

FINAL

MINUTES OF THE 19th MEETING OF THE SCOTTISH WILDCAT ACTION STEERING GROUP

16th March 2018
Battleby

Attendees – see Annex 1
Chair – Allan Bantick

AGENDA ITEM 1 - WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Annex 1 provides a list of attendees.

Apologies were received from Stuart Brooks, Duncan McKenzie, Gillian Agnew.

AGENDA ITEM 2 - *EX SITU* PROJECT UPDATE

HS provided a brief update on RZSS ongoing activities. Licence reporting will be due in December. Noted that higher genetic scoring cats are being found in the Strathbogie PA.

The PTES have provided funding for a project that will allow more detailed assessments of the genetics of wildcats and domestic cats, and hybridisation.

AGENDA ITEM 3 – PRIORITY AREAS PROJECT UPDATE + COMMS UPDATE

See Annex 4 for a full report.

The SWA-MammalWeb funding bid to the PTES was not successful. However, it will still be possible to proceed with elements of the project.

The recent 'wildcat or not' posts on SWA social media have demonstrated that the comments received from the public result in generally good scoring. There is currently work ongoing with WildCRU to look at how automated image analysis may be applied – DB noted that the RZSS have done some similar work with other species and they may be able to advise.

The project needs to get its public sightings data up to date. A Highland-based mammal recorder has offered to help with this.

Several cats were radio-collared over the winter field season. HS noted that these can be fast-tracked for genetic testing

Action point 19.1 – RC to provide HS with details of radio-collared cats so that their samples can be fast-tracked for genetic testing

Action point 19.2 – RC in liaison with project officers, to ensure labelling of samples by vets etc is improved. Consideration should be given to other ways of highlighting the protocols (e.g. waterproof cards? video?)

It was noted that there is currently a genetic knowledge gap for lower scoring cats (because of the focus on high scoring cats) and that it will be useful to address this as the project continues.

Yet another FOI has been submitted by Wildcat Haven, and has been responded to. It was noted that this is an ongoing issue, and has had negative impacts on SWA work by diverting resources. It was noted that Wildcat Haven, despite several requests to make more detailed information available on any work they may be doing more publically accessible and available, have not done so yet.

The SWA Twitter and Facebook accounts are now officially 'verified'.

The Steering Group noted the hard work and dedication of the project officers during the winter fieldwork season, and extended their thanks for the significant work that was done.

AGENDA ITEM 4 – REVISED SWA COMMS PROTOCOL

MG provided a brief update on the protocol. Suggestions were made to improve the information provided, such as twitter handles, other social media references, definition of what might constitute a 'sensitive' issue etc.

Action point 19.3 – MG to revise SWA Comms Protocol in line with comments received

AGENDA ITEM 5 – IUCN INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF WILDCAT WORK

MG noted that the IUCN Cat Specialist Group (CSG) have responded positively to the proposal that they undertake an independent review. Details are being finalised, and a draft TOR produced. Some further comments were made on the draft TOR, to further emphasise the need for the process to be independent of the SWCAP/SWA e.g. regarding the characteristics of sites where future actions may be focussed. It was noted that there could be value in producing short briefing notes to assist the CSG by providing key references, sources of information etc.

Action point 19.4 – MG to write to the IUCN CSG, and progress the review

AGENDA ITEM 6 – DOMESTIC CAT OWNERSHIP/MANAGEMENT ISSUES

An update was given on the petition submitted to the Scottish Parliament Petitions Committee by Elspeth Stirling, regarding responsible cat ownership. ES was invited to give evidence in person to the Committee. To date none of the SWCAP partners have been invited to provide evidence – this might be a reflection of the fact that the focus of the petition discussions have been more on the welfare issues re. feral/pet cats, rather than wildcat conservation.

MG also tabled a draft paper setting out the SWCAP position on responsible cat ownership and wildcat conservation. The intention is that this paper will be submitted to Scottish Government for their consideration. The paper highlights that the evidence coming out of the SWA work further emphasises the threat posed to wildcats by hybridisation with domestic cats, and the practical challenges in dealing with the problem. The Steering Group agreed that there was a need for the paper to emphasise the need for a change in legislation to

ensure a greater level of responsible cat ownership – thereby benefitting wildcat conservation, as well as domestic cat welfare.

Action point 19.5 – MG to finalise the SWCAP paper on responsible cat ownership and wildcat conservation, and arrange for it to be submitted to SG.

