

Responsible Cat Ownership Protects our Native Wildlife



While cats are great companions and can have many positive impacts on human health, it is important to be a responsible cat owner. One important part of being a responsible cat owner and living in a beautiful natural area such as the Lithgow Local Government Area (LGA) is protecting the native wildlife.

The Lithgow LGA has many sections of native bushland that contains rare and threatened plants as well as providing habitat for a range of threatened native animals. Research shows that both feral and domestic cats kill and eat more than 100 types of native species of birds, 50 mammal and marsupial species, 50 reptile species and numerous frogs and invertebrate species.

The types of native animals killed by domestic cats include possums, birds, lizards, snakes, geckos, bats, native rats and marsupial mice. A domestic cat can kill, on average about 30 native animals per year. *1

In Australia, cats have no natural predators. They are most active at night, dusk and dawn when much of our native wildlife is also active. Even well fed cats will prey on native wildlife due to their natural hunting instincts. *2

*1 <http://catassist.org.au/suburban-cats.html?showall=1>

*2 <http://www.environment.gov.au/resource/protecting-our-wildlife-responsible-pet-ownership>

Helpful Tips

The following tips will help you to ensure that you are a responsible pet owner and your valued companion does not threaten our unique wildlife:

- Keep your cat inside between dusk and dawn when they are more likely to hurt
- Ensure that your cat is desexed to prevent unwanted litters
- Have your cat registered and microchipped (this is a legal requirement) at an early age so they can be easily identified
- Ensure your cat wears a collar, bell and identification tag
- Provide a safe outside cat enclosure for play and exercise
- Feed your cat regularly to reduce its need to hunt for food
- Do not feed a stray cat unless you intend to care for it as a pet or take it to an animal shelter
- Be responsible for your cat at all times.

Remember!

Bells on collars don't always work.
Cats with bells can learn to stalk prey silently
Native animals don't associate the sound of bells with danger

For more information please
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