

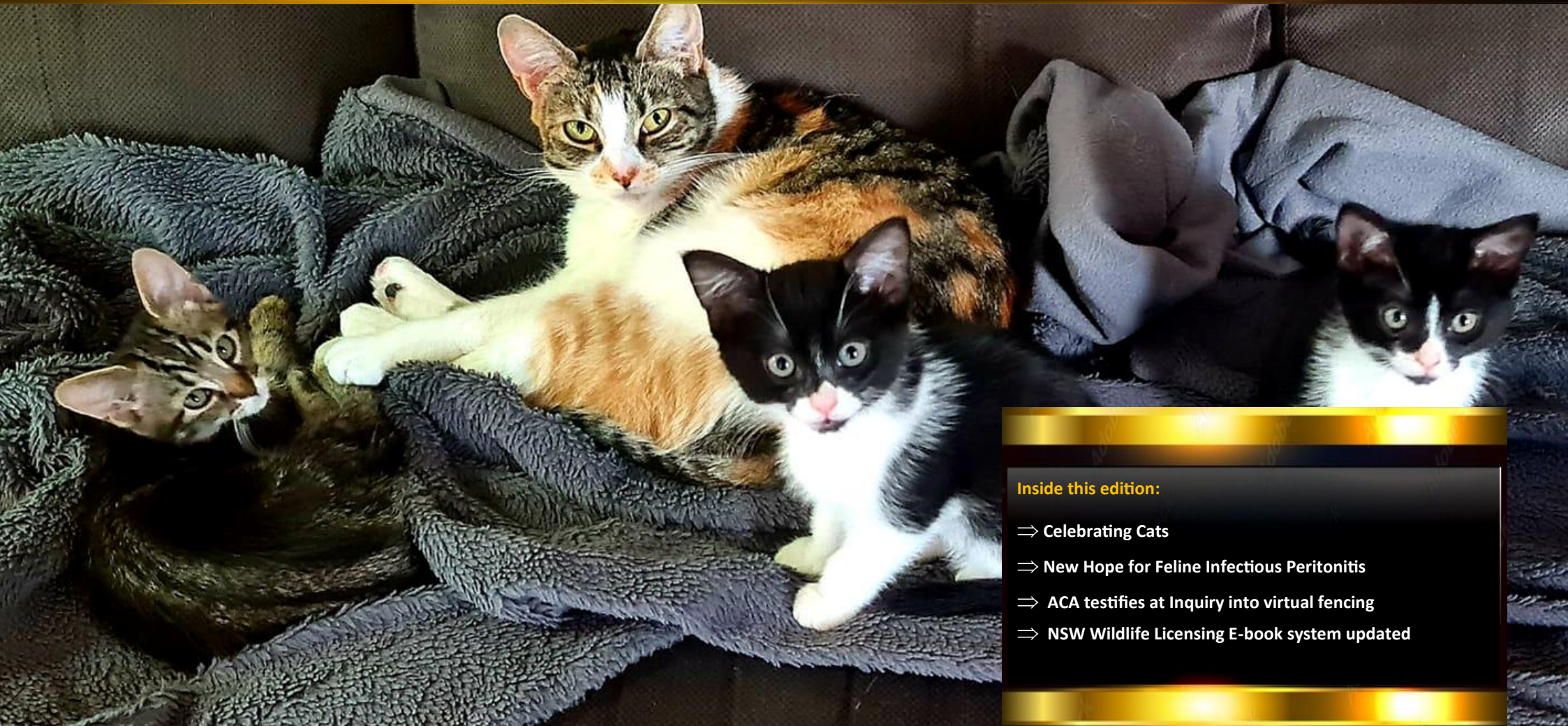


Animal Care Australia

# The Animal Care Expert

Quarterly newsletter of ANIMAL CARE AUSTRALIA INC.

"Animal welfare by the experts — those who keep, care for and breed animals"



**Inside this edition:**

- ⇒ Celebrating Cats
- ⇒ New Hope for Feline Infectious Peritonitis
- ⇒ ACA testifies at Inquiry into virtual fencing
- ⇒ NSW Wildlife Licensing E-book system updated



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*“Animal Care Australia acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we reside, and pay our respects to their Elders past and present.”*

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Watch out for our next issue  
in Dec 2024.

Click to read our [previous issues](#)



## Headline Article: Celebrating Cats

By: Michelle Grayson — ACA Cat Representative

CAT LOVERS FESTIVAL™



I ♥ CATS

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### 2024 Sydney Cat Lovers Festival

The only event in Australia solely dedicated to celebrating cats rolled into Sydney on Saturday 24 and Sunday 25 August 2024.

Animal Care Australia founding member NSW Cat Fanciers Association held a championship cat show at the festival on Sunday 25 August 2024.

Over 100 purebred pedigree cats competed for the coveted prizes in their individual classes as well as Best Exhibit awarded by each of the 3 judges.



Some of the breeds on show were Birman, Ragdoll, Siberian, Devon Rex, Burmese, Sphynx, British Shorthair, Siamese, Maine Coon, Norwegian Forest Cats, Bengal, Cornish Rex, Oriental and Persian.

