

ANIMAL WELFARE

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Having completed this badge members will:

- demonstrate responsibility in the care of a pet;
- identify some of the challenges of caring for unusual pets;
- identify the impact of feral animals on the environment;
- explain the role of animal welfare groups;
- research and participate in animal conservation.

BADGE REQUIREMENTS

1. Be responsible for the needs of a pet.
2. Identify some of the challenges of caring for unusual pets.
3. Identify the impact of feral animals on the environment.
4. Investigate animal welfare groups locally and nationally.
5. Research and participate in animal conservation.



GUARDS
RANGERS



animal welfare

CATEGORY

Specialities

TIME FRAME

Four - five weeks

AIM

To raise members' responsibility toward the animal world.





TEACHING IDEAS

-  **1. Be responsible for the needs of a pet.**

Members are to take care of a pet for four weeks by feeding, grooming and cleaning the pet's living area.

A mobile grooming service could be invited to demonstrate how to bathe, and groom a pet. There may be a cost factor to this activity.

Handout 1 may be used to record the activities members undertake to provide for the needs of a pet.
-  **2. Identify some of the challenges of caring for unusual pets.**

Members make a list of unusual pets by brainstorming ideas.

Research of the needs of unusual pets may be done through Internet fact sheets (see www.mypets.net.au/pl/unusual_pets - fainting goats, four-eyed fish, pet ants, pet rocks, rainbowfishes, scorpion, sea-monkeys), use the library, interviewing a vet, contacting the RSPCA or the personal experience of someone who owns an unusual pet.

After the research is complete, members' ideas for caring for unusual pets can be written on a whiteboard/flipchart. Discuss why caring for an unusual pet may be a challenge.

If possible, an unusual pet may be brought along for members to observe.
-  **3. Identify the impact of feral animals on the environment.**

The Internet (for example, www.animalliberation.org.au/feral.html; www.kidcyber.com.au/topics/ferals.htm; www.feral.org.au/content/species) has lots of information about feral animals. Members need to find out what makes an animal feral, what damage feral animals can do to the environment and the overall impact on wildlife, vegetation and agriculture and what measures are being taken to eradicate or control feral animals.

Members can either individually or in small groups identify a feral animal and prepare a presentation (e.g. poster, Powerpoint, project book) to show the impact the feral animal has on the environment. Members share the presentations with the whole group.

Alternatively, members may use **Handout 2** to collect information on different feral species from fact sheets (**Leader's Resource 1**). Photocopy **Leader's Resource 1** (one page for each member). Cut these into feral animal categories and place all of one animal type in an envelope, i.e. eight envelopes with information for say, six members. Position these on walls around the room. Members can 'gather' the information required to paste onto the sheets of **Handout 2**. This activity could be played as a 'Treasure Hunt' style game.
-  **4. Investigate animal welfare groups locally and nationally.**

Members investigate the activities of various local and national welfare groups. Discuss why these groups exist.

Local animal welfare groups could be identified by contacting the local municipal or shire council. A guest could be invited to speak to members about the function of their specific work.

Teaching ideas

The following websites will give a base on which to locate information about some welfare groups:

Australian Government – www.australia.gov.au/Wildlife

RSPCA – www.rspca.org.au

WIRES – www.wires.org.au

Australian Koala Foundation – www.savethekoala.com

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry – www.daff.gov.au



5. Research and participate in animal conservation.

Discuss why many zoos have upgraded their facilities to give the animals in their care a more natural habitat.

Research the activities of groups who are trying to conserve animals and their habitats, for example:

- WWF (www.wwf.org.au);
- Greenpeace (www.greenpeace.org.au);
- Humane Society International (www.hsi.org.au);
- IFAW (International Fund for Animal Welfare – www.ifaw.org);
- Australian Government (www.australia.gov.au/Wildlife).

Brainstorm ways in which members can participate in animal conservation. Ideas could include:

- Sponsorship
- Donation
- Membership of a group
- Volunteer at an animal shelter

Members choose an activity from the brainstorming session to participate in animal conservation either as a group or individually.



Leader's Resource 1

Feral Animal	Where it Came from	Why it was introduced	It is a threat to ...	What can/is being done
Feral fox	Europe and Asia	For early settlers to hunt	Small native mammals, e.g. bilby, bandicoots, and also birds	Trapped, hunted and poisoned
Feral deer	Europe	To hunt for sport and for food	Eat plants that are the food of native animals	Hunted
Feral rabbit	Europe and northern Africa	For food; released into the wild for hunting mid-1850s	Eat plants that are the food of native animals; burrows destroy habitat of native animals	Hunted, poisoned; calicivirus used in 1995 to kill off rabbits
Feral pig	Indonesia and Europe	For food; escaped from farms into the wild; some released to be hunted	Eat plants that are food of native animals; pollute water supply, damage fences and dams; may spread disease to other animals	Hunted and killed for meat; skin used to make leather goods; hair for brushes
Feral cat	Europe	As pets: they escaped into wild or were dumped	Hunt native mammals such as bilby, birds and reptiles as well as farm animals (Lambs, chickens, ducks)	Hunted and trapped
Feral dog	Europe	As pets or as working dogs for cattle and sheep. Some escaped into the wild or were dumped	Domestic animals such as sheep in particular, calves, and also poultry	Shot, trapped or poisoned
Feral cane toad	South America	In Qld 1935 to control cane beetles, a pest in the sugar cane industry	Native animals; no natural enemy, poisonous, has voracious appetite, breed quickly	Attempts to stop the spread by killing off any found outside the known affected areas, some trapping and fencing; studies being undertaken
Feral fire ant	Central South America	By accident: arriving on shipping containers some time between 1997 and 2001 (first detected 2001 in Brisbane)	Agriculture: destroying crops, seed, root growth; sting burns; use of pesticides and chemicals on environment; destroys ecological balance	Spraying with chemicals and pesticides

