

FINAL VERSION

## MINUTES OF THE 18<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE SCOTTISH WILDCAT ACTION STEERING GROUP

6<sup>th</sup> December 2017  
Perth

Attendees – see Annex 2  
Chair – Allan Bantick

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### AGENDA ITEM 1 - WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Annex 2 provides a list of attendees.

Apologies were received from Anna Meredith, Andrew Kitchener, George Macdonald, Karen Ramoo, Pete Haskell, Stuart Brooks. Stephen Reeves was welcomed as the NTS representative.

### AGENDA ITEM 2 - *EX SITU* PROJECT UPDATE

RZSS are looking at the potential for sourcing wildcat samples from across Europe to get a wider perspective of hybridisation issues. There is currently a competition underway for genetics labs to enter – winning applications will receive support for whole genome sequencing, RZSS have entered. The ‘Newtonmore’ cat, which had a low pelage score of 11, was also confirmed to have not met the genetic wildcat threshold.

Sarah Robinson announced that she was leaving the RZSS before Christmas and moving to a new job. The Chair and members wished her well, and thanked her for her significant contribution to the wildcat work.

### AGENDA ITEM 3 + 4 – PRIORITY AREAS PROJECT UPDATE + COMMS UPDATE

See Annex 3 for a full report.

Efforts are being made to ensure the winter fieldwork is more achievable and realistic for project staff. Two Landrovers have been sourced for fieldwork (previously used for SNH goose management work). Xavier Lambin at Univ Aberdeen is working with FES on a predator-prey study, and there may be opportunities of tying this in with wildcat work.

A bid is being submitted to PTES for funding, in collaboration with MammalWeb - to support wildcat recording and verification protocols. A backlog of records has built up and so the use of a contractor to deal with this is being considered. Education opportunities were discussed

**Action point 18.1** – SR and Emma Rawling (SWA) to discuss education package options and coordinate, in particular for Aberdeenshire area.

Annex 3 also provides a summary of the Comms update. The new ‘Generation Wildcat’ campaign is being developed to target PAs through leaflets, posters etc. The SWA Facebook page is now officially ‘verified’. A BBC Brainwaves podcast is to run in January. Plans are being made for a January BBC R4 programme on wildcats, involving interviews

with staff. The messaging surrounding 'Trusty' wildcat (recently referred to by NTS) is being finalised.

**Action point 18.2** – DM - Press release regarding 'Trusty' to be drafted and circulated for comment.

**Action point 18.3** – DM, in collaboration with SWT, to investigate to what extent the LINK wildcat MSP champion could be involved in promoting local wildcat issues

**Action point 18.4** – AB to investigate if/when the Boat of Garten hall will be available for the autumn 2018 SWA Forum meeting, and then to inform DM who can help plan ahead.

## **AGENDA ITEM 5 – INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF WILDCAT WORK**

A brief update was made by MG about initial discussions involving SR, AK and others over the potential for organising a review by the IUCN Cat Specialist Group of all wildcat work in Scotland, with the ultimate aim of informing the future decision-making process.

It was felt the review might involve a current assessment of wildcat status, but also look at methods, techniques and provide options for the way ahead. The Steering Group were supportive.

It was suggested that the review might want to examine why hybridisation is or appears to be an issue in some parts of Europe but not others, and also the type of criteria to be applied when identifying conservation translocation receptor sites.

## **AGENDA ITEM 6 – RESPONSIBLE CAT OWNERSHIP**

This issue has received increased public profile recently following the Parliamentary Petition submitted by Elspeth Stirling. Elspeth will be appearing in front of the Petitions Committee in the very near future. AB has spoken to Andrew Voas at SG about the topic. It was felt that the proposed IUCN Review may help to inform discussions further.

The potential use of by-laws in the CNP area was discussed again, but DH was able to confirm that it was felt this would be unworkable at the present time. However there may be other opportunities in the CNP area, such as providing receptor sites for any future conservation translocations, and linking in with the 'Cairngorms Connect' programme.

## **AGENDA ITEM 7 – LAND USE SUB-GROUP**

It was noted that the SGA have been unable to attend most recent meetings.

