

## Case Study – Feral Cats



Cats (*Felis catus*) have been in Australia since European settlement and are now established across the country.

Feral cats pose a substantial threat to native animals particularly in arid and semi-arid areas where foxes are less common. The State Environment Report 2007 stated that feral cats predate on a wide variety of native animals and are widely distributed across Western Australia.

\*The number of cats in areas such as the Kimberley is unknown due to difficulties in surveying and unavailability of data. However, a radio-tracking study at Mornington Wildlife Sanctuary suggests there is one individual cat per three square kilometres, eating five to 12 native vertebrates daily.

\*Source: Priority threat management to protect Kimberley wildlife – a report detailing the science on prioritising threat management for Kimberley wildlife. CSIRO and the Wilderness Society, Carwardine J, O'Connor T, Legge S, Mackey B, Possingham HP and Martin TG (2011).





# ANIMAL CONTROL

Local Government Rangers carry out the control and rescue of a variety of different animals in urban and rural areas.

They try to assist with the safe rescue, capture and relocation of animals where possible. Training, experience and using commonsense factor greatly when dealing with potentially dangerous animals which include; dogs, cats, cattle, horses, sheep, goats, pigs, kangaroos, rabbits, poultry, birds and reptiles.



Rangers act in good faith and have the interest and safety of themselves, the animals and the public as a high priority.

However, due to the unpredictability of animal behavior, every situation needs to be assessed at the time. Rangers have the discretion to step away from a job should they choose. Matters concerning wildlife may be referred to the Department of Parks and Wildlife officers, who may have specialist training and equipment.





When attending situations in various areas, it may be necessary to locate and humanely destroy animals that have been attacked or injured and that are most likely beyond veterinary help. Again, this is at the discretion of the officer involved.



Rangers use a variety of equipment. Those that employ firearms to undertake certain animal control duties are trained in the use and safe handling of particular firearms and are governed by a corporate firearms licence.





## Rangers Working in Western Australia's Remote Areas

Many of the large rural and more remote local government areas in Western Australia may only have a relatively small number of Ranger staff. The immense size of their jurisdiction means that they have to travel hundreds of kilometres to answer calls for assistance. Even just to carry out similar important services to local communities that Rangers conduct in urban areas, such as;

- Control of off road vehicle
- Dog & cat management
- Feral animal control
- Illegal camping
- Abandoned vehicles and Illegal parking
- Fire break inspections and hazard reduction
- Litter and rubbish dumping

Rangers in these areas also spend a significant amount of time working with Aboriginal communities to assist with animal health and education programmes.



