



Predator¹

Roughly a quarter of British households have a pet cat.² They can be lovable companions - but do not be deceived - they are also lethal hunters which pose a real threat to local bird populations.

"Domestic cats...are major predators of wildlife in Britain."²

There are approximately 8 million domestic cats, *Felis catus*, in the United Kingdom.³ It is estimated that they are responsible for killing some 275 million other animals each year - of which 55 million are birds.² Such figures need to be treated with caution but the effect of this massacre on many species, which are already under threat of extinction, should be of great concern.⁴

"The combined impact of predation by millions of cats may have a substantial impact on wildlife."²

Millions of birds die naturally each year from starvation and disease⁴ but predation by pet cats also may have played a role in the recent rapid declines in the populations of many species.² The most frequently caught bird is the House Sparrow. Studies have demonstrated that predation by cats had a significant impact on their numbers and may have contributed to their decline across the UK.⁵

Other species hunted include Blue Tits, Blackbirds and Starlings.⁴



"Cats kill an extraordinarily high number of birds in British gardens."⁶

Studies have shown that simple acts like keeping cats indoors at night, feeding birds and fitting bell collars could help reduce the killing of wild birds and mammals by this predator.⁷

Don

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