

Community Based Feral Control

EPBC listed Black-flanked Rock-wallabies
Central Wheatbelt, Western Australia



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Wheatbelt NRM's overwhelmingly successful community feral control project works to benefit the EPBC listed Black-flanked Rock-wallaby of the Central Wheatbelt, Western Australia.

The Challenge

To develop a robust and prescriptive threat management program with a tangible impact on the threats facing Black-flanked Rock-wallabies in the Central Wheatbelt. Getting community members to take on the task of feral animal control from scratch is a big ask, so contractors were engaged to follow an initial prescribed threat management regime. The project site's location meant that any ground gained against ferals would clearly need to be maintained to prevent re-incursion of predators into the project area. To achieve this, landholders and community members living in the project area were the preferred choice to help maintain the investment long term. The challenge was to demonstrate that predator numbers could be managed to low levels.

The Outcome

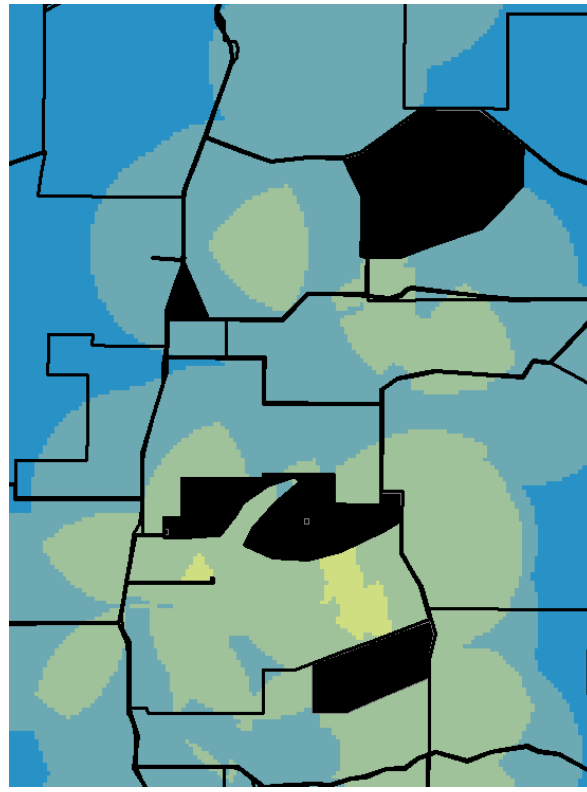
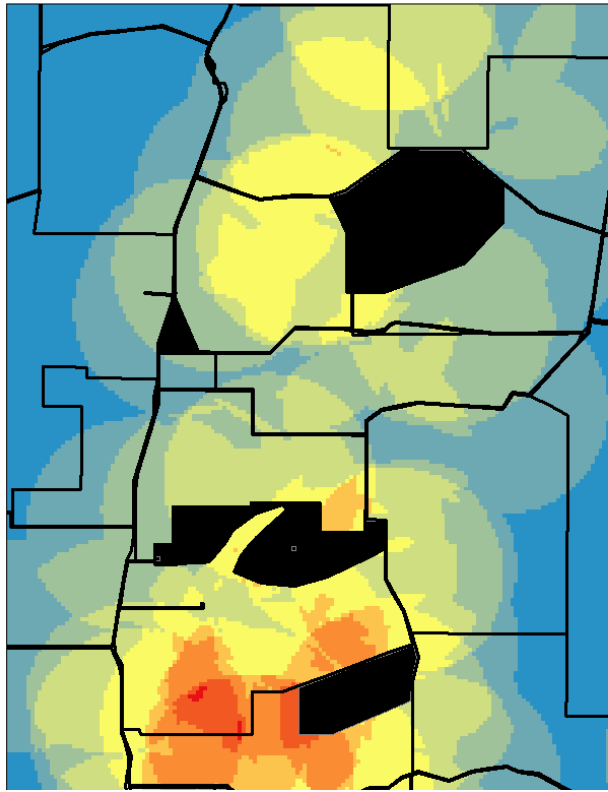
After 12 months of sustained effort, the gains were clear. Working in unison with DAFWA and DPaW, Wheatbelt NRM were able to navigate policy and legislation to set the project up for success, now and into the future.

“We will definitely continue to trap, and while we don't have the resources to do it on such a large scale, we can see what we are doing is making a difference.” Project area landholder

After running more than 150 cage traps around the periphery of DPaW administered reserves, the steady decline and very slow re-incursion rate of feral cats was a fantastic outcome. The greater outcome has been that the community surrounding these DPaW administered reserves has agreed to maintain a third of the traps themselves going forward – which is definitely the bigger success.

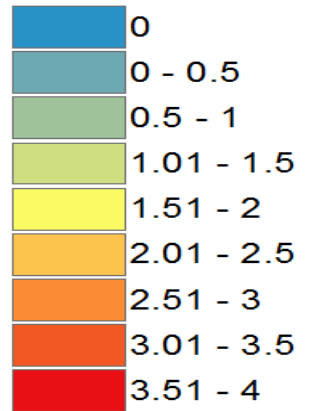
May 2015 - May 2016

January 2016 - May 2016

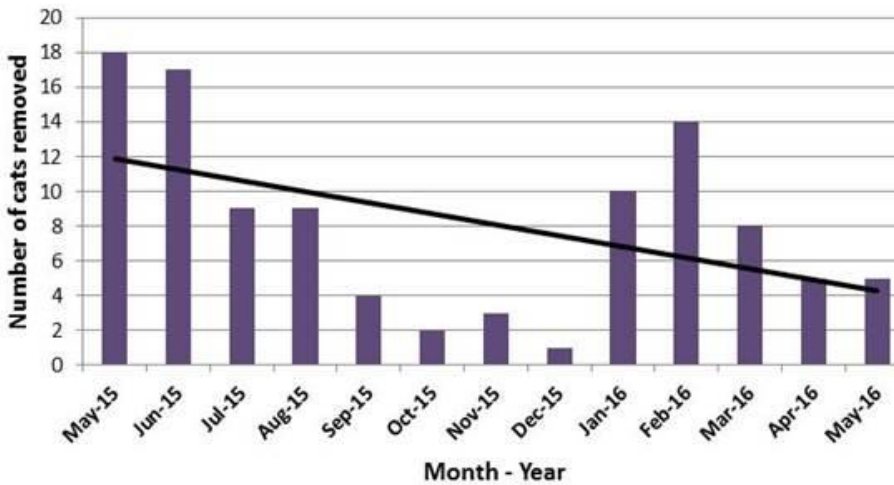


Legend

Number of cats removed per km2



Cats removed during project period



Quick facts:

- Clear increase in rock wallaby numbers, and breeding success during the project.
- More than 100 feral cats removed.
- More than 200 feral foxes removed.
- 12 months of sustained effort.
- Four known populations of Black-flanked Rock-wallabies in the WA Wheatbelt.
- Project made possible through funding from the Western Australian State NRM Office and the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme.

Graphics:

Photo 1 – Feral cat #100

Photo 2 – Threatened Species Commissioner Gregory Andrews onsite with community members and one of their traps

Figure 1 – Feral cat removal over 12 months – initial knockdown and maintenance (showing low re-incursion rate of feral cats)

Figure 2 – Feral cat removal trends over time



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