

Felt Cat

This lesson plan aims to educate both children and adults on the impacts of free roaming cats on the environment and our native wildlife. The resource is a great visual teaching tool, helping to promote responsible cat ownership. The download includes teacher's instructions, sewing templates and an illustrative map on feral cat numbers within Australia.

Resource Categories	Cat; Impacts to wildlife; Activity
Suitable Age Level	Year 2 to Adults
Desired Understandings	Students will be able to identify the different species of bush animals which are under threat due to the predatory impacts of roaming cats. They can verbally propose or design methods for reducing the impacts of cats on Australian wildlife or bush animals.
Resources Required	Felt Cat Sewing Templates (supplied) The Australian Cat Map (supplied) Faux fur 2 x 65cm x 65cm pieces Sewing Machine Sewing Materials e.g. scissors, pins Native Animal figurines x 10
Additional AMRRIC resources to support lesson content	Cat Breeding Mat What Cat, That Cat, How Many Cats? Where does it belong? House or Bush/Sea? Cat Desexing Book

Lesson Plan: Felt Cat

Introduction

- Place Felt Cat on the floor, as per Figure 1
- Bring students onto the floor, sitting in a large circle around the Felt Cat.
- Ask the students if they have/had a cat? (How many do they have? What are their names? Do they hunt for food? Where do they sleep at night? Etc.)
- Allow time to respond to student's comments and questions.

Activity

- Explain to the students that while cats make nice pets, they can have a terrible impact on our bush animals
- Ask students what they feed their cats? What other foods do cats eat? Where do they find their food? (Encourage students to broaden their thinking as to what types of food and where the cats find it)
- Explain to the students that if we do not make sure our cat is well cared for and fed, they will go looking for their own food. (Emphasize this is done mostly at night)
- Ask students if they keep their cat inside at night? Explain, if we do not keep our cats inside at night, this is when they are most likely to go hunting for their food, killing our bush animals.
- Start the activity by telling the students that this cat is called Max. (You can have pre named the cat or allow students to vote on a name)
- Start to tell the students the story *"Last night I forgot to keep Max inside. I also forgot to feed him. He was so hungry that he went out all night hunting in the bush looking for food. When I woke up this morning, he looked very fat and tired. "Look how big his belly is!" "What do you think he ate last night?"* (Allow students to touch and feel Max's stomach)
- Ask the students if they would like to turn Max over and find out what he ate last night.
- Select students individually, asking them to remove an animal from Max's stomach. Discuss with the student's what animal they found inside Max's stomach. What does it look like? Where does it live? Can you buy it at the shop to eat?
- When all animals have been removed from stomach, arrange them in front Max.
- Highlight to the students the number of bush animals which Max has killed and eaten in one night. (Count all the bush animals eaten out loud with the students).

- Discuss the impacts of Max eating our bush animals. There is also the opportunity here to discuss the implications of hunting cats on local threatened species, if known.
- Ask the students what would happen if all our cats were out at night killing our bush animals?
- Ask the students what we all could do to stop our cats killing our bush animals. (E.g. keeping our cats inside at night, feeding and desexing owned cats). By desexing we are reducing the number of unwanted and stray cats, and therefore reducing the hunting burden of these cats.
- Recapping on the lesson use, “The Australian Cat Map”, to demonstrate how many free roaming cats there are in Australia. Explain that Max is only one cat and imagine if all these cats were out at night hunting our bush animals?