Photocopy one for each member, cut into feral animal categories to be placed in envelopes around the meeting room for activity in **Badge requirement 3**.

Handout 1 - Guards/Rangers

 (Type of pet)

 (Pet's name)

 Date of registration/microchipped)

 Type of food

 Frequency and cost of feeding

 Shelter provided

 Grooming required and frequency

 Exercise given

 Outline the process of cleaning the pet's living area

Frequency of: vaccinations _____

worming _____

Care for a pet for four weeks (Check off the daily progress chart)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28



Handout 2 - Guards/Rangers

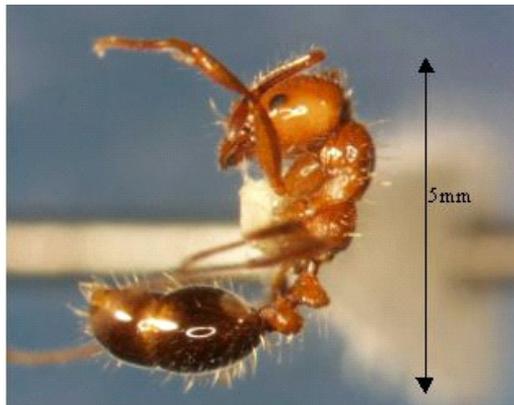
Paste **feral cat** information here



Paste **feral pig** information here



Paste **feral fire ant** information here



Paste **feral dog** information here



Handout 2 - Guards/Rangers

Paste **feral cane toad** information here



Paste **feral deer** information here

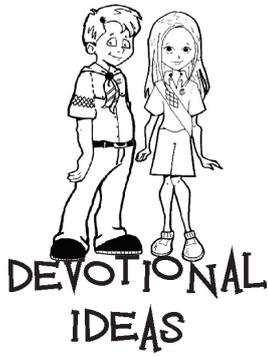


Paste **feral fox** information here



Paste **feral rabbit** information here





Devotional ideas



1. **Title:** Keeping clean
Bible: Philippians 4:8
Supplies: Bible, packet, picture or poster of flea control products

(This devotion would be suitable following **Badge Requirement 1.**)

Has your dog had fleas? Dogs and cats need flea treatment to prevent fleas. Fleas get onto dogs from other animals, from unclean surroundings and, at certain times of the year, by walking through long grass.

The fleas multiply quickly. Once fleas are on pets they spread to other pets, start to breed in the carpet and bite you. They're everywhere! Are you scratching yet?

Fleas bite into the skin of the animal and suck out a little blood. When they do this they actually leave their spit behind. Then they lay their eggs into the animal's fur and even pooh there. Are you itchy now?

When this happens the dog starts to scratch and keeps scratching and scratching and scratching. This starts a rash on its skin which is also itchy. The fleas are taking over. Are you scratching yet?

Ask members to discuss how to prevent a dog from getting fleas. (Use flea guard shampoo, flea collar, flea prevention gel, regularly clean the dog's bedding/kennel.)

Read Philippians 4:8.

Ask members to discuss what each adjective (i.e. pure, holy, right, friendly, proper) means for them, they might like to give an example, and discuss how this would prevent them from doing wrong.

Devotional ideas



- 2. Title:** Animal Care
Bible: Psalm 104:10-28; Genesis 1: 28
Thought: God entrusts us to care for animals
Supplies: Bibles for members to use

Distribute Bibles to individuals, pairs or groups of members. Instruct them to find Psalm 104:10-28. Ask them to read these verses and create a list of how God cares for the animal kingdom.

Allow a few minutes for this and then ask members to create a combined list of their answers. This can be written on a chart or whiteboard.

This Psalm tells how God cares for His creatures, in particular, how He cares for animals.

Read Genesis 1:28 and ask members to identify what instructions God gives us.

Invite members to share their ideas. Gods instructs us to bring creation under our control and to rule over the animal kingdom. Ask members what they think God means when He instructs us to 'rule over every animal on earth'.

The word 'rule' does not mean abuse, or even to use animals for human purposes. A good ruler or king doesn't make slaves of those he rules; instead he protects them and provides for them. In the same way God instructs us to protect and provide for all animals on the planet.

Challenge members to consider how they protect and provide for animals. Part of this challenge may include members' participation in animal conservation which is part of **Badge requirement 5**.



DEVOTIONAL
IDEAS