AGENDA ITEM 7 – LAND USE SUB-GROUP

It was noted that although AB has contacted Alex Hogg to ask about SGA involvement in the SWCAP, he has had no response to date. This will be pursued further with the assistance of KR.

Action point 19.6 – KR to discuss with SGA contacts issues relating to their engagement with SWCAP activities

Progress has been made in establishing a land use sub-group. Membership still has to be finalised – SGA are an obvious invitee, but there is also a need to engage with those running individual shoots (e.g. pheasant shoots). SWA project officers might be aware of local contact points. There will be a need to ensure the group membership is not too large.

Action point 19.7 – RC to liaise with NT and progress the group, with the aim of organising a meeting over the next quarter.

AGENDA ITEM 8 – POTENTIAL FUTURE FUNDING

Potential sources of funding were discussed, to cover *in situ* and *ex situ* elements of the project. Options will be further considered and developed. It was acknowledged that the results of the ongoing IUCN review (see above) will be significant, and would be used to inform the focus of future phases of work.

AGENDA ITEM 9 – PROPOSAL TO REINTRODUCE WILDCATS TO ENGLAND

A number of Steering Group members had been sent the above proposal by Derek Gow. It was agreed that a joint response should be sent back.

The Steering Group noted that they appreciated being sent the draft information, and welcomed the invitation for comments. It was emphasised that the SWCAP support the general aims of wildcat conservation in GB and, in principle, the longer term reintroduction of the species to England once conditions were suitable. However it was felt that the draft proposal underestimated the potential threat posed by hybridisation with domestic cats. Other issues were also noted and will be reported back to the author.

It was agreed that efforts will be made to keep communications channels open. AK will be attending a meeting on 10th May to discuss the project, and will represent SWCAP views.

Action point 19.8 – MG to draft response to Derek Gow setting out SWCAP comments on the English reintroduction proposal, and send once finalised.

AGENDA ITEM 10 – DEPUTY CHAIR ROLE FOR THE STEERING GROUP

The current deputy chair is Ann Meredith, who has recently accepted a new post in Melbourne, Australia. As a result a new deputy chair was needed – Andrew Kitchener agreed to take this role.

The Steering Group thanked Anna for her considerable and extensive contributions to wildcat conservation over many years, and wished her well in her new post.

Anna highlighted that she wished to remain a corresponding member of the Steering Group and will be retaining a professorship at the University of Edinburgh. A replacement to sit on the Steering Group will be decided.

AGENDA ITEM 11 – MINUTES AND ACTION POINTS

See below, Annexes 2 and 3.

AGENDA ITEM 12 – AOB

None

Martin Gaywood SNH.

8 May 2018

Annex 1

Attendee list

SCOTTISH WILDCAT ACTION STEERING GROUP 16 March 2018

Present:

- Allan Bantick
- David Hetherington – Cairngorms National Park Authority
- Kenny Kortland – Forest Enterprise Scotland
- Andrew Kitchener – National Museums Scotland
- Stephen Reeves – National Trust for Scotland
- Anna Meredith – Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies
- David Barclay - Royal Zoological Society of Scotland
- Helen Senn - Royal Zoological Society of Scotland
- Karen Ramoo – Scottish Land and Estates
- Martin Gaywood – Scottish Natural Heritage
- George Hogg – Scottish Natural Heritage
- Roo Campbell – Scottish Wildcat Action
- Pete Haskell – Scottish Wildlife Trust

Apologies:

- Duncan McKenzie – Scottish Wildcat Action
- Stuart Brooks – National Trust for Scotland
- Gillian Agnew – Scottish Natural Heritage

Annex 2

Current Action Point list - For review at next meeting:

AP 16.2 - 11/05/17 - AK

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

Ongoing

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 16.6 - 11/05/17 – MG

- 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. – **Ongoing** by AB
- Speak to GM/SGA about a member for the Land Management sub-group. – **Ongoing** by AB
- It was suggested that NFUS be asked to join that group. – **Ongoing** by NT
- It was suggested that the Highland Partnership Against Wildlife Crime Group be involved in progressing the action and/or the Land Management Group – **Ongoing** by NT

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 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.

Ongoing

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.

Ongoing

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.

Ongoing – SR has also spoken to about 300 pupils over the last few months

AP18.2 – 16/12/17 – DM

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

Ongoing

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

Ongoing

AP 18.5 – 16/12/17 – AB

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

Ongoing

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.