**Action point 18.5** – AB to speak to the SGA about representation at future SWA Steering Group meetings.

Taking forward a Land Use Sub-Group remains a problem, primarily because of staff time availability, especially during the autumn/winter months. However AB offered to help get this started. A TOR should be drafted with the input of other Steering Group members. It was anticipated the new sub-group might include organisations such as SLE, BASC, NFUS, SCA and crofting bodies. Suggestions for the work of such a sub-group were put forward – for example developing seminars for keepers (these might specific for the Cairngorms, or other

areas), presenting at AGMs of relevant member organisations etc. Although a priority of the group would most likely focus around /predation, it might also cover forest management, farm cats and agri-environmental incentive schemes (SRDP etc).

**Action point 18.6** – AB, DH, RC, MG to produce a first draft of a TOR for the land use sub-group.

**Action point 18.7** – KK to look into whether the re-convened Forest Industry + Environment Group might be the appropriate forum for discussing wildcat-forestry issues, or whether it should be covered in the new SWA land use sub-group

## **AGENDA ITEM 8 – POST 2020 RESOURCES**

GA discussed some of the funding opportunities and issues she highlighted in her accompanying paper. A particular focus was given to the possible resourcing for any post-2020 work after the current SWA project finishes. Proposals will need to be developed.

**Action point 18.8** – SNH and RZSS to have further discussions about developing proposals for post-2020 phases

## **AGENDA ITEM 9 – MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved. A shortage of time prevented a detailed update on action points at the meeting, although many of them were addressed during the meeting discussions – they will therefore be checked at the next meeting. Action points are provided in annex 1.

## **AGENDA ITEM 10 – AOB**

RC noted that the Project officers have highlighted a need to set out a statement on the SWA approach to TNVR use and related methods on estates etc. This will be made available to relevant land owners/managers.

**Action point 18.9** – RC, with MG input, to draft a statement on the SWA approach to TNVR use on estates etc, and circulate to Steering Group.

**Martin Gaywood SNH.**

**30<sup>th</sup> January 2018**

## Annex 1

### Current Action Point list - for review at next meeting:

#### **AP 14.7 - 21/09/16 - VB**

VB to finalise media protocols, taking the above discussion into account.

**C/fwd** by MG. MG is in the process of finalising a draft which he will circulate round the steering group for comment and ultimate approval.

#### **AP 15.3 - 02/02/17 – RC**

RC to investigate progress with getting support from a drugs company in providing vaccines for the veterinary work (Stg Group members believed an MOA exists with the company concerned).

**Ongoing**

#### **AP 15.6 - 02/02/17 – HC - NT**

HC to forward a draft TOR for comment, and then to organise a first meeting, ideally before the next Steering Group meeting [*update 23/2 – HC has now left SWA and so this action point will be delayed*]

**Ongoing.** NT will take this forward.

#### **AP 16.1 – 11/05/17 – RC/DB - KL**

RC and DB will collaborate on working to bring about the trapping of the cat from Northern Strathspey, identified by the group for recapture.

**C/fwd.** KL will take this forward.

#### **AP 16.2 - 11/05/17 - AK**

AK to coordinate transfer of samples between specialists, and ensure communications maintained with project staff

**C/fwd**

#### **AP 16.3 – 11/05/17 – RC**

RC will co-ordinate and lead a review of the recording, tracking and handling of wildcat samples through the analysis cycle.

**Ongoing.**

#### **AP 16.5 - 11/05/17 – MG**

MG will form a release/translocation assessment group from internal and external colleagues. This may include the preparation of a SoR for a contract to look at the viability of the remaining priority sites and in addition other potential sites across the country. MG to manage any tendering process.

**Ongoing.**

#### **AP 16.6 - 11/05/17 – MG**

MG will see that the suggestions under 2.1.2 and 2.2.1 are progressed.

- As participation at/in the steering group meetings is important it was agreed to ask SGA to propose a deputy for when GM is unable to attend. – C/fwd
- Speak to GM/SGA about a member for the Land Management sub-group. –

C/fwd

- It was agreed that SLE should also be invited to join the steering group. - Discharged
- It was suggested that NFUS be asked to join that group. – Discharged
- It was suggested that the Highland Partnership Against Wildlife Crime Group be involved in progressing the action and/or the Land Management Group –

C/fwd

**AP 16.8 - 11/05/17 – AM**

AM will pull together a summary of the findings on disease in wild populations and publish them through a letter to the Vet Record.

**Ongoing**

**AP 16.12 - 11/05/17 – MG/GH/RC**

Taking today's discussions and changing priorities under consideration GH/MG/RC will revisit the SWA project team's workplan and circulate a revised plan round the steering group for approval. Particular emphasis/urgency should be given to the task of trapping and testing the 22 potential wildcats, identified though camera trapping and pelage scoring.

