



ALLEY CAT RESCUE



# AFRICAN WILDCAT CONSERVATION PROGRAM

*2026 Report*

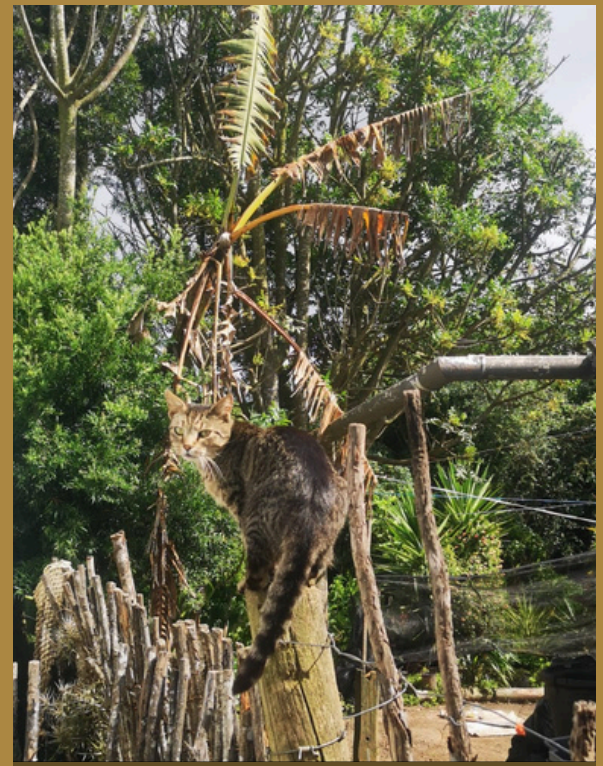


# WHY: An Urgent Conservation Issue

The African wildcat (*Felis lybica*) is the unique ancestor of every domestic cat in the world and today, it faces the accelerating threat of extinction through hybridization.

As domestic cats move unchecked into wildcat habitat, they interbreed with African wildcats, quietly erasing the genetic identity of an irreplaceable species.

African wildcats cannot be protected by fences alone. The most effective – and only humane – conservation solution is prevention. By sterilizing domestic cats living near African wildcat territories, the African Wildcat Conservation Action Plan stops hybridization before it happens, thereby protecting both domestic cats and wildcat populations.



free-roaming domestic cat in the Western Cape Province near AWC-inhabited wilderness

# WHERE: Areas of Greatest Risk

Hybridization happens most around rural towns, farming settlements, and expanding developments along the borders of national parks. In these areas, cats are often kept for rodent control but they are rarely sterilized. They reproduce rapidly and spread over more territory, pushing into surrounding wilderness where African wildcats still survive. The two species breed readily, even more so than African wildcats do with one another.

Without intervention, these unmanaged cat populations will continue to multiply exponentially – placing African wildcats, local ecosystems, and the cats themselves at risk.



rural farm cat - Buffelsdrift, Western Cape Province



African wildcat on roadway - Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park



a place domestic cat and wildcat worlds meet - Robertson, Western Cape Province

# HOW: Reaching Places No One Else Can

Our program brings spay / neuter to places that have no access to veterinary care.

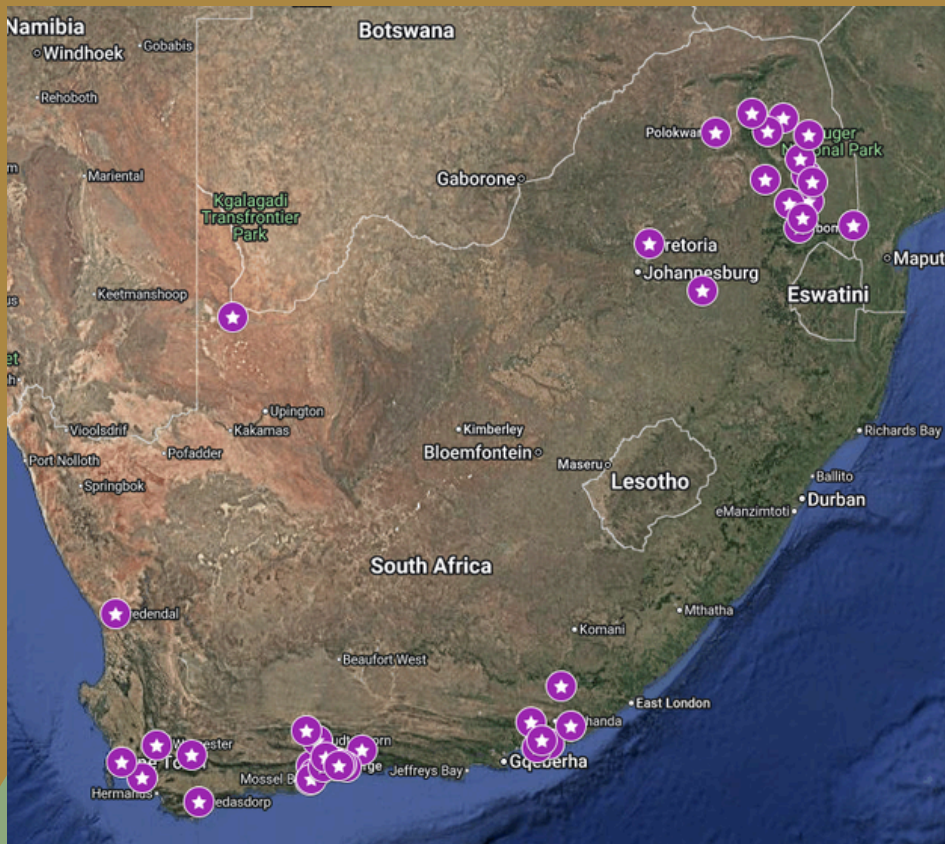
Working with small, dedicated teams and mobile veterinarians like Dr. Ina Visser, we travel long distances to remote, under-resourced communities to provide high-quality sterilization services.



Mobile clinic setup



Dr. Visser performing a spay in Andriesvale



In the past year, we have expanded the number and reach of sterilization campaigns in the area surrounding Kruger National Park – one of the most critical strongholds for African wildcats – and responded to urgent cat population crises, including an abandoned diamond mine in the Northern Cape where over 100 cats were sterilized in a single intervention.

Each surgery prevented thousands of future births and countless future hybridizations, with the added (and important) benefit of improving the health of the cats sterilized.

# RESULTS: Measurable Impact, Lasting Protection



**Over 15,000 cats have now been sterilized through the Conservation Action Plan.**

Every one of them represents a permanent barrier between domestic cats and African wildcats.

**Felis lybica is too environmentally and historically significant to become a mere memory, buried within domestic cats' DNA.**

By continuing the momentum of our TNR projects in the provinces of Limpopo, the Northern Cape, Kgalagadi, and rural KwaZulu-Natal, we are paving the way for African wildcats to thrive as a species, and domestic cats as individuals.



[saveacat.org/awc-conservation-projects.html](https://saveacat.org/awc-conservation-projects.html)



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