Ongoing – will be taken forward by the new sub-group

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.

Ongoing

Action point 19.1 – RC to provide HS with details of radio-collared cats so that their samples can be fast-tracked for genetic testing

Action point 19.2 – RC in liaison with project officers, to ensure labelling of samples by vets etc is improved. Consideration should be given to other ways of highlighting the protocols (e.g. waterproof cards? video?)

Action point 19.3 – MG to revise SWA Comms Protocol in line with comments received

Action point 19.4 – MG to write to the IUCN CSG, and progress the review

Action point 19.5 – MG to finalise the SWCAP paper on responsible cat ownership and wildcat conservation, and arrange for it to be submitted to SG.

Action point 19.6 – KR to discuss with SGA contacts issues relating to their engagement with SWCAP activities

Action point 19.7 – RC to liaise with NT and progress the group, with the aim of organising a meeting over the next quarter.

Action point 19.8 – MG to draft response to Derek Gow setting out SWCAP comments on the English reintroduction proposal, and send once finalised.

Annex 3

Action Point progress

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.

Discharged

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).

No longer to be progressed

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*]

No longer to be progressed (alternative actions identified)

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.

Discharged

AP 16.2 - 11/05/17 - AK

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

Ongoing

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.

Discharged (via IUCN review)

AP 16.6 - 11/05/17 – MG

- 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. – **Ongoing** by AB
- Speak to GM/SGA about a member for the Land Management sub-group. – **Ongoing** by AB
- It was suggested that NFUS be asked to join that group. – **Ongoing** by NT
- It was suggested that the Highland Partnership Against Wildlife Crime Group be involved in progressing the action and/or the Land Management Group – **Ongoing** by NT

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 through camera trapping and pelage scoring.

Discharged

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.

Discharged

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.

Ongoing

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.

Discharged

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.

Discharged

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.

Discharged

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.

Discharged

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

Discharged

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

Discharged

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

Discharged

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.

Ongoing

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.

Ongoing – SR has also spoken to about 300 pupils over the last few months

AP18.2 – 16/12/17 – DM

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

Ongoing

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

Ongoing

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.

Discharged – a date is now being organised

AP 18.5 – 16/12/17 – AB

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

Ongoing

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.

Ongoing – will be taken forward by the new 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

Discharged – FIEG not the appropriate forum, issues will be taken forward through other means

AP 18.8 – 16/12/17 – SNH and RZSS

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

Discharged

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.

Ongoing

ANNEX 4

SCOTTISH WILDCAT ACTION PROJECT MANAGERS UPDATE 16TH MAR 2018

Our project activity this quarter has largely been focussed on setting up the various pieces of winter fieldwork including camera survey, TNVR and wildcat trapping.

Monitoring

We are conducting full scale surveys in the Angus Glens, Strathbogie, Strathpeffer and Strathspey along with a reduced survey in Morvern to help identify cats for trapping. In order to achieve a survey alongside TNVR and wildcat trapping, we have relaxed the methods this winter so that cage-traps can be placed at camera locations and live-trapping can commence before the 60 days survey period is complete. As of the end of December, few results had come in, but since then we have identified candidate wildcats (cats that could score 17 or above based on the available camera images) in all five areas. More accurate assessments will be allowed once we collected more camera images or once we can assess the cats under sedation.

We continue to develop our collaboration with *MammalWeb*. We were not successful in our collaborative bid to the Peoples Trust for Endangered Species for developing the web interface and employing someone part-time to promote and helpdesk a national survey. Despite this set-back, the *MammalWeb* team are working to develop a pared-down version that we can make use of later in 2018.

Since the last report we have no new information to report regarding the Exeter CASE student or the genetics study on feral and farm cat interactions with wildcats.

TNVR and other cat management

To date 134 cats have gone through our TNVR programme of which 109 were neutered, 11 failed SNAP tests and 14 were rehomed. This quarter saw TNVR activity in Stathbogie and Strathpeffer with six cats caught.

Priority Area	TNVR effort and success Oct – Dec 2017.							
	Trap nights	Feral / hybrid caught	Wildcat caught	Cats TNVR	SNA P test fails	Kittens rehomed	By- catch	TNVR volunteers
Strathbogie	30	5	0	5	0	1	0	1
Strathpeffer	9	1	0	1	0	-	-	1
Total	39	6	0	6	0	1	0	2

Over this quarter, seven *Supercat* neutering vouchers were used.