**Ongoing.**

**AP 17.1 – 24/08/17 – MG/SR**

MG and SR will work together to draft a commission to carry out a review of the Scottish wildcats, which will be run past the rest of the SWACP for comment and approval. When the final draft is agreed they will endeavour to progress the review through the IUCN Cat Specialist Group or other appropriate group.

**AP 17.2 – 24/08/17 – RC/KL**

RC/KL will either produce a final draft of the Population Analysis on Formal Survey Data paper for presentation, discussion and agreement at the next meeting of the Steering Group or a substantive update on progress toward the final draft.

**AP 17.3 – 24/08/17 – RC/MG**

RC/MG to take account of the discussion pertaining to the SWA work-programme, identify what priorities are achievable and realistic to achieve and to and come up with an appropriate scheme. If this is not possible an intersectional e-mail exchange with the Steering Group will take place to allow a conclusion to be reached.

**AP 17.4 – 24/08/17 – SR/SB**

Working with project staff SR/SB will work up an agenda for the SWA Forum meeting. They will also source a suitable venue to hold the event. This should be completed by the end of September to allow the invitations to be issued.

**AP 17.5 – 24/08/17 – RC**

RC will see to the issuing of the invitation to the SWA Forum meeting as soon as AP4–24/08/17 is completed at the end of September.

**AP 17.6 – 24/08/17 – MG/RC**

MG/RC will identify to GA discreet, costed projects and/or programmes that are yet to start that will form the basis of funding applications and that are an immediate

priority.

**AP 17.7 – 24/08/17 – ALL**

To enable prioritisation of the actions outlined in the draft plan below, it will be helpful for SWA partners to identify to GA: what capacity they may have to lead or support a funding bid on behalf of the partnership (to Mar 18 initially); what bids they are currently developing within their own organisation, to what funder and in what timescale that risk being in competition with a bid from/on behalf of SWA

**AP 17.8 - 24/08/17 – AB**

AB will contact Hugh Dignon to discuss the possibility of creating a group, of which SWA would be a member, regarding responsible cat ownership

**AP 17.9 – 24/08/17 – AB**

AB will approach AM to ask if she would be willing to take on the role of vice chair of the Steering Group

**AP 17.10 – 24/08/17 – RC/DC**

RC/DC will speak to Pete Cairns to review what his, Pete's, future role in the SWA project will be.

**AP 18.1 – 16/12/17 - SR and Emma Rawling (SWA)**

SR and Emma Rawling (SWA) to discuss education package options and coordinate, in particular for Aberdeenshire area.

**AP18.2 – 16/12/17 – DM**

Press release regarding 'Trusty' to be drafted and circulated for comment.

**AP 18.3 – 16/12/17 – DM, SWT**

DM, in collaboration with SWT, to investigate to what extent the LINK wildcat MSP champion could be involved in promoting local wildcat issues

**AP 18.4 – 16/12/17 – AB**

AB to investigate if/when the Boat of Garten hall will be available for the autumn 2018 SWA Forum meeting, and then to inform DM who can help plan ahead.

**AP 18.5 – 16/12/17 – AB**

AB to speak to the SGA about representation at future SWA Steering Group meetings.

**AP 18.6 – 16/12/17 – AB, DH, RC, MG**

AB, DH, RC, MG to produce a first draft of a TOR for the land use sub-group.

**AP 18.7 – 16/12/17 – KK**

KK to look into whether the re-convened Forest Industry + Environment Group might be the appropriate forum for discussing wildcat-forestry issues, or whether it should be covered in the new SWA land use sub-group

**AP 18.8 – 16/12/17 – SNH and RZSS**

SNH and RZSS to have further discussions about developing proposals for post-2020 phases

**AP 18.9** – 16/12/17 – RC, with MG

RC, with MG input, to draft a statement on the SWA approach to TNVR use on estates etc, and circulate to Steering Group.

