

State of California
The Resources Agency
Department of Fish and Game

**SELECTED REFERENCES ON
FERAL AND FREE-RANGING DOMESTIC CATS
IN RELATION TO WILDLIFE CONSERVATION**

INTRODUCTION

Domestic cat predation is a significant cause of wildlife mortality, particularly on oceanic islands, in "islands" of wildlife habitat in urbanized areas, and in other wild lands and open spaces near built-up areas. Predation by domestic cats has caused, or significantly contributed to, the extinction of many animals species around the world. In many areas of California, free-ranging cats are a serious, continual threat to the survival of endangered wildlife populations. Cat predation is detrimental to wildlife populations in established urbanized areas and in expanding, newly developed areas.

The cat has become the most numerous pet in the nation. Numbers of domestic cats have grown rapidly in recent decades, resulting in increasing numbers of house-dwelling cats that hunt outdoors and of abandoned or wild-born cats that subsist in the wild. Another consequence of this overpopulation is the euthanasia of millions of unwanted and stray cats annually.

Public and municipal efforts are being made to control domestic cat overpopulation by various means, including licensing, educating to encourage responsible pet ownership, and promoting cat sterilization. Some groups opposed to euthanasia of captured feral cats are encouraging and implementing feral cat management programs to curtail population growth or to stabilize and protect local populations. This increasingly popular method entails trapping feral cats, testing them for disease, vaccinating them, sterilizing them, and returning them to the area of capture or to a new area to a free-living existence in "controlled colonies," where they are provided food, protection, and veterinary care.

The purpose of this bibliography is to provide wildlife biologists and other interested persons with some of the information sources on free-ranging domestic cats and their effects on wildlife. Included are references on ecological investigations and other biological studies on free-ranging cats; on the cat as predator, disease source, or prey; and on cat depredation and disease control.

**SELECTED REFERENCES ON FERAL AND FREE-RANGING DOMESTIC CATS
IN RELATION TO WILDLIFE CONSERVATION**

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