Progress Report SP 2012-023

Feral cat control and numbat recovery in Dryandra woodland and other sites

Animal Science

Project Core Team

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Update requested

Document endorsements and approvals as of July 28, 2019, 11:19 a.m.

Project Team	granted
Program Leader	granted
Directorate	granted

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A Friend

Context

Dryandra Woodland supports important populations of several threatened mammals, including the numbat, woylie and red-tailed phascogale, as well as significant populations of a number of threatened birds. Recent research has shown that feral cats are responsible for the majority of numbat and woylie deaths. This project investigates the feasibility and efficacy of using the *Eradicat®* feral cat bait to reduce numbat and woylie mortality and promote their recovery at Dryandra.

Aims

- Determine the uptake of rhodamine-labelled non-toxic *Eradicat®* baits by chuditch, red-tailed phascogales and mardos in Dryandra.
- Determine the survival or mortality of groups of radio-collared chuditch, red-tailed phascogales and mardos during a baiting campaign using toxic *Eradicat®* baits in Dryandra.
- Determine the survival or mortality of feral cats through a baiting campaign using toxic *Eradicat®* baits in Dryandra.

Progress

- The fieldwork supporting this project and analysis of data has been completed. Preparation of a publication is under way.
- Results show there was only a negligible level of consumption of non-toxic baits by red-tailed phascogales and all radio-collared phascogales were still alive a minimum of six days after toxic baiting, by which time all baits in replicated trials had been consumed by other animals. These results indicate that red-tailed phascogales are at low risk of 1080 poisoning through *Eradicat®* operations in their habitat.

Management implications

- *Eradicat®* can be used with minimal non-target impacts in the Dryandra Woodland. This is significant for the implementation of integrated fox and feral cat control programs at Dryandra and elsewhere in the south-west of Western Australia.

Future directions

- Cats will be captured and fitted with GPS collars by a contractor to gather additional data on cat movement on the periphery of reserves for this project and to support the detector dog project by providing cats in known locations for use in assessing the value of cat detector dogs in feral cat control.