

## Use and perception of collars for companion cats in New Zealand

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### Supplementary Table 1. Questionnaire used to investigate the use and utility of collars for companion cats in New Zealand, and to explore public perception of collar use.

The following survey was developed by Michele Harrod, a current student at Unitec, Auckland studying Applied Science (Animal Welfare). Her supervisor is Mark Farnworth (mfarnworth@unitec.ac.nz) is a senior lecturer in Animal Behaviour and Welfare.

The questions below are designed to take no more than 3 minutes of your time and are completely anonymous. We would ask that respondents reside in New Zealand and be over 18 years of age. If any content of the survey concerns you we would like to invite you to contact us on the email address provided above.

The purpose of this survey is to evaluate public attitudes towards cat collars in New Zealand.

Please answer all relevant questions. By completing this survey you are giving informed consent for the information submitted to be used for the purposes of research. All returns will be ANONYMOUS and UNIDENTIFIABLE. Responses will be kept in a password protected file and accessible only to primary researchers and their associates.

Many thanks for your time and consideration.

UREC REGISTRATION NUMBER: 2011-1152. This study has been approved by the UNITEC Research Ethics Committee from 23 February 2011 to 22 February 2014. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Committee through the UREC Secretary (ph: 09 815-4321 ext 7248). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

#### 1. Where do you live? City/Town:

#### 2. Would you classify your home as:

Inner City      Urban      Semi Rural      Rural

#### 3. Your age:

18-24      25-34      35-44      45-54      55-64      65-74  
75+

#### 4. Gender

Male      Female

#### 5. Does your job currently require that you work with animals? (This may include any voluntary work you do).

Yes      No

**6. Do you currently own a cat?**

Yes No

**7. How many cats do you currently have?**

1 2 3 3+

**8. Is your cat micro-chipped?**

Yes No Some are / some aren't

**9. Do you restrict your cats' access outdoors**

All of the time - ours are strictly indoor cats

Only during the day Only after dark - we keep them indoors after dinner

Only overnight from late evening until morning

Never - our cat is free to come and go at will We have an enclosed outdoor area for our cats

so they cannot leave our property

Other (please specify)

**10. Does / do your cat/s wear a collar?**

Yes No Some do / some don't

**11. If yes, please select the reason/s you use collars (please choose all that apply)**

To prevent them catching and/or killing other animals

Flea control Identification

To prevent them catching and/or killing birds

Because they look great

Other (please specify)

**12. If you do not use collars, please tell us why not (please choose all that apply)**

The bells / beepers on them are disruptive to us

My cat keeps losing them I am happy for my cat to control pests around my home

My cat is micro-chipped and therefore does not require a collar for identification

I don't believe collars are very effective as a means of reducing hunting behaviours

They need to be replaced too often

Too expensive

I have lost a cat due to a collar injury

My cat is intolerant of collars

I think collars are unsafe

I have had a cat injured because they were wearing a collar

The bell / beeper on it seemed to bother my cat

Other (please specify)

**13. Please tell us whether you agree or disagree with the following statements. If you do not currently own a cat, and the question is specifically about YOUR cat, please check N/A for not applicable:**

Cats often get their paws or limbs stuck in their collars and injure themselves

Collars with bells, or other deterrent devices reduce the number of animals and birds cats catch/kill

I have had to take my cat to the vet at least once following a road accident

Collars with bells can improve a cat's hunting ability

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Cats play an important role in controlling pest populations in New Zealand  
 Motor vehicles are a major cause of trauma for cats  
 Domestic cats who are well fed do not tend to catch many animals/birds  
 I believe owners should always keep cats indoors overnight  
 My cat has a tendency to fight with other cats in the neighbourhood  
 I feel very confident that my cat is safe whilst it is free-roaming around the neighbourhood  
 I would make the effort to call the owner if I encountered an injured or deceased cat with an

## ID Tag

Not all cats will tolerate a collar  
 Flea collars are still the most effective form of flea control  
 If collars are too tight, cats can experience trouble breathing  
 Cat collars should be replaced every 2 years  
 Cat collars are unnecessary if a cat has been micro-chipped  
 I have used flea collars in the past and my cat absolutely hates wearing a collar now  
 You should always be able to fit all of your fingers under a cat's collar when it is on the cat

My cat rarely leaves my property  
 Cats risk being choked by collars if they are caught on anything, such as branches or fences  
 Cats not wearing collars are generally stray cats

Available responses:

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neither agree nor disagree

Agree

Strongly agree

Don't know

N/A

**14. From the list below, please select the top THREE sources you would most trust for information about pet care and tick in your order of ranking:**

Trusted Social Media groups

SPCA

SAFE

Pet Magazine

Breeders

Friends and Family

Library Books

Veterinarian

Internet (Self searching)

Available responses:

Top Most Trusted

Second Most Trusted

Third Most Trusted