

PRIORITY ACTIONS FOR EASTERN QUOLLS ON NORTH BRUNY ISLAND

PROJECT UPDATE OCTOBER 2022



QUARTERLY PROGRESS (JULY-SEPT)

Would you believe we are now in the final year of the project? The first quarter has already flown by as we continue to make progress removing or rehoming feral and stray cats on Bruny Island. By the end of September, a total of 104 cats have been removed from the project area over two years. Where possible, these cats were rehomed through the Ten Lives Cat Centre.

FERAL AND STRAY CAT TRAPPING UPDATE



Conrad Daniels from Bruny Farming checking traps.

Trapping efforts continue to target feral cats on the Neck Game Reserve, and stray cats around hotspots in Alonnah and Simpsons Bay. The combination of high numbers of feral or stray cats and native wildlife in these areas suggests that management actions here will bring the greatest benefit to threatened species. By targeting these areas, Bruny Farming have captured one feral cat and three stray cats in the last three months. One cat was also caught by a community member.

Trapping is currently our best method of cat control, however it requires an enormous effort to catch a few cats. This is partly because other animals (e.g., quolls) also get in the traps and need to be released, and because cats are very cunning and learn to avoid traps or steal bait without getting caught. To help with this, Biosecurity Tasmania is continuing trials of new and emerging cat control techniques and tools.

As reported previously, trials of new thermal imaging hardware and a non-toxic trial of Felixer grooming traps have been completed. The results of another non-lethal trial of Felixers in Tasmania, undertaken by UTAS in collaboration with Biosecurity Tasmania, has recently been published in the Wildlife Research journal. Their results are consistent with our trial and support further investigation around the use of Felixers on Bruny Island. The results of a final trial using a non-toxic version of Curiosity® baits will be ready to share in our next update.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Thanks to Kingborough Council for providing free cat-flaps and the Bruny Men's Shed for assisting with building cat enclosures for domestic pets. It's great to have the community working together on this project. This quarter, cat owners were asked to renew the registration of their cats with Kingborough Council. A huge thank you to those who have already done this. Generally, By-Law compliance remains high with approximately 80% of registered cat owners compliant in this quarter. Kingborough Council will be making contact with all known cat owners on Bruny as part of the 2022-2023 annual review of registration under the By-Law.

In June, Kingborough Council held a forum on Bruny Island highlighting the risk of cat-borne diseases to livestock. Alongside Rosie Hohnen from NRM South and Kaylene Allen from Kingborough Council, attendees heard from Bruce Jackson (coordinator of the Tasmanian Livestock Health Monitoring Network), and Mahalia Kingsley (University of Tasmania). The speakers all emphasised the importance of cat and farm management in minimising the transmission and impacts of cat-borne disease in the sheep industry. While the research indicates that farms on Bruny have lower transmission than in the Midlands, it is vital that the farming and broader community do not become complacent.



Cat impacts on island birds

- Cats->14% of global bird mammal and reptile extinctions (Medina et al. 2011).
- Globally predator removal has outcomes for seabirds (Lavers et al 2009).
 - 25.3% ↑ breeding success
- Cat eradication= seabird recolonization!
 - Ascension Island
 - Red-billed tropic bird, brown noddy
 - Tasman Island
 - Lewin's Rail
 - Macquarie Island
 - Blue petrels and grey petrels



In July, Cindy Hull and Rosie Hohnen from NRM South talked about the project as part of a United Nations Sustainable Development Goals forum. Cindy and Rosie outlined the Bruny Island Cat Management Project, its structure, direction, and progress to date. Emphasis was made on the domestic cat management aspect of the project and particularly the benefits to wildlife and agriculture of domestic and feral cat management. Following the online presentation, there were a lot of excellent questions particularly about progress in stray cat management, barriers to cat control and future directions.

HOW YOU CAN HELP



- Record all sightings of feral cats on Bruny Island via FeralCatScan. Visit the [website](#) or download the free smart phone App or contact Kingborough Council ph: 6211 8200 / kc@kingborough.tas.gov.au to report a cat sighting.
- Get assistance to trap stray or feral cats on your property. Contact Kingborough Council's Cat Management Officer, on 03 6211 8200 or kallan@kingborough.tas.gov.au for information. Where appropriate stray cats are transferred to Ten Lives Cat Centre for rehoming.
- Encourage cat owners to protect their cat, along with local wildlife and livestock by complying with the Bruny Island Cat By-Law.
- Find out more about the project [here](#), or contact NRM South on 0447 266 527.



Travelling to Bruny this summer? Keep an eye out for our sign at the Kettering terminal!

Project partners



Supporting organisations



This project is supported by NRM South through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Program. It is delivered in partnership with Bruny Farming, Biosecurity Tasmania, Kingborough Council, Ten Lives Cat Centre, the South East Tasmanian Aboriginal Cooperation and with support from the weetaapona Aboriginal Cooperation.