Every cat was bathed, blow dried, primped and pampered in order to be show ready for the cat competition, as well as those on the breeder display stands.

Ziggy Stardust, a 7 month old Maine Coon, was awarded the Overall Supreme Exhibit in the cat competition on Sunday 25 August 2024.

Each different breed has its own “standards” that a cat is judged on - from their body size and shape, eye colour, ear placement, coat texture and pattern, and a number of other specific features

Over 80,000 cat lovers passed through the festival over the 2 days and were able to meet breeders and their cats.

NSW Cat Fanciers Association had 12 breeder members participate in the breed showcase.



These members spent two days talking to visitors about the cats they love, educating on responsible pet ownership and allowing visitors to get up close and personal with their cats.



SIAMESE



LONGHAIR BENGAL



DEVON REX



Bengal

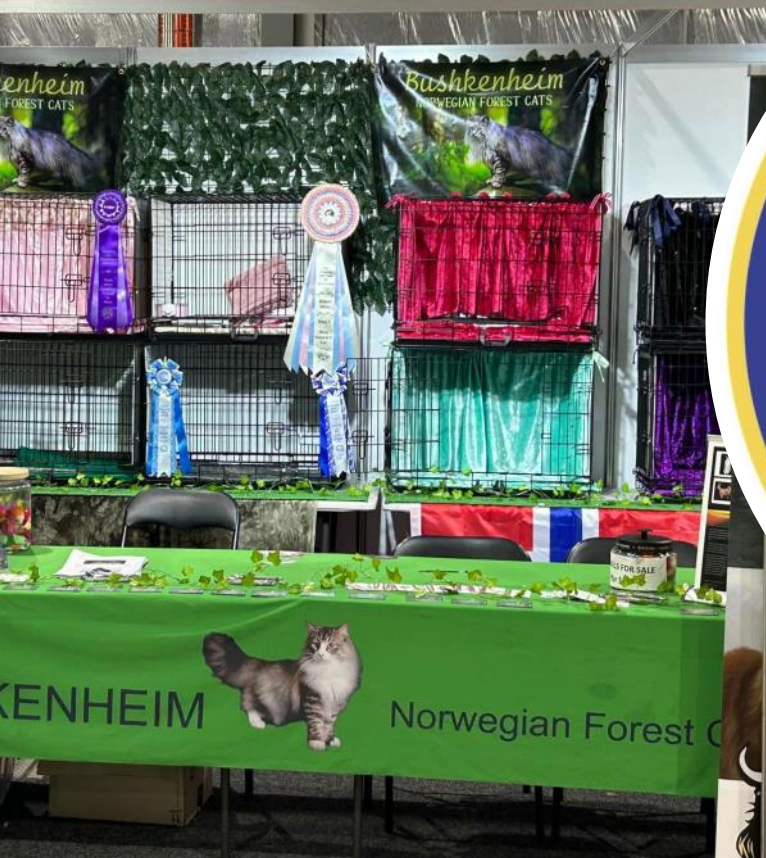


You might think that all cats have the temperament to attend an event as busy and loud as the Cat Lovers Festival.

In reality, breeders choose cats very carefully who show the right attributes as young kittens. Show cats start at a very young age (approx. 12 weeks old). They attend many shows during the year and are well practiced at handling these sorts of things.



NORWEGIAN FOREST CATS 512



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## Submissions & Correspondence Reports



### Banyule Council Public Order — follow-up

**June 2024:** Animal Care Australia provided a follow-up response to the announced Banyule City Council’s Public Order for dogs & cats to be debated by Council this week.

Our feedback highlighted:

- The Public Order proposals were contrary to the results of the community consultation
- The justifications provided were not supported by data
- Where minimal data was provided the proposed controls were not proportionate with the concerns identified

Animal Care Australia highlighted a number of additional points and reminded Council that we will be submitting to the current Parliamentary Inquiry into Local Government funding and services and we will be including these concerns as part of that submission.

Animal Care Australia has submitted our concerns to the Mayor and all Councillors.

You can read our full response here:



### NSW: Companion Animals Amendment (Puppy Farm Bill 2024 — OPPOSED!

**June 2024:** Animal Care Australia (ACA) provided feedback to NSW Members of the Upper House to totally oppose the proposed

amendment related to the over-regulation of dog and cat breeding.

ACA does not support the unethical breeding of any species and continues to consult with government to enhance animal welfare legislation, regulations, and codes of practice in order to improve the animal welfare outcomes for all species.

ACA is working on options focused on making improvements to the Breeding Code of Practice for Dogs and Cats to improve animal welfare outcomes.

So-called puppy farm bans don’t stop puppy farms — they incentivise them!

You can read our detailed response to the Bill here:





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**NSW: POCTAA Amendment (Transparency and Fit and Proper Persons) Bill 2024 — Provisionally SUPPORTED!**

**June 2024:** Animal Care Australia (ACA) provided feedback to NSW Members of the Upper House to provisionally support the proposed amendment related to creating more accountability for the RSPCA and AWL as POCTAA enforcement organisations.

The RSPCA MUST BE HELD MORE ACCOUNTABLE!

The Bill also made further amendments for mandated disqualification orders by the courts.

