

Submission
No 85

**INQUIRY INTO MANAGEMENT OF CAT POPULATIONS
IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

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Cats have been vilified enough; it's time to stop this nonsense. Cats are to blame for decreasing wildlife numbers? Don't be ridiculous. Do you really need the facts pointed out to you?

1. Where is the said wildlife going to live? Very few animal species survive in the suburbs because there is NOWHERE for them to live and no appropriate food source.

2. People are responsible for the killing and removal of wildlife, either accidentally or otherwise. Many people are not willing to have them around their homes because of mess and behavioural issues. They will kill and remove possums, wombats, birds, lizards etc. They are run over en masse sometimes simply because they happen to be on the road and the driver couldn't be bothered even to brake hard....because they don't care.

3. There is a limited number of animals that are potential prey for cats. Many are too large or well able to defend themselves. I own 4 cats (indoor/outdoor) and have a relatively large suburban garden that is frequented by King Parrots, Galahs, Silvereyes, wrens, thornbills, lorikeets, wattlebirds, currawongs, crested pigeons and more. There are also sparrows, mynas, starlings, blackbirds and koels. There is a resident possum, a few geckos, skinks and more. My cats have never caught and/or killed any of the larger birds or parrots. They are outside for about 5 hours everyday, and only occasionally catch something, like once a month or less, and when they do, it is usually a sparrow or mouse. I encourage much more wildlife because of my established garden with a wide variety of plants (mostly non-native). The cats are not an issue. Most surrounding homes have no or very few trees and the plants they have are not amenable to the wildlife.

3. The animals that can fall prey to cats also fall prey to large birds such as currawongs, magpies, hawks, owls, butcher birds, backyard chickens....and dogs. Dogs may be confined to backyards but what is to stop them from attacking wildlife passing through? Or trying to survive there?

4. This whole issue smacks very much of cat-hatred. Cats are like any other animal in that they enjoy time outside in the sun and fresh air. It's all well and good to tell people to enclose them in the yard, but many people cannot afford this.

5. The main issue is feral cats in the bush, not wandering domestic cats or even urban strays. These cats rarely become feral. The poor feral cats trying to survive out in the bush have obviously bred over time and established colonies. Where is your proof that feral numbers are increasing due to NEWLY-WILDED cats? That is not to mention damage done by foxes, dingoes, wild dogs, feral pigs etc. Plus habitat removal, land-clearing, climate change.....

6. Any measures put in place must be HUMANE. No animal deserves to suffer whilst merely acting instinctually and trying to survive. They are not evil psychopaths, merely natural carnivores trying to get by in a foreign environment of their choosing.

HAVE SOME COMPASSION AND COMMON SENSE.