

State of California
The Resources Agency
Department of Fish and Game
Wildlife Management Division

**A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF
FERAL, STRAY, AND FREE-ROAMING DOMESTIC CATS
IN RELATION TO WILDLIFE CONSERVATION**

Compiled by
Ronald M. Jurek

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INTRODUCTION

Domestic cat (*Felis catus*) predation is a significant cause of wildlife mortality in many parts of the world. Diseases of domestic cats pose serious threats to native species, as well. The damaging effects of cats on wildlife are particularly severe 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 animal species around the world. In many areas, feral and free-roaming cats are a continual threat to endangered wildlife.

The domestic cat has become the most numerous pet in the U.S. Numbers of domestic cats have escalated 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.

In many countries, governmental agencies and conservation organizations have been attempting to protect native wildlife by eradicating or reducing feral cat populations on islands and mainland ecosystems by trapping, shooting, poisoning, and introducing pathogens. Municipalities and private groups are attempting to control domestic cat overpopulation by other means, including licensing, restricting commercial breeding, educating to encourage responsible pet ownership, and promoting pet sterilization. In Europe and the U.S, some groups opposed to euthanasia of captured stray and feral cats are encouraging and implementing "neuter-and-release" programs to attempt to curtail population growth or to stabilize and protect local populations in "controlled colonies".

The purpose of this bibliography is to provide wildlife biologists, land managers, and other interested persons with a representative array of information sources on the ecology and control of feral and free-roaming domestic cats and on their damaging effects on wildlife. Included are 340 references on ecological investigations and other biological studies; on "neuter-and-release" management; on population control efforts; on the cat as predator, disease source, or prey; and on cat depredation and disease control.

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