

Cats and wildlife on Aotea

Aotea/Great Barrier Island is home to rare and endangered species some of which are preyed upon by cats.

It's heart-breaking to see threatened species killed by cats. As a cat owner visiting or living on Aotea you have an extra responsibility to ensure your cat is well cared for and doesn't cause harm to the island's wildlife.



Birds like dotterels nest on the ground making them vulnerable to predation by cats. On offshore islands, forest birds, shore and sea birds make up a large part of a feral cats diet.



Invertebrates like peripatus (velvet worm) and wētā are preyed upon by cats across New Zealand resulting in their decline.



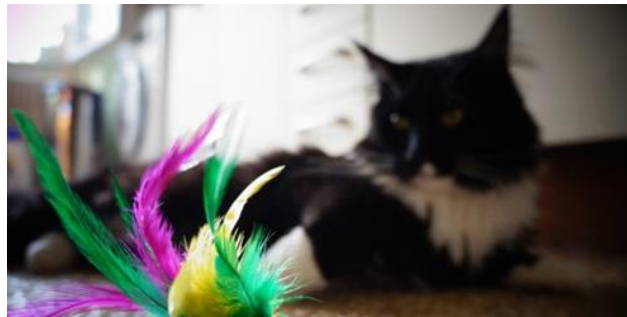
Long tailed bats are present on Aotea and are threatened by cats. A well reported case study in NZ found one feral cat killed 102 endangered native short tail bats in one week.



Lizards like the Barrier Islands endemic chevron skink are easy prey to cats particularly after dusk and before dawn while they are cold.

Are you a responsible cat owner?

- ✓ Your cat has been microchipped and registered
- ✓ Your cat has been desexed
- ✓ You keep your cat contained to your property
- ✓ When you can no longer care for your cat, you find it a new responsible owner
- ✓ You provide enrichment for your cat to keep it happy indoors



Disclaimer

Although this document has been prepared in good faith from several sources believed to be reliable, the Auckland Council does not give any warranty that all the information contained is accurate or complete or that advice given will be appropriate in all circumstances.

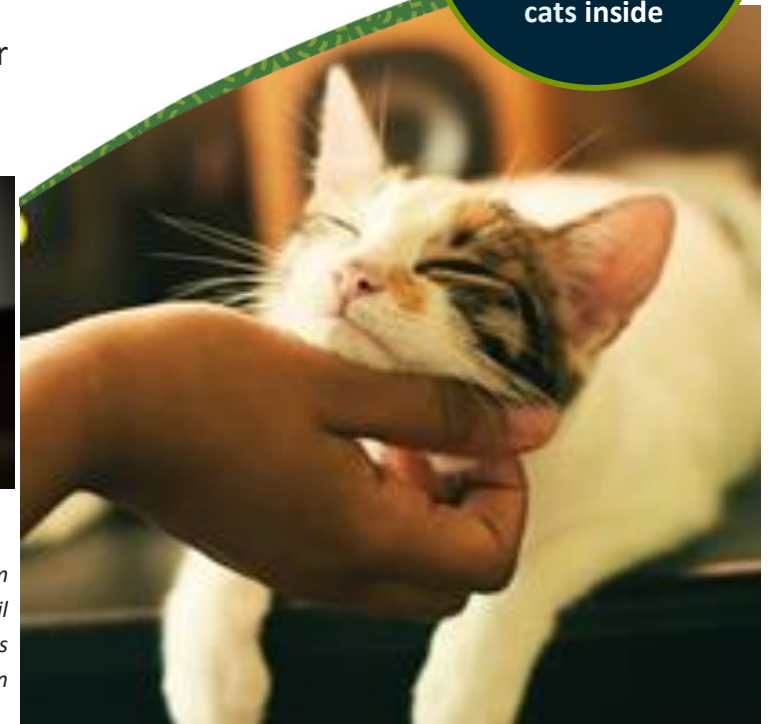
Phone 09 301 0101 or visit aucklandcouncil.govt.nz

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Responsible cat ownership

Aotea/Great Barrier Island

Info on FREE microchipping and de-sexing for owned cats inside



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What can you do?

Responsible cat ownership is important. It includes microchipping cats, desexing, limiting the number of cats per household and keeping cats inside as much as possible.

Here are some things to consider:

- Keep your cat happy and safe at home. Raising an indoor cat is very common overseas and cats quickly get used to living solely inside.
- Add bells to your cat's collar — the more bells the better. Bells don't completely stop hunting, but they do minimise it.
- Minimise the number of cats you own. Consider not replacing your cat when it dies or replace it with an indoor cat.
- If your cat is bored inside, try adding stimulating and challenging places for your cat to explore. You can introduce new objects such as cat toys, climbing equipment or cat grass to stimulate smell and touch.
- Do your own rodent control, rather than leaving it to your cat. Research shows that rodents make up only about a quarter of the species cat's hunt. Native animals make up nearly 50 per cent.
- Some islands in Hauraki Gulf are "cat free". Your cat cannot be brought within 200m of these islands.

Free Microchipping

Why register and microchip your cat?

- Feral cat trapping is occurring on Aotea
- If cats are let out to roam, they can encounter live cage cat traps. If your cat is microchipped, Auckland Council contractors can quickly identify where you are and reunite you with your cat.
- Following the Christchurch earthquakes, over 80% of microchipped cats were quickly reunited with their owners after the quake, compared with only 15% of non-microchipped cats.

If you do not want to microchip your cat we would still appreciate it if you could register your cat online at: [https://www.animalregister.co.nz/owner-](https://www.animalregister.co.nz/owner-information/how-to-register-your-pet.html)

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Cats that are not microchipped should also be collared with up-to-date local contact information visible so we can return the cat quickly.

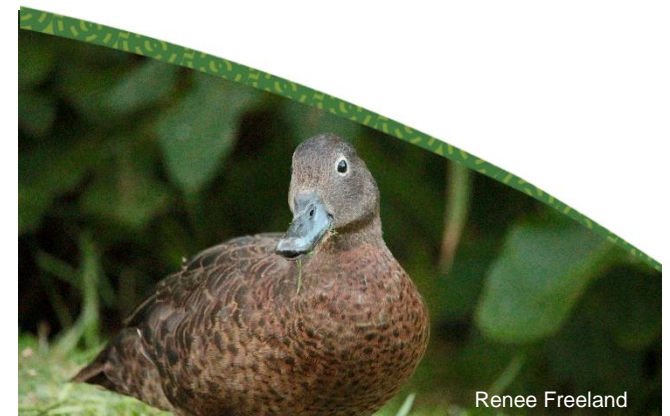
We also have a register for owned cats on Aotea to help us identify owned cats while trapping. To add your cat to the Aotea Cat-alogue please contact biosecurity@aklc.govt.nz

To desex, microchip and register your cat FOR FREE please contact Anne Kernohan at Great Barrier Island veterinary services 09 429 0463 or txt 021 797 538

Free Desexing

Why desex your cat?

- Non-desexed cats wander further, so can encounter dangers including roads, poor weather, dogs and feral cats.
- Desexing can prevent diseases such as uterine infections and cancers of the reproductive system.
- By desexing your cat, you are helping to protect our native species and ecosystems. If cats are left intact, they contribute to the feral and stray cat populations on Aotea through breeding. Cats on Aotea contribute to the decline in threatened species such as Pāteke.
- Desexing cats is an important animal welfare issue. The Humane Society of New Zealand believe that "the single most important tool in the effort to deal with unwanted animals is the prevention of indiscriminate breeding" and that "all pets should be desexed".



Renee Freeland