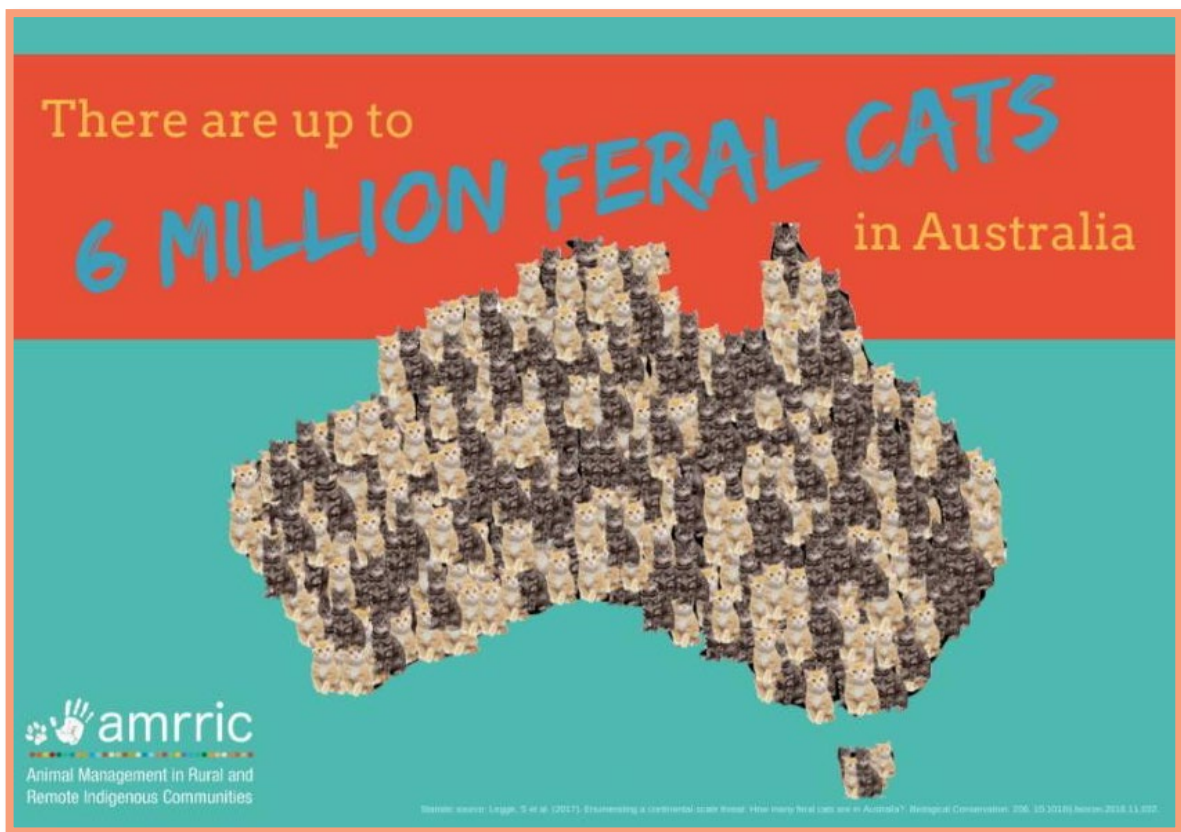
Final Understanding

- Cats will hunt if left alone outside
- Cats have a profound impact on our native wildlife and bush animals
- Desexing cats reduces the cat population, and thus the impacts on wildlife/bush animals
- Feeding cats and keeping them inside at night helps to stop them hunting

Appendix A

The Cat Map

Statistic Source: Legge, S et al. (2017). Enumerating a continental-scale threat: How many feral cats are in Australia? *Biological Conservation* 206.10.1016/j.bicon.2016.11.032.



Appendix B

Felt Cat

Materials List

Felt Cat Templates 1 & 2

Material scissors

Sewing machine

Plastic animals and insects

65cm x 65cm Faux Fur (topside of cat coat)

65cm x 65cm (Underside of cat)

