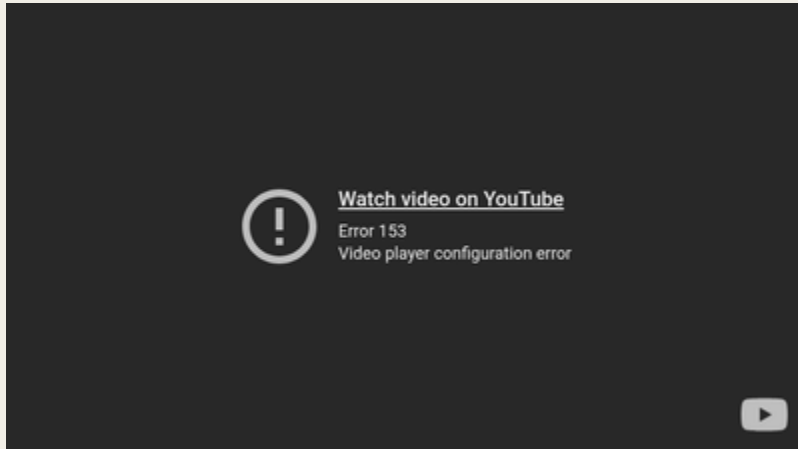
In Turkey, the care for stray animals is not just an act of kindness, but a deep-rooted cultural and historical tradition dating back to the Ottoman period, emphasizing respect and coexistence. For the elderly and retired, this tradition has become a vital, daily ritualistic work and a source of profound personal fulfillment.

These strays are often considered beloved "fellow neighbors" and their daily feeding forms a crucial, joyful first step in the elderly person's morning routine. This consistent interaction fosters a strong emotional bond, filling a deep-seated need for affection and sincere connection, much like spending time with their own distant family or children. More than just feeding, this practice is seen as embodying a core moral duty and cultural value, offering the feeders a sense of happiness, inner peace, and purpose. Despite often living on a low budget, these dedicated individuals prioritize their furry friends, creatively utilizing leftovers or inexpensive food, which also contributes to an informal system of waste management. This daily devotion showcases the profound, resilient spirit of Turkey's elderly population.

## ENCOUNTERED PROBLEMS:

- To feed strays, elderly carry food and water and put them in the feeding areas. What they have been encountering is carrying these relatively heavy items until the feeding points. Since their physical power has diminished, this is one of the challenging areas.
- Not only feeding the animals, but also maintenance of the feeding area is one of their duties. Cleaning the water/food containers, collecting rotten food, and garbage are done. Due to physical strain, or lack of access to water/cleaning products in the middle of streets; this area also results in some difficulties.
- Another concern is not being able to take them to the vets so easily in case of any emergency, sickness, or even for neutering. Especially, with feral ones, usually a cage is set up and until the cat goes inside, someone has to watch and wait. When animals have extreme pain/sickness, even though they are really friendly, it might become hard to catch them. So, elderly might need some extra help on this topic.

## NEWS AROUND TURKEY:



**Sokak hayvanları 'Süheyla teyze'nin yolunu gözlüyor**  
Edirne'de aldığı muhtaçlık aylığı ile geçinen 60 yaşındaki Süheyla Fındıklı, çevresindekilerin de desteğiyle 10 yıldır sokak hayvanlarına bakıyor. - Anadolu Ajansı

1. [KEDİLERE ADANAN BİR ÖMÜR... NURİYE TEYZE 70 KEDİYE ANNELİK YAPIYOR](#)
2. [SOKAK HAYVANLARI 'SÜHEYLA TEYZE'NİN YOLUNU GÖZLÜYOR](#)

1. All 70 cats featured in the video have their own unique names such as "Watermelon", "Almond", "Cinnamon", "Apple", and the Aunt Nuriye calls out to each of them individually. This clearly demonstrates the strong bond they share. In the interview, she mentions that she provides for all of the cats' needs, including spaying/neutering, medical treatment, and feeding. She says that the cats are no different from babies, and this is the level of sensitivity and care she approaches them with. She also adds that the cats have become like her own children, a true part of her family.

2. Süheyla Fındıklı, an elderly Turkish woman, has been feeding the stray cats and dogs in her neighborhood for about 10 years, stating "I love animals very much." She spends a part of her daily life gathering scraps from the butcher and feeding around 60 cats and 10-15 dogs. She emphasizes that she feels immense joy when the animals are full and happy, and she cannot bear to see them hungry, especially in winter.

## WHAT WE WOULD LIKE YOU TO FOCUS ON:

Designers are expected to deliver a physical product, offering easy cleaning (disassembling etc.) , and transportation for elderly. The product should be designed in such a way that it can be compatible to be on the streets, resistant to harsh weather conditions. It should protect the food inside it from getting rotten in a short period of time.

**Aesthetic Harmony:** A modern and aesthetic appearance that does not create visual clutter on the streets.

**Ease of Transport:** Lightweight and compact structure suitable for individual carrying and placement.

**Easy Cleaning:** Surfaces/containers that can be quickly and practically disassembled for cleaning or wiped down in place.

**Hygienic Protection:** A covered/shielded container system that protects the food (kibble) and water from sunlight, dust, and dirt.

**Ergonomics:** Eating and drinking angle and height suitable (ergonomic) for both cats and dogs.

**Environmental Resistance:** Durable material that can withstand all weather conditions (rain, snow, sun).



## IMAGES OF STRAYS DURING FEEDING