## **Annex 2**

### **Attendee list**

#### **SCOTTISH WILDCAT ACTION STEERING GROUP 6 December 2017**

##### Present:

- Allan Bantick
- David Hetherington – Cairngorms National Park Authority
- Kenny Kortland – Forest Enterprise Scotland
- Stephen Reeves – National Trust for Scotland
- Sarah Robinson - Royal Zoological Society of Scotland
- Helen Senn - Royal Zoological Society of Scotland
- Martin Gaywood – Scottish Natural Heritage
- Gillian Agnew – Scottish Natural Heritage
- Roo Campbell – Scottish Wildcat Action
- Duncan McKenzie – Scottish Wildcat Action

##### Apologies:

- Anna Meredith – Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies
- Andrew Kitchener – National Museums Scotland
- George Macdonald – Scottish Gamekeepers Association
- Karen Ramoo – Scottish Land and Estates
- Pete Haskell – Scottish Wildlife Trust



## ANNEX 3

# SCOTTISH WILDCAT ACTION PROJECT MANAGERS UPDATE 6<sup>TH</sup> DEC 2017

With two new staff this quarter, a fair amount of our activity has been on getting staff trained and equipped to work effectively. Both Duncan and Nicola have had a lot to take on but are doing very well in getting to grips with the project and have swiftly become valued members of the wildcat team. Additionally, with Keri switching from, Strathpeffer to Strathspey, a significant portion of her time has been taken up with handing over Strathspey to Nicola and learning about the Strathspey landowners, volunteers and cats.

This coming winter we have agreed to adopt a different approach to our vehicles. In previous years we have made use of SNH pool vehicles at no cost to the project (this is a hidden cost of the project shouldered by SNH). This winter we have secured two Landrovers for Emma and Keri, on loan from SNH, the running costs of which will be met completely by the project. We will also rent a 4WD during the peak winter field season, again at project cost. We calculate there is enough in the budget to do this (see budget below) and dedicated vehicles provide greater flexibility for field staff to act quickly when conducting fieldwork.

## Monitoring

No new monitoring occurred this quarter but a lot of discussion has been taking place around monitoring and research. As agreed at the previous Steering Group meeting, the team have been planning for full survey in the priority areas this winter alongside targeted live-trapping of potential wildcats for blood sampling. In collaboration with Dr Kerry Kilshaw at WildCRU, GPS collaring is planned that will enable active management around individual wildcats by providing remotely downloadable data on their movements. Linked to this, a collaborative CASE studentship proposal from Prof Robbie McDonald at Exeter University was successful and we have Nell Foley joining us to investigate the behaviour of domestic and hybrid cats and their interactions with wildcats, alongside the attitudes of cat owners and farmers. Alongside these proposals, we have been discussing more recently genetic approaches to understanding feral and farm cat interactions with wildcats. This will be expanded on in future reports.

## TNVR and other cat management

TNVR of farm cats and those visiting gardens continued this quarter as we identified locations where cats could be neutered without trap by-catch risk to breeding wildcats and other wildlife.

TNVR effort and success Jul – Sept 2017.

Priority Area	Trap nights	Feral / hybrid caught	Wildcat caught	Cats TNVR	SNA P test fails	Kittens rehomed	By-catch	TNVR volunteers
Strathbogie	90	23	0	23	-	1	-	2
Strathpeffer	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>24</b>		<b>1</b>		<b>3</b>

Over this quarter, 11 Supercat neutering vouchers were used.

## Public sightings

A similar number of public sightings were submitted this quarter as last. As mentioned in the last report, verification continues to be a bottleneck and we are exploring options including paying someone with suitable experience to help clear the backlog and setting up a collaboration with the citizen science based biological recording project *MammalWeb*.

Public sightings received by iRecord for Scotland (verified and unverified reports).

	<i>Felis silvestris</i>	<i>Felis silvestris x catus</i>	<i>Felis catus</i>	Total
Reporting quarter	21	23	7	51
Previous quarter	17	30	3	50
1 <sup>st</sup> April 2015 to end of report quarter	125	179	45	351

## Land management

With changes in staff, both Keri and Nicola spent time reengaging with landowners in Angus Glens and Strathspey priority areas. No update is available regarding our strategic approach to dealing with land-management issues as our new land management officer is only recently in post.

## Outreach

Six outreach events occurred this quarter, four of which were part of the summer fair calendar. For three of those we took advantage of the kind offers from our partners at FCS and SLE to host us in their tents. Attendance totalled well over 520 people.

Outreach events ran or attended by project staff.

Date	Staff	Outreach event	Attendees
21/07/2017	Emma	Deveron Arts Association Lunch	20
28/07/2017	Emma	Aberdeen JHI Bioblitz	150
30-31/07/2017	Emma	Turriff Show with SLE	300
05/08/2017	Roo & Ivor	Moy Game Fair with SLE	50
07/08/2017	Emma	Keith Show with FCS	200
10/08/2017	Keri	Grantown Show	-

## Budget

Between 1<sup>st</sup> Jul and 31<sup>st</sup> Oct 2017, project costs totalled £61,143. Actual spend to 31<sup>st</sup> Oct 2017 is provide in the table below.

