Bruny Island Cat Management Update: domestic and stray cats on Bruny – June 2021

The **Bruny Island Cat By-law** was developed to ensure that domestic cats are protected; to limit their impact on wildlife (predation) and livestock (disease); and to ensure that further cats are not added to the island's stray and feral cat populations. Managing domestic and stray cats is critical to controlling the feral cat population and thus protecting the island's unique wildlife.

The By-law requires all cats that live on, or regularly visit the island are registered with Council; are desexed and micro-chipped; and stay on their owner's property. There is also a limit of 2 cats per household without a permit and it is illegal to feed stray cats.

Council would like to thank the cat owners who are keeping their cats safe at home and are complying with the By-law, and all the people who have helped trap stray cats on their property. We also wish to acknowledge the assistance and support given to cat owners by the Ten Lives Cat Centre, and the funds for this work, also received from Bruny Island Environment Network and the Bruny Island Community Association.

Domestic cats – how are we progressing?

Over the past few years, the By-law has been slowly introduced with the needs of cat owners in mind.

- In 2017 cat owners identified several factors to help them transition to keeping their cat contained at home. Council has supported cat owners with access to technical advice, assistance with materials and construction of enclosures, and a phase-in period of the By-law.

- Fifteen households have received practical assistance - enclosures, netting, cat doors and tunnels. This included the installation of two enclosures by the Men's Shed.

- One household received free desexing of their cats by the Ten Lives Cat Centre.

- Many other households received advice on containment design and managing their cat's transition to containment.

- Four households were assisted with trapping and rehoming many stray cats on their property.

The community has responded well to the By-law. The vast majority (86%) of known cat owners have registered their cats, and of those, at least 60% are complying. Council will be further supporting and following up with those who are yet to comply.

Most cat owners use a combination of methods to prevent their cats from roaming. Of the registered households:

- 65% provide access to the house and an enclosure/enclosed deck.
  One innovative household built a DYI fence-top system to stop their
  cat scaling their courtyard fence.

- 14% keep their cats inside 24 hours per day.

- 11% also use a harness and lead to walk or restrain their cat when outside with them.

- 5% also allow their cat on occasion to be outside and unrestrained, but under their watch and control.

Management of stray cats – community involvement over the past 12 months

- 20 residents and visitors reported sightings of stray and feral cats.

- Most of these sightings were on South Bruny at Simpsons Bay and Alonnah; some at Adventure Bay and Lunawanna and a few were sighted further afield, including at Cloudy Bay and along Lennon Road (North Bruny).

- 11 community members borrowed traps from the program and assisted with trapping stray cats on their property.

- 14 stray cats were taken to the Ten Lives Cat Centre. The majority were rehomed, and one domestic cat was returned to its owner.

Ongoing community involvement is central to the success of cat management on Bruny. We welcome reports of cat sightings (on the Feral Cat Scan app or by contacting Council) and please encourage cat owners you know to register their cats. Registration is free and help with desexing, microchipping, containment and rehoming is available. Please be aware that if a cat is microchipped it still needs to be registered with Council.

For further information visit https://nrmsouth.org.au/

For all cat enquiries please contact Kingborough Council: Ph 6211 8200 email kc@kingborough.tas.gov.au

For advice and resources to help keep pet cats, communities, and wildlife safe visit https://www.tassiecat.com/at-home

Andrew Nicholson is a cat owner and experienced vet who lives on Bruny. To view Andrew and his cat Rasputin's story visit Inside with Cats - Kingborough Council