

## Nuisance Cats

### **Cat Act 2011**

The main purpose of the *Cat Act 2011* is to encourage responsible pet ownership by ensuring cats are registered, sterilised and microchipped. There are limited provisions within the *Cat Act 2011* to address cats that may be considered a nuisance because they roam, attack wildlife or create a disturbance in or around a property.

Under the provision of the *Cat Act 2011*, the City may seize a cat if they are reported to be on private property without the consent of the owner/occupiers. The City will assist you to remove any nuisance cats that you may have contained. Cats must be contained in a receptacle that is of a size and weight that a Ranger can carry to their vehicle. e.g. in a cat box or cage. The cat must be older than six weeks and not lactating in order for Rangers to collect, however please first attempt to resolve the situation by following the advice in the fact sheet.

### **Common Cat Behaviour**

Cats by nature are predators and are well equipped to catch their prey. Cats will roam their home ranges hunting during the day or night, unless they are restricted indoors. Yowling is part of a cat's vocal communication system and is more likely to be due to one of the following:

- When a female cat is in heat, she'll often become very affectionate and vocal, meowing and yowling as she attempts to alert a potential mate of her fertile status. Likewise, a male cat may become talkative when hearing or smelling a female cat in heat. This yowling and other mating behaviors may repeat themselves every 18-24 days throughout a cat's eight month breeding season.
- The most common type of aggression between cats occurs between unneutered males. As males reach adulthood, they often begin to challenge each other for access to mates and territory. Tomcats who roam will get into threatening stand-offs and actual fights. They sit or stand stiffly, their hackles up, and stare at each other. Their ears will be swiveled backward, and they often growl, hiss and howl loudly. One cat might eventually slowly leave, or one or both of them might attack.

### **Common Nuisance Behaviours**

The following are examples of behaviours which could be termed nuisance behaviours:

- A cat continually coming into your garden and spraying on your outdoor furniture.
- A cat continuously defecating on your flower beds.
- Cats coming into your garden and frightening your cat.
- A cat outside that appears to be in pain and yowling constantly.
- Cat/cats killing wildlife in your garden, particularly birds.

- Cats entering your cat flap and eating your cat's food.

### **Suggested deterrent methods**

The following information is provided to enable residents to deter unwanted attendance by cats on their property. However, please be mindful that any action taken that deliberately injures or harms a cat is not acceptable and such action is deemed to be an offence under the provisions of the *Animal Welfare Act 2002*.

If you know where the cat owner resides, the most effective deterrent method is to speak to them directly. Advise them of the issue and request that they deter their cat from attending your property.

If this is not successful, or you don't know where the cat comes from, the following methods may assist you:

- Try spraying the cat with water. If the cat associates its visits with an unpleasant experience it is unlikely to return. Please note: it is important that you do not harm the cat in any way.
- Use a loud sudden noise to startle the cat.
- Use motion such as an activated sprinkler or ultrasonic devices.
- Always make sure that all garbage is placed inside a secure trash bin.
- Scent repellents can be a useful tool. Cats have highly developed sense of smell so natural products such as lavender, citronella, citrus spray and garlic may deter them.