ACA does not support mandatory orders and believes the courts must have the ability to make those determinations.

ACA is also lobbying to correct previous amendments that are overreaching and prevent people from breeding animals or working with animals — even before they have been found

guilty of an offence.

LOSS OF EMPLOYMENT & TREATED GUILTY BEFORE PROVING INNOCENCE SHOULD NOT CONTINUE IN NSW.

You can read our full submission here:



**Inquiry into Local Government funding and services**

**June 2024:** Animal Care Australia has submitted to the Inquiry.

As a nationally recognised animal welfare organisation, Animal Care Australia regularly interacts and consults with local councils across Australia.

Animal Care Australia’s interactions with Victorian Councils are more often than not in response to councils that are in our opinion abusing their powers and forcing their own officers’ biases into changes of their local laws, including public orders, domestic animal management plans, and the issuing of, or

more to the point, refusal to issue excess animal permits as required under the Domestic Animals Act and even enforcing outlandish conditions for approval of development applications.

The top points:

- Animal Care Australia called for greater oversight of councils by the state government to improve accountability and transparency.
- Animal Care Australia called for the improved ability for residents to appeal council actions without the need to escalate to VCAT.
- Animal Care Australia highlighted circumstances of financial wastage by councils.
- Animal Care Australia called out the occurrences where community opinion is either not sought or is ignored.

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Animal Care Australia requested the opportunity to provide further evidence at this Inquiry.

You can read our full submission here:



**ACA responds to the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy**

**June 2024:** Animal Care Australia has responded to the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy (AAWS). ACA recommended:

- \* to clearly define animal welfare and animal rights/ protection as well as clarifying the category of ‘companion animal’
- \* to exclude non - industry stakeholders - such as animal rights activists or those with similar ideological views
- \* to maintain a commitment to sustainable animal welfare practices informed by animal welfare science & evidence, and not science that has only been peer-reviewed by animal rights oriented researchers

- \* the exclusion of the RSPCA as animal welfare enforcement officers. Compliance officers MUST be employed directly by government
- \* a national approach to education and awareness of animal welfare in order to improve animal welfare
- \* a requirement of greater representation of the industry stakeholders on Animal Welfare Advisory Councils.

ACA expanded on a number of the strategy’s elements and will continue to participate in task groups moving forward.

You can read our full submission here:



**ACA responds to NSW Dealing in protected birds draft code of practice**

**June 2024:** Animal Care Australia has responded to the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service draft dealing in protected birds code of practice.

ACA supports the existence of codes of practice, however, we have opposed this particular code as it does not serve the intended purpose of a risk-based approach. The conditions & requirements are the same as those for licensed birds — except for the licensing fee.

Elements of this code were not supported by the key animal keeping stakeholders and yet those objections were ignored by NPWS.

ACA called out the inclusion of the RSPCA and WIIRES in the advisory committee given they both oppose the keeping of native animals as pets.

ACA opposed:

- The limit on dealing of 30 birds.
- The requirement to up date NPWS on the movement of birds.
- The requirement to lodge annual returns.

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- The clause that provided for a breach of the Biodiversity Conservation Act for failing to update your name and contact details within 28 days. This would be an offence under the Act.

ACA called out a number of other issues with the proposal and will continue to lobby for the correct risk-based process to be adopted.

You can read our full submission here:



— which will result inaccurate outcomes.

- Support of improving responsible pet ownership
- Lack of proper stakeholder inclusion in the development of the Plan
- Clear lack of animal welfare needs by the inclusion of restricted pet numbers
- Reminder not to make the same mistake as Banyule Council by ignoring residents' feedback

ACA also requested to meet with Council to discuss additional concerns.

You can read our full response here:



**Nillumbik Council Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025**

**July 2024:** Animal Care Australia responded to Nillumbik Shire Council's Domestic Animal Management Plan review. Our feedback included:

- Support for a 24 hour cat confinement — with caveats outlined in our response
- Called out the use of a misleading survey





## Containers for Cash

*Do you have a recycling bin FULL of bottles and cans! Did you know these can help organisations like Animal Care Australia to continue supporting the rights to keep pets?*

*You can now support Animal Care Australia by returning your cans and bottles to Containers for Cash stations in QLD, WA, VIC and NSW. For each returned bottle or can, Animal Care Australia will get a donation!*

*This is a great way for you, our supporters, to make a donation and recycle! Showing your love for the work our volunteers do and for our planet at the same time!*

*To donate in NSW : Get the app: <https://returnandearn-app.com/> or,*

*Select us from the charities list at the Return & Earn Collection Point.*

**Donate  
TODAY!**

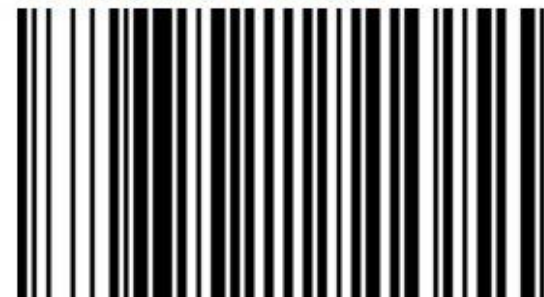
C11377668



*The code to donate in **QLD and WA** is C11377668—and scan the barcode above to get the app.*

*In **Victoria**: Use the barcode below to upload the app and donate when returning your containers for cash at local CDS VIC West, CDS VIC East and CDS VIC North (Visy) Zones.*

C2000011352





## Notice of AGM!

ACA's AGM will be held on Monday 11th November 2024 via Zoom commencing at 7.30pm.