Expenditure	Original allocation	Revised allocation	Actual
	Total + VAT	Total + VAT	To 31/10/17
Staff costs	£857,037	£857,037	£422,429
Recruitment	£1,500	£1,500	£659
Publicity and promotion	£10,000	£10,000	£24,479
Training for staff	£4,368	£4,368	£5,782
Training for volunteers	£9,000	£9,000	£462
Travel for staff	£27,000	£27,000	£15,257
Travel and expenses for volunteers	£120,800	£70,800	£6,595
Other activity costs	£176,486	£96,486	£7,604
Equipment tools and materials	£97,602	£97,602	£77,776
Professional fees	£276,796	£424,196	£99,805
<b>Total cash costs</b>	<b>£1,619,504</b>	<b>£1,619,504</b>	<b>£660,849</b>
<b>Total non-cash costs</b>	<b>£336,800</b>	<b>£336,800</b>	<b>£ -</b>
Donations			-£3,931*
Other cash income (Excluding SNH)	-£1,190,549	-£1,190,549	-£594,704
Non-cash income	-£336,800	-£336,800	-£49,800†
<b>Total project income including non-cash income (Excluding SNH)</b>	<b>-£1,527,349</b>	<b>-£1,527,349</b>	<b>-£648,435</b>

\*Received by SNH as at 9<sup>th</sup> Feb 2017. Further donations have been made since and will be added once payment has been requested from RZSS.

†Calculated as at 30<sup>st</sup> June 2017.



## Quarterly Communications Update

From: July to September 2017

### PRO-ACTIVE PRESS RELEASE:

**MORE THAN 100 FERAL CATS CAUGHT IN DRIVE TO SAVE WILDCAT –**

### PRESS RELEASE

#### National Media:

\*8 stories

Examples:

1 August 2017 – Metro – Stray cats rounded up so they protect the gene pool of the Scottish wildcat - <http://metro.co.uk/2017/08/01/stray-cats-rounded-up-so-they-stop-diluting-gene-pool-of-scottish-wildcats-6822530/>

2 August 2017 – Daily Record - Scheme to save wildcats a “success” – PRINT VERSION

1 August 2017 – Scottish Farmer - Feral cats trapped and neutered to protect Scottish wildcats - [http://www.thescottishfarmer.co.uk/news/15446381.Feral\\_cats\\_trapped\\_and\\_neutered\\_to\\_protect\\_genuine\\_Scottish\\_wildcats/](http://www.thescottishfarmer.co.uk/news/15446381.Feral_cats_trapped_and_neutered_to_protect_genuine_Scottish_wildcats/)

2 August 2017 – The Scotsman – Stray cats captured in drive to save Scottish wildcat - <http://www.scotsman.com/news/environment/stray-cats-captured-in-drive-to-save-scottish-wildcat-1-4520003>

#### Regional Media:

\*2 stories

Example: 2 August 2017 – The Courier - Progress in drive to protect Scottish wildcat in Angus Glens - <https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/local/angus-mearns/481363/progress-in-drive-to-protect-scottish-wildcat-in-angus-glens/>

#### Local Media:

\*42 stories

Example: 2 August 2017 – Badenoch & Strathspey Herald – Major boost for wildcat fight in Highland - <http://www.strathspey-herald.co.uk/News/Major-boost-for-wildcat-fight-in-Highlands-02082017.htm>

### PRO-ACTIVE PRESS RELEASE:

## SUSPECTED WILDCAT KITTEN FOUND IN STRATHBOGIE

### National Media:

\*1 story

Example:

2 August 2017 – The Scotsman - Wildcat' kitten is rescued from farm – PRINT VERSION

## WILDCAT HAVEN PRESS RELEASE CLAIMING TO HAVE FOUND “PURE WILDCAT” ABERDEENSHIRE

### National Media:

\*15 stories

Examples:

16 August 2017 – The Scotsman – Is this one of Scotland’s last true wildcats? -  
<http://www.scotsman.com/news/environment/is-this-one-of-scotland-s-last-true-wildcats-1-4532948>

