

Submission
No 439

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

Name: Dr Lynette Allen
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Safe Cat/ Safe Wildlife

I have a native garden that has been planted for native birds, breed Bourke parrots and I am a retired GP. I recorded 34 species in my garden in the recent Aussie Bird Count.

Roaming cats have had a major impact on birds, reptiles, and frogs in my garden. I no longer have Bearded Dragons, Blue Tongues or any large skinks some of which were 30cm! Any I find now are small and often tailless. Birds no longer breed in my yard due to stress -they are frightened off the nest so the eggs/babies go cold and die. This is also occurring in my aviaries.

I am also concerned about the diseases the cats carry as they dig and defecate in the garden. The major issue is Toxoplasmosis a parasite that reproduces in cat intestines and can be transmitted to humans and other animals via contaminated soil, water, plants and food. The bodies immune system forms cysts around the parasite which can be in any organ or muscle. Medication does not destroy the cysts which can reactivate if the immune system is weakened such as with Cancer, HIV or other major viruses.

Toxoplasmosis causes miscarriage and stillbirth in humans and animals and neurological issues if the baby lives. I have a friend who is losing her vision due to Toxoplasmosis in her eye. According to my optometrist there is a number of people in the community with it.

We need legislative change to the Companion Animals Act to support local councils to enforce mandatory desexing by 5 months and cat containment.

Education of the public regarding changes and why.

Cat containment 24/7 within home/cat run

Mandatory desexing, microchipping and registration

Maximum 2 cats per property

Trapped cats feral, stray, unwanted to be humanely euthanased to reduce the problem

Funding for resources to enforce regulations and illegal breeders to be prosecuted.

Currently 70% of cat owners let their cats roam and they kill 186 animals/per year each. It's not the cats fault as they are natural hunters it is their owners. Contained cats live 2-3 times longer than cats that are allowed to roam and are not unhappy.

We need consistent legislation Australia-wide or we will continue to lose our native species.