



A Big BUT

The government is, if anything, more hell-bent on killing mynas, cats and rabbits than on killing kangas and horses. Those programs are comprehensive and ongoing, and have been going on much longer. The brumbies only cop it every few years, and the kangas a few months of the year. Cats, rabbits and mynas cop it every year and all year round.

These anti-cat, anti-rabbit and anti-myna programs (or should that be pogroms?) are, in fact, more cruel, involving poisoning, gassing and trapping. Shooting is the only way of murdering wild animals that is potentially painless to the victim (not the survivors, of course) if done expertly.

In any case, the same ecological arguments against killing horses also apply to cats, rabbits and mynas. But there is one much more overwhelming ecological reason for NOT killing cats, rabbits and mynas. Lethal control of these animals maintains HIGHER populations than just leaving them to find equilibrium in our altered ecosystems. This is because, unlike horses and kangas, these are fast-breeding animals. Because of the sustained killing, they are always young animals. So, not only are they more fertile (being younger) but also they never get the chance to achieve sexual and territorial dominance – which is how most wild animals exercise their own fertility control.

I suspect many of the “ecullogists” in most Aussie governments are well aware of all this. But they actually WANT these populations unnaturally high because, at natural numbers, these animals are harmless (even beneficial). In unnaturally high numbers, any wild animal species can do damage, so, by keeping the populations high, the public servants can say “See! See! Look at all that damage!”

Thus they ensure ongoing funding for their programs and employment for their staff, while providing the government with a perfect scapegoat that allows it to get away with saying “Look over there!” while doing sod-all about real environmental problems.

0 - 0 - 0 -

Brumbies ‘Naturalised’

Like many non-native animals brought to Australia and abandoned to fend for themselves in the wild, brumbies are now fully naturalised into ecosystems that have been vastly altered by land clearing, agriculture, development, freshwater source depletion, and the deliberate eradication or exploitation of native animals. Naturalised animals have picked up the slack from native animals that are no longer present in large enough numbers to contribute the services they evolved here to provide.

Brumbies are hard-hooved, heavy animals, like the cattle and sheep for whom so much of the native landscape has been displaced, but any damage these horses do is comparatively trivial, because there are so few brumbies and so many sheep and cattle.

Like all other wild animals, naturalised animal populations fluctuate with the condition of the environment. If brumby numbers have increased recently, it is because the land to which they have access has increased. The snowline is rising with climate change, and every plant and animal that lives along that snowline must adapt or die. A rising snowline is good for horses, but most of the natives will die, not because of the horses but because of the climate change! Clearly blaming the horses is nothing but another government scapegoating exercise.