16 August 2017 – The National – First ever video evidence of pure wildcats in the Highlands -  
[http://www.thenational.scot/news/15474878.First\\_ever\\_video\\_evidence\\_of\\_pure\\_wildcats\\_in\\_the\\_Highlands\\_unveiled\\_with\\_video/](http://www.thenational.scot/news/15474878.First_ever_video_evidence_of_pure_wildcats_in_the_Highlands_unveiled_with_video/)

16 August 2017 – Scottish Farmer – War of Words Over Scottish wildcat -  
[http://www.thescottishfarmer.co.uk/news/15476631.War\\_of\\_words\\_over\\_wildcats/](http://www.thescottishfarmer.co.uk/news/15476631.War_of_words_over_wildcats/)

### Regional Media:

\*1 story

Example: 17 August 2017 – Press and Journal – Extremely rare wildcat filmed in Aberdeenshire -  
<https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/news/aberdeenshire/1308982/extremely-rare-wildcat-filmed-in-aberdeenshire/>

### Local Media:

\*1 story

Example: 17 August 2017 – Evening Express Aberdeen -  
[https://www.eveningexpress.co.uk/fp/news/local/ghostly-images-captured-on-camera-prove-the-pure-bred-wildcats-not-extinct-in-shire/?utm\\_source=email](https://www.eveningexpress.co.uk/fp/news/local/ghostly-images-captured-on-camera-prove-the-pure-bred-wildcats-not-extinct-in-shire/?utm_source=email)

### Broadcast Media:

\*2 stories

Example:

16 August 2017 – BBC Radio Scotland – story highlighting claims by Wildcat Haven of a

“pure” wildcat. Also has counter claims from SWA about the fact this is NOT news

**Trade Media:**

\*3 stories

Example:

17 August 2017 – Scottish Farmer – Pure Scottish wildcat captured on video - [http://www.thescottishfarmer.co.uk/news/15476631. 39 Pure 39 Scottish wildcats spotted on video/](http://www.thescottishfarmer.co.uk/news/15476631.39%20Pure%20Scottish%20wildcats%20spotted%20on%20video/)

**STORIES MENTIONING SCOTTISH WILDCAT ACTION**

**National Media:**

\*5 stories

Examples:

24 May 2017 - The London Economic – Tigers of Scotland documentary about the Scottish wildcat to be filmed in 4K - <https://www.thelondoneconomic.com/entertainment/tigers-scotland-documentary-scottish-wildcat-filmed-4k/24/05/>

4 August 2017 – The Herald – Keeping cats un-neutered should not be an option - [http://www.heraldscotland.com/opinion/15452885.Keeping\\_cats\\_un\\_neutered\\_should\\_not\\_be\\_an\\_option/](http://www.heraldscotland.com/opinion/15452885.Keeping_cats_un_neutered_should_not_be_an_option/)

17 September 2017 – The Scotsman – Mass support for neutering of every cat in Scotland - [http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/15540187.Mass\\_support\\_for\\_neutering\\_of\\_every\\_cat\\_in\\_Scotland/](http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/15540187.Mass_support_for_neutering_of_every_cat_in_Scotland/)

**Local Media:**

Examples:

24 July - Inverurie Herald – Inverurie pupils go wild about Scotland - <http://www.inverurieherald.co.uk/news/education/inverurie-pupils-go-wild-about-scotland-1-4512774>

4 August 2017 – The Edinburgh Reporter - Edinburgh Zoo wonders have you seen our cats - <http://www.theedinburghreporter.co.uk/2017/08/edinburgh-zoo-wonders-have-you-seen-our-cats/>

28 October 2017 – Aberdeen Evening Express - Caught on camera: Wildcat returning from her hunt in North-east - <https://www.eveningexpress.co.uk/fp/news/local/caught-on-camera-wildcat-returning-from-her-hunt-in-north-east4/>

**Broadcast Media:**

Example: 18 July 2017 – STV Online - Three new Scottish wildcat kitten born at Safari Park - <https://stv.tv/news/north/1393758-three-new-scottish-wildcat-kittens-born-at-wildlife-park/>

## Social Media Highlights

### TWITTER

**Stats for July to September:** New followers: 112, Tweets: 72, Tweet Impressions: 178.5K, Mentions: 164, Profile Views: 5,906

**Comparison stats for April to June:** New followers: 279, Tweets: 42, Tweet Impressions: 91K, Mentions: 73, Profile Views: 2,506

#### Top Tweet July:

Today is [#InternationalTigerDay](#) so it's a good time to read about how u can help the Highland Tiger [scottishwildcataction.org/about-wildcats/](http://scottishwildcataction.org/about-wildcats/) [#ScottishWildcat](#)