Any member wishing to join this meeting will need to RSVP by no later than 5pm Monday 11th November via email:

[aca@animalcareaustralia.org.au](mailto:aca@animalcareaustralia.org.au) with:

\* The name of the member organisation and the representative of your organisation who will participate on behalf of the organisation

\* Individuals may also attend – but do not have any voting rights – please RSVP your name.

A link for the meeting will be emailed to you shortly before the starting time.

All end of term Committee members (Species representatives) have indicated their intent to re-stand for their positions.

Office-bearers positions are elected by the newly elected Committee. To be re-elected are:

⇒ President

⇒ Treasurer

Committee positions to be re-elected (current representative in brackets)

⇒ Horses & Livestock (Karri Nadazdy)

⇒ Insects & Arachnids (Michaela Storen)

⇒ Native Mammals (Michael Donnelly)

**Vacant Committee positions available:**

⇒ Fish & Aquatic Species Representative

Nominations for positions will open on 14th October 2024. You can download a form here: [Nomination Form](#)

Completed Forms must be delivered to the Secretary by no later than midnight 3rd November 2024. Email:

[secretary@animalcareaustralia.org.au](mailto:secretary@animalcareaustralia.org.au)

If insufficient nominations are received to fill all vacancies the candidates nominated are taken to be elected.

AGM Agenda will be provided closer to the time of the AGM on our Facebook Events Page or by request or upon RSVP.

Michelle Grayson

Secretary

If you have any questions, please contact Michelle Grayson Secretary – Animal Care Australia — [secretary@animalcareaustralia.org.au](mailto:secretary@animalcareaustralia.org.au)



## **New hope for Feline Infectious Peritonitis (FIP): a guide for pet parents**

By: Michelle Grayson — ACA Cat Representative

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(Article & pics sourced from: [PetSure.com.au](https://www.petsure.com.au))

### New hope for Feline Infectious Peritonitis (FIP): a guide for pet parents

Feline Infectious Peritonitis (FIP) has been regarded as a scary and often deadly disease for cats, worrying cat parents everywhere, but there's good news. Recent progress in veterinary medicine has brought new hope for both cat owners and their companions dealing with FIP.



We will take a look at advancements in treatment for FIP, including the serendipitous discovery of molnupiravir, a drug which was initially used to treat COVID-

19 in humans, and how this marked a significant breakthrough in feline medicine.

### So, what is FIP?

FIP is caused by a mutated version of a common virus called Feline Enteric Coronavirus (FEC). Normally, this virus leads to mild gastrointestinal issues in cats that usually resolve on their own. But when it mutates and causes FIP, it becomes a serious and often fatal disease that affects many parts of the body. Dr. Kate Worthing (BVSc PhD PGCert) from the University of Sydney School of Veterinary Science explains, "while most cats with this virus don't show any signs, or only have a bit of diarrhoea, a small number of them develop FIP."

### What are some signs that a cat may have FIP?

FIP can be tricky to diagnose because it can cause a variety of symptoms. Some of these symptoms can include:

- A potbellied appearance

- Persistent fever
- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss
- Lethargy
- Difficulty breathing
- Jaundice (yellowing of the eyes or gums)
- Eye abnormalities (such as inflammation or cloudiness)
- Neurological symptoms (such as seizures or imbalance)

### Is there anything you can do to reduce your cat's risk of getting FIP?

Dr. Kate Worthing explained that even though researchers are working hard on it, figuring out how FIP develops is still a bit of a mystery. It's influenced by a range of factors, like a cat's genetics, changes in the

Cont'd next page...

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virus, and sometimes just luck. While we can't control these factors directly, studies suggest that cats living with lots of other cats are more likely to get FIP than those in single-cat homes. So, having fewer cats might lower the risk. But because FIP is so complex and we don't fully understand it yet, Dr. Kate Worthing stressed that there's no guaranteed way to prevent it.

### The serendipitous discovery of a new treatment

The search for a treatment for FIP got a boost from the worldwide effort to fight COVID-19, when new medications were discovered: remdesivir, GS441524 and molnupiravir. These were all originally designed to fight human viruses. As doctors worked on treating COVID-19 patients, they noticed similarities between how FIP affects cats and severe COVID-19 in humans. This got them thinking: could remdesivir, GS441524 and molnupiravir help cats with FIP too?



Dr. Kate Worthing points to a recent study [i] done by the University of Sydney that found some exciting results. In the study, 86% of cats diagnosed with FIP went into remission after being treated with either remdesivir, an antiviral drug given by injection, or GS-441524, a similar drug given orally. This breakthrough shows how treatments from one field of medicine can be adapted to help with diseases in another, giving us hope for fighting illnesses that affect both humans and animals.

