

PRACTICALITIES

AN INNOVATIVE CAT TRAP

From Avril Baxter



Community Landcare Coordinator Anthony Witham proudly displays David's cat trap at the Broomehill Aquafest.

WHEN David Dilley and family moved to a small property near Broomehill they planted macadamia trees to secure a long-term income. Geese were seen as a natural part of the system for grass control within the orchard, however before long, they were dismayed to find that the geese were being killed, but not eaten.

David borrowed a trap to see if he could catch the culprit and sure enough there was a feral cat at work. As cat control needed to be ongoing, David soon became tired of picking up and returning the trap. He then realised he could make one by modifying an old shopping trolley which was for sale at the Katanning tip. A hook at the back of the trap is baited with old meat bones (ham works particularly well) or inch thick slices of polony log with the skin left on. When the cat pulls on the bait, the trap door closes behind it.

David now has the feral cat population under control in his area

and only sets the traps if one of his or his neighbours' birds are taken.

John Asher from the Department's Environmental Protection Branch in Bunbury notes that feral cats living on the outskirts of towns or around rubbish tips are more likely to enter traps than those with little human contact.

The Cruelty to Animals Act (1920) states that traps must be inspected at regular intervals and feral captures disposed of humanely. In David's case this means that traps are set around 5 pm, checked first thing in the morning, non-target animals are released and feral cats shot.

David has traps available for sale. For more information contact him on 9824 1123.

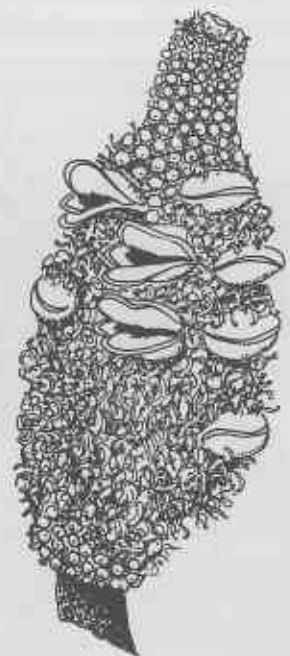
Note some local government areas, eg semi-urban areas, may have their own guidelines which affect trapping and should be consulted before embarking on a control program.

LFW NEWS

FIRE SYMPOSIA, RAVENSTHORPE AND GAIRDNER

In total, over 100 people attended these two Symposia in late February, to hear a range of speakers discuss all aspects of fire management, from fire in WA plant evolution (Steve Hopper, Kings Park) to the logistics of confronting a wildfire roaring out of vacant Crown land (John Winton, FESA). Numerous topics of interest in managing both large and small areas of bushland for (a) the safety of humans and their property and (b) the regeneration of native plant communities, arose during the two days.

It is understood that the speaker's notes and discussion sessions are going to be made available on CD - cost unknown as yet. If you are interested in obtaining a copy of this CD, please contact Sylvia Leighton on 9842 4500 or email: sylvial@calm.wa.gov.au



Banksia seed capsules open after fire. Illustration from Banksias of the Wellstead District.