Impressions: 9,082 |Total engagements: 250 |Retweets: 57 |Likes: 88 |Link clicks: 70 |Detail expands: 17 |Profile clicks: 12

#### Top Follower July:

@scottjkyle1 – Scott Kyle from the TV show Outlander who has 397K followers

#### Top Tweet August:

**With video of wildcat** - Miaows about helping us out! It's [#InternationalCatDay](#) & this generation has the power to help save our species [scottishwildcataction.org/how-you-can-he...](http://scottishwildcataction.org/how-you-can-he...) [pic.twitter.com/N8FTJEg5Oz](https://pic.twitter.com/N8FTJEg5Oz)

Impressions: 8,769 |Total engagements: 427 |Retweets: 46 |Likes: 78 |Link clicks: 17 |Media engagements: 239 |Detail expands: 33 |Profile clicks: 12

#### Top Follower August

[@ClydeCoastPath](#) – Clyde Coastal Path with over 21.5k Followers

#### Top Tweet September:

**With images of cats and pelage** - If you're out and about in one of our 5 priority areas, here's what to look out for to make a positive ID of a Scottish wildcat [pic.twitter.com/47dUEZLvQD](https://pic.twitter.com/47dUEZLvQD)

Impressions: 4,562 |Total engagements: 419 |Retweets: 34 |Likes: 52 |Link clicks: 32 |Media engagements: 240 |Detail expands: 50 |Profile clicks: 11

#### Top Follower September:

@lordbonkers – Jonathan Calder with over 5K followers

### FACEBOOK

**NB: Through a contact of Duncan's the SWA Facebook page is now Verified. We are still working on achieving this for Twitter as well.**

There were 634 new Page Likes between the beginning of July and the end of September, compared to 46 the previous quarter.

### Top post July:

**31 July 2017:** *We are thrilled to reveal that the "potential" wildcat kitten, found near Huntly last week, has responded well to care and has now overcome hypothermia. We have now identified this kitten as female and she is happy, content and thriving. She will stay in her outdoor foster pen to ensure her care is as natural as possible while we await the DNA results to find out whether or not she is a Scottish wildcat.*

Reach: 31,288|Shares: 79 |Comments: 80 | Likes: 2,003

### Top post August:

**8 August 2017 - VIDEO -** *Miaows about helping us out! It's #InternationalCatDay & this generation has the power to help save our species*

<http://www.scottishwildcataction.org/how-you-can-help/> - donate

Reach: 12,447|Views: 3,389|Shares: 55 |Comments: 22 | Likes: 240

### Top post September:

**6 September 2017 - \*COMPETITION TIME\*** *We're edging ever closer to our 10,000 Page Likes milestone and we'd love it if you can help us reach even more people. It's so important that as many people as possible are aware of the work we are doing to save the Scottish wildcat and how everyone has a part to play in the conservation of our Highland Tiger.*

*You can help us get there more quickly by sharing our page with all your friends and family. As a thank you we have teamed up with our partners at the [Royal Zoological Society of Scotland \(RZSS\)](#) to give away a family ticket to RZSS [Highland Wildlife Park, Kincaig](#) to one lucky follower, which will be chosen at random once we reach the 10,000 mark. It could be you who gets the chance to go and visit the Park's very own charismatic group of Scottish wildcats. [Scottish Wildcat Action](#) supports the comprehensive conservation breeding for release programme, led by the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland at RZSS Highland Wildlife Park.*

Reach: 14,558|Shares: 124 |Comments: 43| Likes: 223 |

### Scottish Wildcat Action Website

#### Google Analytics:

July - September 2017

Website Users: 6,659 v 3,694 previous quarter – **up 80.27%** | Page Views: 18,940 v 10,467 – **up 80.95%** | Pages Viewed per session: 2.13 v 2.30 – **down 7.43%** | % which are new sessions: 71.49 v 76.10% - **down 6.6%** | Average session duration: 1:43 v 1:50 – **down 6.45%**

**Web Traffic/Referrals:** Mobile Facebook remains the top referral site to our website, with Twitter in second and desktop Facebook in third. In fourth position is the Highland Wildlife Park.

Incidentally BBC, Cairngorms Nature, SNH and RZSS also feature in the top 10. Scottish Wildlife Trust or National Museums Scotland do not sit in the top 10, perhaps something we could look at?