### Providing care and managing nutrition

Alongside treatment, giving supportive care and managing nutrition are crucial for cats with FIP. Supportive care includes giving them Intravenous fluids (IV) to keep them hydrated, feeding them a balanced diet to fight weight loss and malnutrition, or treating symptoms like fever and lethargy when necessary.

### Does pet insurance cover treatments for FIP?

PetSure's pet insurance policies now include coverage for antiviral medications like remdesivir and GS-441524, as well as molnupiravir. This means pet parents have more options to help their cats fight FIP and can focus on giving them the best care possible.

### A case study: Tezy's bout with FIP

Luke and his partner Analee are the proud pet parents to Tezy – a two-year-old black Domestic Shorthair they rescued in



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February 2021. Tezy is a playful, affectionate, and vocal cat but after they introduced a new rescue cat to the home, Willow, they knew something wasn't quite right.

In June 2023, Tezy became lethargic and reclusive and started hiding away in a box. After noticing Tezy's loss of appetite and that she was struggling to jump with a limp in the back leg, Luke took her straight to the local vet for examination. The vet noticed fluid in Tezy's abdomen and suspected the fluid was urine leaking out of her bladder and referred Tezy to the emergency vet hospital at the University of Sydney. Here, the specialist did a range of X-rays and blood tests and after three days of observation, they diagnosed Tezy with feline infectious peritonitis (FIP).

Having not heard of FIP before, the veterinary specialist explained that while FIP was previously a fatal disease it could now be treated effectively, thanks to new research and a breakthrough during the Covid-19 pandemic that discovered the application of new medications for FIP.

However, Luke was warned that the medications were costly.

Tezy's treatment included a combination of GS-441524 (oral tablet) and Mefloquine (an anti-malarial that has better blood-brain penetration than GS tablets) to help with Tezy's neurological symptoms, including her limp. Tezy remained in hospital for 1 week in total and the treatment went on for three months. The total claim cost was \$18,471, so Luke was thankful he had pet insurance as he was reimbursed \$14,339, nearly 80% of the eligible treatment cost. This meant Luke was only out-of-pocket around \$4,000.

"There's no value on a cat's life but if I didn't have pet insurance, we wouldn't have been able to afford treatment and Tezy may not be with us today," – Luke

Luke's advice to other pet parents is to go to the vet right away if you notice something isn't right, and to look out for warning signs like a reduced appetite, lethargy, or weight loss. He also urges pet parents to get a

second opinion if needed and to do the research, stating there are great online resources and community groups with useful information.

While Tezy's recovery was gradual, Luke saw a noticeable difference in her demeanor as soon as treatment started. Tezy has been in stable remission since September 2023, and is back to her usual energetic and affectionate self – playing at home with her brother Willow, while still maintaining her independence.

An FIP diagnosis can be tough for pet owners, but there's some good news. Advancements in veterinary medicine has offered new hope for cats affected by FIP. While these treatments might not cure the disease, they can help cats live longer and have a better quality of life.



## ACA testifies at NSW Inquiry into the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (Virtual Fencing) Amendment



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*Pictured on story cover: Kylie Gilbert (left) - ACA Dog Representative and Karri Nadazdy (right) - ACA Horse & Livestock Representative..*

**Friday, 5th July 2024**

### **Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment (Virtual Stock Fencing) Bill 2024 Opening Statement**

Good morning,

Chair – I ask that this statement be tabled.

Today we are here to discuss the advantages of virtual fencing as they relate to horses and livestock kept on hobby farms, recreationally and as pets, but also for wildlife. We support responsible animal ownership, and keeping animals contained to our own property is one way animal owners can act responsibly.

Claims that electric or virtual fencing is cruel solely because it is aversive come exclusively from Animal Rights groups, who lack experience or knowledge of the products, learning theory, or animal training. This is

anthropomorphizing at its best.

Electric fencing has been in use since the 1930's and virtual fencing is the exact same experience for the animal but with huge technological advances that benefit animal welfare, safety for the animals as well as the community and added convenience for owners.

**We should never make it harder or more expensive to be responsible animal owners and carers.**

Electric and virtual fencing is a very effective deterrent and Animal Care Australia has no animal welfare concerns with the use of these devices, as long as they are sized correctly for the species, or to the need. Why would we force owners to buy duplicate systems for each species, when the virtual fence could simply have different collars for different species? This technology is inevitable and not far away but will remain illegal in NSW under this amendment.

Animal Care Australia believes that limiting the permitted use of virtual fencing to only livestock will create unintended consequences. We need these options available to us as soon as the manufacturers release them.

We must stay focused on improving animal welfare and avoid distractions from the animal rights lobby's ongoing efforts to complicate and increase the cost of animal ownership.

You can read our submission here:





## *Can you keep mini horses as pets?*

*By Karri Nadazdy — ACA Horse & Livestock Representative*



PONY PRISON



## *Animal welfare is animal care.*

I'm often asked whether minis can be kept as pets and 'lawnmowers' in suburbia, or to have one instead of a dog or cat.

Mini horses and mini ponies can make excellent pets, but its important to keep in mind that minis are just small versions of full size equines, having been selectively breed for size. They have the same care and welfare needs that all horses do.