As with last winter, we have employed contactors to help us with TNVR in both the Angus Glens and Morvern, though both had only just begun working on the contracts at the end of this quarter.

Following the hard-work of the Project Officers, our volunteers and contractors, we have been seeing a steady stream of trapped cats trickling into the vets since the start of the New Year. I anticipate that this winter will be more successful than last in the TNVR of wild-living feral and hybrid cats.

Public sightings

Fewer sightings were submitted this quarter compared with Jul-Sept 2017. This is also fewer than reported for the equivalent period in 2016 where 39 records including 19 proposed as wildcat were submitted. As at 12th March, 11 (46%) of these had not been reviewed by verifiers indicating that we need to find resources or allocate more time to handle this part of the process more quickly. Public sightings are a potentially invaluable resource that we need to make better use of.

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

	<i>Felis silvestris</i>	<i>Felis silvestris</i> x <i>catus</i>	<i>Felis catus</i>	Total
Reporting quarter	11	12	1	24
Previous quarter	21	23	7	51
1 st April 2015 to end of report quarter	136	191	46	375

Land management

In the lead up to the winter field season, Keri and Nicola have been establishing access permission with additional estates in Strathspey, Strathpeffer and the Angus Glens. The land management sub-group being set up through the SWCAP steering group will help us develop further our approach to dealing with land-management issues.

Outreach

Outreach events ran or attended by project staff (to be updated with attendance figures).

Date	Outreach event	Attendees
16/09/2017	Bennachie Centre volunteer group	12
27/09/2017	Talk, Huntly- general to church group	23
03/10/2017	Turriff U3a group talk	35
09/10/2017	Lothian and Borders Mammal Group	40
10/10/2017	Biodiversity Conference, Edinburgh (presentation)	80
19/10/2017	RZSS Education day, stall, Highland Wildlife Park	200
23/10/2017	Satslife presentation (Royal Statistical Society)	30
08/11/2017	Scottish Countryside Rangers Association research talk	38
09/11/2017	Wildcat Forum	39
11/11/2017	Strathbogie volunteers autumn gathering, talk	60
14/11/2017	Huntly Probus Club, talk	32
18/11/2017	Donside Camera Club fundraiser	50
19/11/2017	Glenlivet wildlife group camera trap and wildcat training	4
24/11/2017	Vet farmers gathering, Strathbogie, display and meet/greet	60
30/11/2017	Volunteers TNVR training day, Strathpeffer	6
06/12/2017	Angus Glen volunteer event	35
07/12/2017	Angus Glens den building event run by FCS	18

Outreach events are provided above. The main event this quarter was our annual Wildcat Forum, kindly hosted at the Culloden Battlefield by our partners at the NTS. This gave us a

chance to update the wider stakeholder group on progress to date and the current status of wildcats. But the highlight was arguably the informative talk by Chris Clegg on some of the more obscure historical and anthropological aspects of the wildcat in Britain. Leanne Gater and Alex Stone of *Wildfilms*, the team behind the [Tigers of Scotland](#) film help us extensively this quarter by agreeing to visit each of our priority areas and a few nearby venues to show their film to the public. As a result, screening of this film featured heavily in the wildcat events calendar including one with our partners at Aigas and as a close to our Wildcat Forum. The film proved a great way of telling the public about our work and we thank Leanne and Alex for taking the time to run the screenings.

Budget

Between 1st Nov 2017 and 31st Jan 2018, project costs totalled £68,812. Actual spend to 31st Jan 2018 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	£468,465
Recruitment	£1,500	£1,500	£659
Publicity and promotion	£10,000	£10,000	£26,712
Training for staff	£4,368	£4,368	£5,782
Training for volunteers	£9,000	£9,000	£462
Travel for staff	£27,000	£27,000	£16,621
Travel and expenses for volunteers	£120,800	£70,800	£9,721
Other activity costs	£176,486	£96,486	£8,596
Equipment tools and materials	£97,602	£97,602	£82,897
Professional fees	£276,796	£424,196	£109,744
Total cash costs	£1,619,504	£1,619,504	£729,661
Total non-cash costs	£336,800	£336,800	£ -
Donations			-£3,931*
Other cash income	-£1,190,549	-£1,190,549	-£635,991
Non-cash income	-£336,800	-£336,800	-£49,800 [†]
Total project income including non-cash income	-£1,527,349	-£1,527,349	-£689,722

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

[†]Calculated as at 30st June 2017.



