

Love Cats Love Wildlife

Funded by Tweed Shire Council



The "Love Cats Love Wildlife" project tackles the staggering annual impact of roaming pet cats on native wildlife, amounting to a significant \$241 million Australia-wide. This initiative consisted of personalised cat training sessions and an impactful social media awareness campaign that aimed to mitigate the harmful effects cats can cause in the Tweed Shire region.

The project commenced with participant recruitment from existing council datasets and social media channels. Out of 233 targeted individuals, 31 cat owners expressed interest, with 15 selected based on specific profiles, primarily curfew or outdoor cat owners in the Tweed region.

Statistics revealed a pre-training scenario: 86% of participants had never received any prior cat training, and 60% reported previous cat injuries, including catfights, car accidents, or falls. Notably, only 53% were full-time indoor cat owners, while 25% adhered to night curfews for their pets.

Post-training, a noteworthy shift occurred: 93% of participants believed in keeping cats indoors, indicating a significant change in perspective. Moreover, 64% improved their perception of cat training, acknowledging its effectiveness, while 21% maintained their initial beliefs about cats' trainability.

The project delivered ideas for indoor cat enrichment. Post-training, there was a shift in the top five strategies employed: from food and brushing to introducing toys, scratch boards, high spaces, catnip, and cat-friendly plants.

Behavioural changes were evident, with 14 out of 15 participants noting positive alterations in their cats' behaviour due to the training they implemented.

Furthermore, 71% of participants emphasized the safety of their cats, while 50% highlighted the protection of wildlife as key benefits observed post-training.

The social media campaign, disseminated across various platforms, witnessed engagement metrics, notably with the concept of simplifying "catification" gathering the most interest.

Recommendations for future endeavors emphasized the need for more online sessions, multiple shorter training sessions spread over several weeks, and group sessions tailored to address specific behavioural issues among cat owners. Leveraging specific social media channels and partnering with influential cat-centric accounts were also suggested to amplify engagement and outreach.

This project demonstrates the potential to influence positive changes in cat owners' attitudes and behaviours, ultimately aiming to reduce the adverse impact of roaming cats on Australia's wildlife.

93% of participants believed in keeping cats indoors post training

14 out of 15 participants noticed positive alterations in their cats' behaviour