The first consideration is how many. What the? I hear you say? You just want one? Well, all horses, including minis, are herd animals with a basic and uncompromising need to live with other equine company. Minis cannot be kept alone without an equine friend that they can interact with. Horses take turns sleeping to watch over each other, they groom each other, and stand nose to tail to swish flies off each other. They tend to go as a group to the water trough, or to rest in the shade. Lonely horses will show signs of sleep deprivation, distress and anxiety. This can turn into serious behavioural issues such as aggression, pacing, kicking and constant neighing. Anyone considering a horse (of any size) must allow for their horse to have company. One horse is never an option.

Now that you know how many - the next consideration is space. Horses have evolved to walk and eat (called grazing) for around 16 hours a day. They have very small stomachs that need to be trickle fed with lots of fibre all day long. They need space to move and to have enough land to have grass most of the year. Not all grass is safe for horses to eat! Suburban lawns are fertilized, weed

treated, and often include species of grass not suitable for horses. Even "improved pastures" intended for sheep and cattle are not safe for horses - the high sugar and protein levels can make horses very sick, very quickly. Horses are more closely related to rabbits than they are to cows and have lower nutritional requirements, but a higher demand for fibre. Horses have very sensitive digestive systems, without the ability to vomit, so they need a bland and consistent feeding regime without surprises.

Safe, secure fencing is essential, as minis can be quite good at escaping out of standard horse (or even sheep) fencing. Councils around the country have different rules for where horses can be kept. ACA is educating councils on the different needs of different types of horses and land, but many councils still have some strange and nonsensical requirements for horse keeping. Often several acres are the minimum requirement, and suburban and city councils often state no horses are allowed at all. We hope to see exemptions made for service and assistance horses in the future.

Supplemental feed, such as grass hay, and a daily vitamin and mineral supplement is required for most horses as a bare minimum for those not doing a lot of exercise or competing. Minis can get fat very easily - obesity is much more common than malnourishment and a much bigger welfare issue. Obesity can quickly lead to metabolic conditions such as laminitis of the

feet, which is a very painful and life threatening condition.

A mini horse or pony should never be too plump. A good way to check their weight is to see if you can feel their ribs. If not, they are too fat! Ideally the ribs should be just visible in their summer coat, and not have any fat pads on their neck or rump. Horses can be fed a lower calorie diet, but can never have their food volume limited - they always need access to fibre (Teff or native grass hay is ideal), even if they need to lose weight.

How much exercise does a mini horse need? A daily walk with you is great exercise - they can walk or jog very long distances if they are gradually accustomed to it. Minis are usually too smart for their own good and can get quite bored if they don't have a fun activity to keep them occupied. They make great carriage ponies (with strict weight pulling limits!) and can be great at horse agility, learning tricks, hiking on trails, and competing at Ag Shows in halter classes and other fun events.

Minis are generally too small for even children to ride - especially the really small mini horses, with their fine, delicate features, and light body weight. If you want a horse the kids can ride then a riding pony or small horse is more suitable.

Minis have hard hooves that grow constantly and need to be trimmed every 4-6 weeks by a farrier or Podio therapist. Their teeth also grow constantly and as they

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get older they need to see the dentist more often to check for loose teeth or sharp edges. An annual vet check and an allowance for emergencies is also crucial. Competition or recreational sports that you do with your mini will also have costs.

Another thing to consider before jumping in and buying a mini is their longevity. Unlike our dogs and cats, minis can live 30 years or more, if well cared for. There are few pets we have to plan that far ahead for. Minis are fairly easy to come by from breeders, rescues and privately, and are often quite hard to rehome. The older any horse gets, the harder they are to rehome, and owners need realistic future plans that puts their horse's welfare first. Horses are not a pet to acquire on a whim or to keep short term.

The joy a mini horse or pony will bring to your life cannot be overstated, but they do require a lot of care, space and expense. If you're not sure if you're up to the task - volunteering for a horse rescue, or other horse owner to experience what is really involved in caring for a horse before committing to buying your own mini would be a great idea.

Being a responsible horse owner is a long term prospect but a worthwhile and very rewarding adventure.

*(Photos credit: Karri Nadazdy)*



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## ***NSW Native Wildlife Licensing online E-book system updated. What you need to know.***

### **Attention all NSW native wildlife license holders.**

The new 'interim' online system has now been implemented and is simply a data update system.

If you have not yet downloaded your records from the old e-book then it is too late. But not to worry — NPWS are promising your data is not lost—but you will need to wait until a newer system can be finalised before you can view it.

The current form DOES NOT provide you with a full listing of all the species you keep. Therefore:

**ACA STRONGLY recommends you maintain your own reliable records moving forward.**

For more information about the new online system go here:

<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/licences-and-permits/wildlife-licences/native-animals-as-pets/native-animal-keeper-record-book?>

ACA will continue to keep you updated as things progress. We are aware of everyone's concerns and have made those known to NPWS. We will continue to work with them to get issues resolved.



## **Online Native Animal Keeper Record Book**

### **Important**

You do not need to re-enter previously submitted information (e.g. via the previous e-book). Please use this form only for new records, that means information that you haven't previously submitted.