Material pins

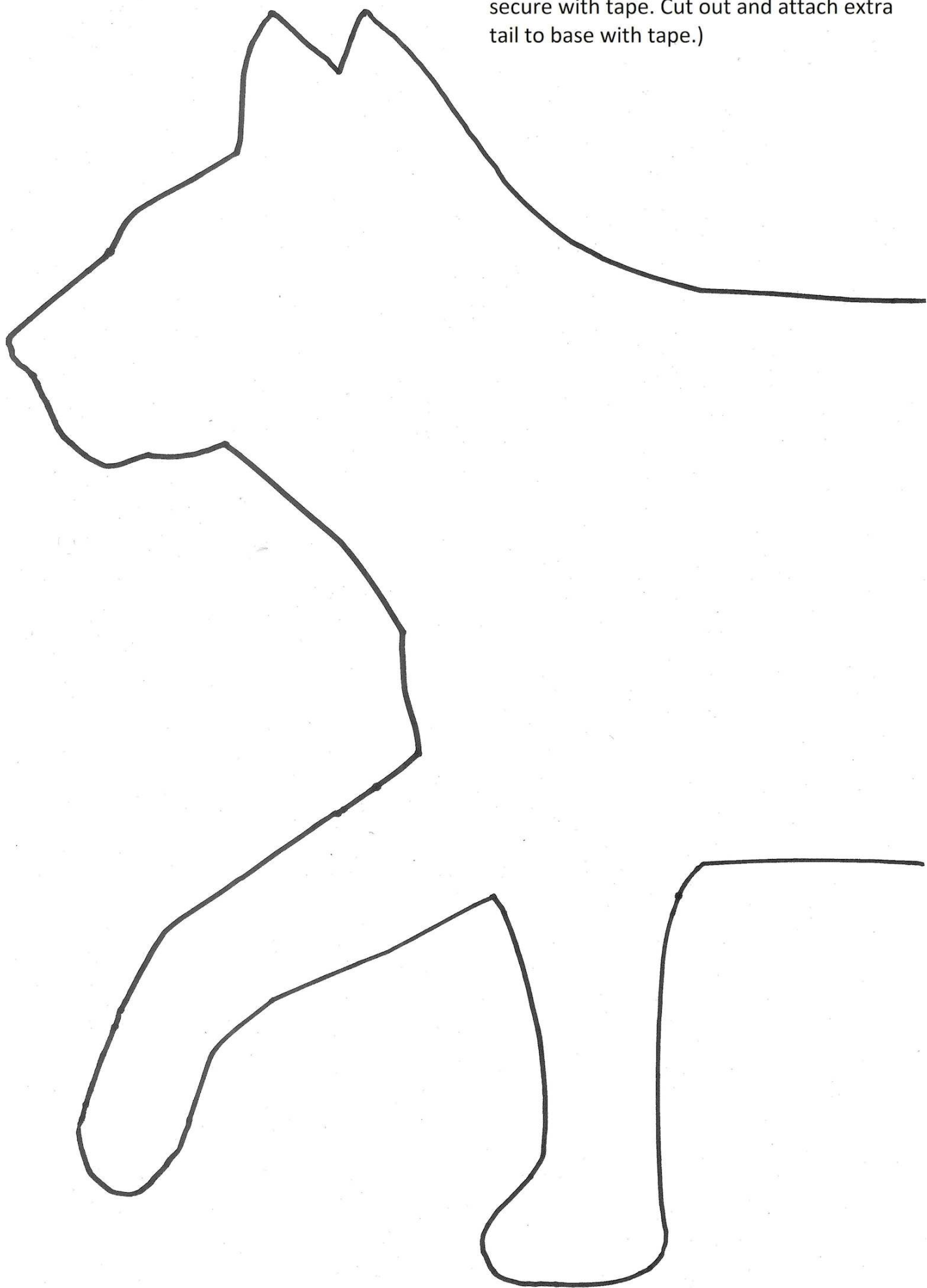
- Print Felt Cat Templates 1 & 2 onto single A3 pages
- Cut both templates out and secure together in the middle with sticky tape. Ensure that the extra tail is also cut out and attach to the tail base with sticky tape.
- Using the Felt Cat Template, trace onto faux fur and felt. This will give you the top and bottom layer of your cat.
- Secure the two layers together with pins for ease of sewing.



- Sew the two layers together approximately 1cm from the edge.
- Once the two templates have been sewn together, turn Felt Cat over and put the back of the felt approximately 12cm long in a vertical direction.
- Sew around the cut to ensure it is durable. This will allow the animals/insects to be inserted into the cat's stomach.
- Fill the Felt Cat with animals and insects.
- Let the fun and learning begin.

Felt Cat 1

(Cut out Felt Cat template 1 and 2 and secure with tape. Cut out and attach extra tail to base with tape.)



Felt Cat 2