## FORWARD PLANNING



- SWA is continuing to work with Pennie Latin and Dan Holland on the BBC podcast Brainwaves. Interviews have already been carried out with Keri Langridge, Helen Senn, David Barclay and Roo Campbell as part of their half hour programme on the work of Scottish Wildcat Action
- Launch of #GenerationWildcat brand and campaign aimed at farmers and outdoor enthusiasts. Details contained in the Comms Plan circulated at the last meeting. This will now be launched on the back of the Wildcat Army line – encouraging a nation of trail camera using members of the public to provide us with images and videos of cats captured on their devices to build a comprehensive picture of cats in Scotland. Graphics and branding almost ready (SNH Graphics assisting).
- Wildcat trapping – press release has now been done and is currently with partners for final approval ahead of the trapping season starting in December.
- New merchandise (badges and leaflets) have been ordered and delivered for use by the Project Officers.
- Introduced an SWA LinkedIn page. Aiming to provide SWA with a social media platform which can be used by professionals and we intend to update it regularly.
- Have also created a Snapchat account for SWA and are looking at ways in which we can engage with the protectors of the species in the future – young people – by utilising this hugely popular platform
- Have been working with Your Cat magazine on a non-paid for feature article on our work and Roo did an interview with them in August. The issue is expected to be out in December and they have promised to promote our Donation page.
- Continually looking at innovative ways of promoting our messages via our social media channels. We have carried out a Facebook Live chat featuring Roo, which went well, and we are planning more with other partners in the near future. Strategic use of GIFs, videos and pictures to highlight our messages, combined with horizon scanning of current Twitter trends so that we can align our messages to relevant audiences.

## Management of Negative coverage

- Wildcat Haven issued a press release to all media in August claiming they had filmed, for the first time, a “pure” Scottish wildcat in Aberdeenshire. The release was so packed full of misleading information and criticism of SWA and our partners at RZSS it was decided we would respond. Of course this always had the potential to turn into a tit for tat argument in the public forum, but there were so many inaccuracies it was a risk we felt was necessary. BBC story was sadly unfair on SWA, but we did make efforts to have the online story amended to be more representative of the position - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-north-east-orkney-shetland-40960990> Although there was some criticism in the media and social about a “spat,” the whole exercise actually provided a couple of very high profile opportunities for us to promote our work, firstly through the The Wild Swimming Brothers and their high-profile status (they promoted the wildcat for us) and also a video interview with Associated Press and the worldwide audience that gave us.
- We will be speaking with NTS about the media protocol after a press release was issued about Trusty, a wildcat (hybrid) we have been aware of for some time. The difficulty this has the potential to cause is in relation to questions (which we have not yet had) about why we are not neutering this animal. The following response has been agreed in case we do: *“Scottish Wildcat Action deals with a large number of very complex issues, some of which are a little less clear than they may first appear.*

*We are aware of this cat and no decision has been made around neutering, for very good reason. She has the potential to mate with a male cat with a good pelage score and that in turn could produce kittens which pass our pelage and genetic threshold. The best course of action is to continue to monitor this cat and assess the kittens. Only then will we be able to make a fully informed decision around neutering. These are the sort of decisions we make every day when dealing with a species with a very long and complicated history of hybridisation.”*

- Been working closely with SNH comms on an issue with Golticlay windfarm in Caithness. Local councillor keeps urging SWA or SNH to “properly,” camera trap an area around a windfarm site due to the suspected presence of wildcats. We have a holding statement in place, which has been agreed with the Operations Team in Caithness and SNH, which is:

*“A project officer from Scottish Wildcat Action (SWA) spoke to a local councillor about the Golticlay windfarm. The SWA project is a partnership of over 20 organisations, including Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH). SWA’s work is predominantly focused on five priority areas. Evidence of wildcats outside these areas would be welcomed by SWA and its partners, in particular good quality photographs or video.*

*“Given the information provided about the possible presence of wildcats in the Rumster and Golticlay area, we were aware of wildcat surveys being undertaken by the developer as part of the assessment of the development proposal. We understand SNH agreed the methodology for the survey work, including its geographical scope. The surveys have not shown any confirmed presence of wildcats in the application area during the survey period.*

*“We are still discussing the possibility of supporting volunteer-led survey work for wildcats in Caithness and beyond. We encourage anyone interested to contact us. From an SWA perspective, while it is not one of the project’s priority areas and volunteer training has been offered to undertake this work as part of the wider work of the project.”*