

Faure Island may become wildlife sanctuary without feral cats

Feral cat control strategies developed by the Department may provide the techniques needed for effective feral cat eradication from many islands around the world.

The successful baiting of Faure Island in the Shark Bay region last year resulted in the eradication of the entire feral cat population in several days.

Other feral cat eradication programs throughout the world have taken months or years to complete so the Department's success is outstanding.

More feral cat eradication programs are planned for other

islands off the Western Australian coast, the research scientist in charge of the Department's cat control programs, Dave Algar, said.

Faure Island is leased by the Australian Wildlife Conservancy and is to become a wildlife sanctuary. The AWC hopes to translocate five native mammal species to the island: the Western Barred Bandicoot (*Perameles bougainville*), Boodie (*Bettongia lesueur*), Greater Stick Nest Rat (*Leporillus conditor*), Shark Bay Mouse (*Pseudomys fieldi*) and the Banded Hare Wallaby (*Lagostrophus fasciatus*). AWC

funded the cat eradication work undertaken by Dave Algar and John Angus from Science Division at Woodvale, and Rob Brazell, Christina Gilbert and Bruce Withnell from Regional Services, Wellington District.

Dave said the feral cats were probably introduced to Faure Island from pearling vessels or early pastoralists in the late nineteenth century and probably contributed to the extinction of native animal species.

Faure Island is thought to be the second largest island in the world where feral cats have successfully been eradicated.



Bruce Withnell and John Angus, from Woodvale, have morning tea during a cross country transect of Faure Island. (Inset) Dave Algar. Photograph by Norman Bailey.



Photograph by John Angus. Feral cat
on Rottneest Island, Feb 2002.
Eradication program by D. Algar,
Dept. Conservation & Land
Management.