**Example:** the last submission you made was on 15 May 2024 in the previous e-book. You have since then purchased 3 lizards and have not recorded these yet. You only need to enter these 3 lizards into the new e-book, not any of the previously submitted information.

If you leave this form without submitting, your data will be lost. Please ensure you hit 'submit' before leaving this form. If for any reason you cannot submit all your entries all at once, please submit your entries in batches clicking submit to finalise each batch as they are completed.



## Go on, stop procrastinating – Volunteer!

By: Sam Davis — ACA Bird Representative



### *Animal welfare is animal care.*

Volunteers are the unsung heroes of any community, and within aviculture, they are what make clubs shine.

At bird club events, volunteers underpin all operations. They set up chairs, table, sounds, equipment, man the BBQ, manage finances, book speakers, prepare newsletters and magazines, maintain membership registers, complete government forms, book venues – the list goes on and on. Their enthusiasm and dedication to their club's mission is truly inspiring.

Sadly, there's rarely a glut of volunteers. Too often, too few, and these few are doing an amazing array of tasks to keep the club's ship sailing.

An anecdote from my own experience may just encourage others to volunteer. Many years ago, the Finch Society of Australia meetings in Sydney were pretty basic, few guest speakers, membership dwindling, etc. By no means a rare occurrence for many bird clubs. Brian Read and I had only recently begun attending

after many years. We discussed not bothering, but decided no we should put our hand up to help, get involved in getting things moving once more, and so we did. I must say I'm now proud of the Finch Society of Australia, it has a fantastic committee and membership. My point is, sitting in the background complaining doesn't solve anything, put your hand up, throw your hat in the ring, and volunteer. It really is a fulfilling experience to give back to a hobby you love.

The aviary display and hand raised birds at the Sydney Royal Easter Show isn't merely an amazing promotion of aviculture; it's a testament to the dedication of volunteers who work tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure its success. From setting up the aviary, supplying birds, landscaping to manning the stand each day, these volunteers are giving back to the hobby they love, and in return they receive much personal satisfaction.

Volunteers play crucial roles at bird sales, shows, expos and a range of other events. They design advertising, collect registration forms,

book venues, setup tables, check in birds, man the BBQ and then after everyone has gone they home, they remain to finalise finances and pack tables and clean floors and kitchens. Most of all volunteers create an inviting atmosphere for members and visitors. It is volunteers that make these events both successful and enjoyable.

Consider the recent Parrot Breeders & Exhibitors Society of N.S.W club sale at Fairfield Showground in Sydney. This event attracted thousands of birds, hundreds of sellers and buyers - a large event by any measure. You may be surprised to learn how few volunteers were behind the event. About half a dozen in total. These volunteers are amazing, but they need your help. I've assisted the last few years - booking in birds as they arrive, checking the health of birds before the sale opens and packing up tables at the conclusion. They could do with help, as could other clubs running similar events. I encourage those who attend such events to thank these people. If you see someone with a hi-vis vest, shake their hand, thank them,

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and just maybe consider asking if you can help.

Interacting with the public is so vital to public acceptance of aviculture. Volunteers answer questions, share experiences, and educate visitors about aviculture and bird preservation. Their passion and knowledge help instill a deeper appreciation aviculture and its care for birds and their welfare. This is so important as we balance the scales against those who oppose aviculture.

Do you have skills to share? Whether it's manual tasks, tech skills, or financial acumen, there's a role for you. You could be the treasurer of a club, help prepare talks, assist new members, set up tables, sweep the floor, cook sausages. supply chocolate biscuits for supper. There really is a role for everyone. Ultimately, volunteering isn't just about giving back; it's an opportunity for personal and professional growth. By getting involved, aviculturists can develop leadership, communication, and teamwork skills while fostering a stronger sense of community.

To all the fabulous volunteers who contribute in so many ways, thank you. Your dedication and passion are the lifeblood of the avicultural community. And to those considering volunteering, seize the opportunity. Your skills and enthusiasm can make a world of difference in ensuring aviculture is in good hands for generations to come.



## ***Animal Species Representative – Fish/aquatic species***

### **Experience:**

Animal Care Australia is seeking a person who has reasonable advocacy experience and an understanding of the differences between animal rights and animal welfare.

Animal Care Australia is seeking a person who has reasonable experience in the keeping & breeding of fish – tropical, freshwater and marine.

### **Essential skills:**

- ⇒ Communication skills (oral & written)
- ⇒ Time management
- ⇒ Able to work as part of a Team

### **Desirable – but not essential:**

The inclusion of cephalopods in animal welfare legislation will result in Codes of Practice needing to be examined and in some cases to be drafted. Knowledge of keeping these species will be of great benefit.

Having a membership of an Association for the keeping & breeding of fish species or contacts to groups.

### **Specific Tasks**

- ⇒ Represent all species specific member organisations to communicate current animal-related community and welfare issues.
- ⇒ Undertake work including drafting of policy advice, project work of a specialist nature, research and analyse current legislation and policies and prepare associated reports for consideration by the Animal Care Australia Committee.
- ⇒ Assist Animal Care Australia to work with government, non-government & community stakeholders to ensure policy issues are coordinated and effectively communicated as per community and government expectations.
- ⇒ Provide support to the Animal Care Australia Executive and ensure effective coordination of the business of the association, including up to date reports for Animal Care Australia's social communications – social media, website and newsletter.
- ⇒ Abide by and support Animal Care Australia's Code of Ethics, Mission Statement, Objects, Constitution, Communication Policy and Anti-discrimination & Harassment Policy.
- ⇒ Other duties as necessary.



