

REPORTS AND COMMENTS

Care and control of companion, stray and feral cats

This publication addresses many of the welfare and management problems arising from the domestication of the cat. Although we tend to think of the cat as a companion animal, many stray from or are thrown out of their homes, and some may become feral or are born as feral animals.

Section 1 of the booklet addresses the topic of cats as companion animals and argues the case for sterilization to prevent the problem of excess unwanted kittens and to improve the welfare of adult cats. Section 2 outlines the management options for strays, which include fostering or adoption through rehoming centres or shelters. Shelter design and housing management practices are touched on but the detail would not be sufficient to set up a shelter. The aim appears to be to outline the issues that need to be considered.

Section 3 explains the various options for dealing with feral cats and here there is a great deal more detail, reflecting the expertise of the editor. The options, which amongst others include rehoming, relocation and extermination, are covered briefly but most of the information concentrates on neuter and release schemes. Trapping, handling and programme management are all discussed with good illustrations throughout. Finally, Section 4 covers legislation and education. The legislation section is short, there is no detail on differences between countries in their legislative provisions, and it really only states that there should be 'adequate' legislation. There seems to be no particular reason why education should be lumped with legislation but the section on cat behaviour and care is useful and interesting.

The publication ends with a case history of WSPA's cat population control project in Lamu, Kenya, which seems misplaced as it does not make any substantive points not made elsewhere in the text and reads as if it came from an annual report. Perhaps the intention was to show that WSPA has practical experience in the area. Much more useful is the list of organizations that can be contacted for further reading.

Cat Care and Control tries to do too many things in a rather short booklet. It is a little patchy, (for example it does not discuss the controversial procedure of de-clawing or mention the *Pet Trade Industry Association Model Licence Conditions and Guidance for Cat Boarding Establishments*) but it does collate useful information from a number of sources into one document.

Cat Care and Control: A Practical Guide to the Management of Companion, Stray and Feral Cats. Edited by Jenny Remfry (1997). World Society for the Protection of Animals: London. 37pp. Paperback. Obtainable from the publishers, 2 Langley Lane, London SW8 1TJ, UK. Free.

FAWC report on the welfare of laying hens

This Report considers the main systems of egg production in the UK (battery cages, deep litter, perchery, aviary and free-range) and makes recommendations for the improvement of hen welfare. On the opening pages, the FAWC Chairman Sir Colin Spedding, in a covering letter to the Agriculture Ministers, introduces the Report and highlights key points. These include the recommendation that Directive 88/166/EEC, which sets the minimum space requirement at 450cm² per bird, should be amended immediately to require a minimum space of 600cm² in all battery cages within 5 years. Furthermore, the Council recommends that conventional battery cages should be phased out in the long-term subject to three provisions (a) the UK industry must be protected from unfair competition within the EU (b) imports of eggs and egg products into the EU from countries in which battery cages are still used must