Quarterly Communications Update

From: October to December 2017

This period was a slow period in terms of news coverage and all work was centred around preparation for the busy winter period and marketing materials to support Project Officers, public education and continued work on forthcoming #GenerationWildcat campaign. Below are the only news articles which came out during the reporting period:

WILDCAT SPOTTED NEAR LEITH HALL, ABERDEENSHIRE

Local

- 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/>

PROJECT OFFICER INPUT

Local

- 24 November - Huntly Express - **Wild about cat woman** - *Huntly Probus Club members enjoyed an excellent presentation by Emma Rawling from Scottish Wildcat Action. Ms Rawling explained that fewer than 300 Scottish wildcats remain and the population is in decline because of the change in habitat, cross-breeding and disease.*

GENERAL NEWS

REGIONAL

- 7 December - The Courier - **Scottish wildcat 'does not have a chance' in feline 'war zone'** - <https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/politics/scottish-politics/559666/scottish-wildcat-not-chance-feline-war-zone/>

NATIONAL

- 26 November 2017 – The Herald - **Scotland's beautiful woodlands under threat - from the Forestry Commission** - http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/15684394.Scotland_s_beautiful_woodlands_under_threat_from_the_Forestry_Commission/

Social Media Highlights

TWITTER

Stats for October to December: New followers: **174**, Tweets: **119**, Tweet Impressions: **230.5K**, Mentions: **228**, Profile Views: **6,678**

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

Top Tweet October:

Artistic kids! Send your drawings of Scottish wildcats & we'll feature best on our website 🐾
hello@scottishwildcataction.org [#WorldAnimalDay](#) pic.twitter.com/alx8bsqnB4

Impressions: 17,985 | Total engagements: 152 | Retweets: 30 | Likes: 44 | Link clicks: 3 | Media engagements: 32 | Detail expands: 23 | Profile clicks: 14

Top Tweet November:

Been a while since we shared one of our Scottish wildcat videos so here's a new GIF of a wildcat in Morvern we made recently. It obviously loves the valerian lure 🐾🐾 [#Stonker](#)
pic.twitter.com/q9a9bGBqPX

Impressions: 5633 | Total engagements: 191 | Media engagements: 53 | Likes: 77 | Retweets: 32 | Profile clicks: 9 | Detail expands: 15 | Link clicks: 2

Top Tweet December:

It's [#WorldWildlifeConservationDay](#) so we're highlighting the plight of the UK's most endangered animal, the Scottish wildcat - visit our website to learn about Scottish Wildcat Action's work to save our Highland Tiger and about what we all can do -
scottishwildcataction.org pic.twitter.com/jmX8HOBrgt

Impressions: 6823 | Total engagements: 153 | Media engagements: 18 | Likes: 46 | Retweets: 41 | Detail expands: 18 | Profile clicks: 17 | Link clicks: 9

FACEBOOK

There were **303** new Page Likes between the beginning of October and the end of December.

Top post October:

Where we are in the wildcat's annual life cycle -
Read more here - <http://www.scottishwildcataction.org/.../where-we-are-in-the.../>

Reach: 7.055 | Reactions: 214 | Shares: 28 | Comments: 5 | Likes: 182

Top post November:

We've been sent some lovely images of the Scottish wildcat from one of our Twitter followers @Taarente - thought we'd share them with everyone 🐾🐾🐾🐾

Reach: 8.295 | Reactions: 745 | Shares: 82 | Comments: 41 | Likes: 623

Top post December:

Thrilled to announce our new partnership with renowned Scottish artist [Ailsa Black](#) - read more about how she is helping save the Scottish Wildcat here - <http://www.scottishwildcataction.org/.../artist-paints-brigh.../>

Reach: 7,617|Reactions: 447|Shares: 34 |Comments: 19| Likes: 384

Scottish Wildcat Action Website

Google Analytics:

October - December 2017

Website Users: 5,477 | Page Views: 17,349 | Pages Viewed per session: 2.28 |% which are new sessions: 67.57% | Average session duration: 2min 14secs (increase of over a minute compared to last quarter) | Devices used to access website: 1) Apple iPhone) Apple iPad 3) Android

FORWARD PLANNING

- Preparation for the busy winter period, which included the creation of a number of marketing materials (wildcat trapping leaflet), posters and groundwork for new partnership with Scottish artist Ailsa Black (coverage to follow in next Steering Group update).
- Continued work on new campaign #GenerationWildcat
- Creation of wildcat trapping press release