If you would like to join the Animal Care Australia Team or you know someone who would be ideal for the position please apply via SEEK Volunteer or email us at: [aca@animalcareaustralia.org.au](mailto:aca@animalcareaustralia.org.au)

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[Animal Welfare league - QLD](#)

National Assistance:

[National Desexing Network](#)

[National payment plan option](#) - VetPay

State Assistance:

South Australia

[Safe Pets Safe Families](#) - Vet Crisis program have partner Vet clinics and put people on a Centrepay payment to pay off their vet bill.

[Pay it Paw-Ward](#) program

Victoria

[Pet Medical Crisis](#)

[Pets of the homeless](#)

Tasmania

[Hobart Community Veterinary Hospital](#) - financial assistance

New South Wales

[Great Western Animal Hospital](#) - Pendle Hill - offers treatment assistance via VetPay or Zippay.

Australian Capital Territory

[ACT Pet Crisis Support](#)

Queensland

[Palliative care and end of life for pets](#) - Sunset Vets

Northern Territory

[PAWS Darwin Community Vet](#)

Western Australia

[Perth Vet Bill Assistance Inc.](#)



**Vet Help & Resources**

Are you currently having difficulty with the cost of living and genuinely cannot afford the vet bills or even get your pet to a vet?

Below is a list of organisations or options that can support people on limited incomes.

**Desexing**

If you have a unwanted litter a lot of rescues will rehome the kittens or puppies and desex the mum for free.

In South Australia, [Paws & Claws](#) offer free desexing. [CATS](#) - is low-cost desexing for cats only.

In New South Wales & Queensland the Animal Welfare League also run free desexing clinics:

[Animal Welfare League - NSW](#)



Photo by Gustavo Fring

Cont'd next page...

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## Outreach Services & Other

There are also some outreach services for people who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of, some of these services are free and offer other supports.

**National** – assistance for homeless persons with pets

### [Pets In The Park](#)

### [Pets of the homeless](#)

## South Australia

[Paws & Pals](#) – homeless support

We run free pop-up vet clinics in Adelaide (City), Smithfield, Riverland, DV shelters across SA, and some other locations. We also have other supports we provide. Talk to your support agency for a referral to our clinics.

## New South Wales

[Regional Community Vet Assistance](#) – not all services are free.

Vets & Pet Services that accept [Afterpay](#)



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**Executive**



**Michael Donnelly**  
President



**Sam Davis**  
Vice-President



**Michelle Grayson**  
Secretary



**Sue Kowalczyk**  
Public Officer/Treasurer

**Species  
Representatives**



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**CATS:**  
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**DOGS:**  
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**EXHIBITED:**  
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**HORSES & LIVESTOCK:**  
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**INSECTS & ARACHNIDS:**  
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**NATIVE MAMMALS:**  
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**REPTILE & AMPHIBIANS:**  
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**SMALL MAMMALS:**  
**Rachel Sydenham**  
smmammals@animalcareaustralia.org.au

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## MISSION STATEMENT

**“Animal Care Australia (ACA) is the Peak Animal Welfare Body representing the keepers and breeders of pet and companion animals in Australia”.**

ACA encourages continued development of animal welfare standards and Codes of Practice for animal husbandry, breeding, training, sale and sporting exhibitions for a wide range of animal species. Our goal is to promote and encourage high standards in all interactions with the animals in our care. To encourage responsible pet ownership, and the respectful treatment of all animals in our community ACA continues to promote welfare education over regulation



## OBJECTIVES

- To represent Animal Care Groups as the peak animal welfare body
- To engage and advise Government and legislators on welfare issues relating to pets and companion animals.
- To protect the rights of ethical hobbyists & animal keepers to breed and keep pets and companion animals.
- To clarify the difference between animal rights and animal welfare
- To promote higher animal welfare outcomes



## ACA GENERAL MEETINGS 2024

**7.30 to 8.30pm**

**MARCH 11th**

**MAY 13th**

**JULY 8th**

**SEPTEMBER 9th**

**NOVEMBER 11th — AGM**

**Meetings in 2024 will continue via Zoom to ensure members nationwide can attend.**

Any member wishing to join a meeting will need to RSVP by no later than 5pm on that Monday via email: [aca@animalcareaustralia.org.au](mailto:aca@animalcareaustralia.org.au) with your details. A link for the meeting will be emailed to you.

**Animal Care Australia Inc.**

**PO Box 314 Macarthur Square Post Office NSW 2560**

**Website:**

[animalcareaustralia.org.au](http://animalcareaustralia.org.au)

**Email:** [aca@animalcareaustralia.org.au](mailto:aca@animalcareaustralia.org.au)

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CFN: 25599



CAT LOVERS FESTIVAL

NSW CFA

EXHIBITOR