

1 **Title**

2 **Temporal overlaps of feral cats with prey and competitors in primary and human-**
3 **altered habitats on Bohol Island, Philippines**

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26 **Abstract**

27 The vertebrate fauna of the Philippines, known for its diversity and high proportion of
28 endemic species, comprises mainly small- to medium-sized forms with a few large
29 exceptions. As with other tropical ecosystems, the major threats to wildlife are habitat loss,
30 hunting and invasive species, of which the feral cat (*Felis catus*) is considered the most
31 damaging. Our camera-trapping study focused on a terrestrial vertebrate species inventory on
32 Bohol Island and tempo-spatial co-occurrences of feral cats with their prey and competitors.
33 The survey took place in the Rajah Sikatuna Protected Landscape, and we examined primary
34 rainforest, its border with agricultural land, and rural areas in the vicinity of villages.
35 Altogether, ~~in~~ over 2,885 trap days we captured 30 species of vertebrates – 10 mammals
36 (including *Sus philippensis*), 19 birds and one reptile, *Varanus cumingi*. We trapped 81.8% of
37 expected vertebrates. Based on the number of independent events, the most frequent native
38 species was the barred rail (*Gallirallus torquatus*). The highest overlap in diel activity
39 between cats and potential prey was recorded with rodents in rural areas ($\Delta=0.62$); the lowest
40 was in the same habitat with ground-dwelling birds ($\Delta=0.40$). Cats were not recorded inside
41 the rainforest; in other habitats their diel activity pattern differed. The cats' activity declined
42 in daylight in the proximity of humans, while it peaked at the transition zone between
43 rainforest and fields. Both rodents and ground-dwelling birds exhibited a shift in activity
44 levels between sites where cats were present or absent. Rodents tend to become active by day
45 in cat-free habitats. No temporal response to co-occurrences of civets (*Paradoxurus*
46 *hermaphroditus* and *Viverra zangalunga*) was found. Our first insight into the ecology of this
47 invasive predator in the Philippines revealed an avoidance of homogeneous primary rainforest
48 and a tendency to forage close to human settlements in heterogeneous habitats. A detailed
49 further investigation of the composition of the cat's diet, as well as ranging pattern, is still
50 needed.

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51 **Introduction**

52 The Philippine Archipelago is considered a global biodiversity hotspot, known for its
53 high proportion of endemic species (Ambal *et al.* 2012). The terrestrial vertebrate taxa, which
54 primarily encompass small to medium sized species, inhabit more than 7100 islands. These
55 species include at least 213 mammals (Heaney *et al.* 2010), 674 birds (Lapage 2015), 270
56 reptiles and 111 amphibians (BREO 2015).

57 Similarly to other oceanic islands, the predominantly small fauna of the Philippines
58 suffers from the presence of competing invasive species, such as *Rattus* spp., and the feral cat
59 (*Felis catus*). The cat is listed as the most widespread and probably most damaging of the four
60 carnivores included on the list of the 100 worst invasive species (Lowe *et al.* 2000). At least
61 175 vertebrates are threatened or have been driven to extinction by feral cats on at least 120
62 islands (Medina *et al.* 2011). Meta-analysis has revealed that the negative impact of feral cats
63 is largest for insular endemic mammals, and is exacerbated by the presence of invasive cat
64 prey species such as mice or rabbits (Nogales *et al.* 2013). The cat is widely kept as a pet by
65 people throughout the Philippines and can be found foraging in every habitat (Duffy &
66 Capece 2012). Despite the general prevalence of cats in the Philippine landscape, there is a
67 noticeable lack of knowledge regarding the cat's impact on the biodiversity of this
68 archipelago.

69 Cats feed on a wide range of animals, from arthropods, reptiles and birds to mammals
70 the size of a rabbit (Pearre, Maass & Maass 1998). In Australia alone, with a variety of
71 animals of similar size such as those found in the Philippines, ~~has recorded~~ 400 prey species
72 consumed by cats ~~have been recorded~~ (Doherty *et al.* 2015). In the Philippines, members of
73 the orders Chiroptera and Rodentia are the most numerous mammalian species (Heaney *et al.*
74 2010). A wide range of terrestrial and arboreal rodents with body mass ranging from the 15-g
75 *Musseromys* spp. to the 2.6-kg *Phloeomys* spp. risk predation by cats. Only adult individuals

Commented [v2]: Provide Latin names.

76 of *Phloeomys* and *Hystrix pumila* (Heaney *et al.* 2010) exceed the potential prey dimensions.
77 According to size and niche, members of the Tupaiidea (treeshrews), Erinaceidae (moonrats)
78 and Soricidae family (shrews) should be listed as mammalian prey for cats. Similarly, the
79 smallest Philippine primate, *Tarsius syrichta*, which inhabits Bohol and other islands of the
80 Mindanao faunal region, can be included (MacKinnon & MacKinnon 1980).

81 On Bohol Island (3,269 km²), as on the other Philippine islands, bats and rodents
82 dominate among local mammals. The small mammalian fauna consists of one insectivorous
83 species and nine species of rodents, including the introduced *Mus musculus*, *Rattus rattus*,
84 *Rattus norvegicus*, *Rattus tanezumi* and *Rattus exulans* (Heaney *et al.* 2010). The avifauna of
85 Bohol numbers 235 species, with Passeriformes forming the largest sub-group at 83 species.
86 Bohol is also home to 14 ground-dwelling bird species inhabiting the woody or bushy inland
87 habitats potentially affected by cats (Kennedy 2000).

88 Along with dog (*Canis lupus familiaris*), possible competitors of cats on Bohol
89 include two mammalian carnivores, Asian palm civet (*Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*) and
90 Malayan civet (*Viverra zibetha*) (Heaney *et al.* 2010) and two reptile species: Cuming's
91 water monitor (*Varanus cumingi*) and reticulated python (*Python reticulatus*) (BREO 2015).

92 Temporal-spatial co-occurrence of competing species from camera trapping data was
93 examined for example in the Sumatra forest on felids from the size of the marbled cat to the
94 tiger (Sunarto *et al.* 2015) and in Australia between dingoes and the feral cat (Wang & Fisher
95 2012). Results based on the overlapping diel activities confirmed the potential in description
96 of the timing of the activity in response both to the presence of superordinate predators and
97 also in temporal partitioning between the same-sized predators or predators of the same-sized
98 prey. The feral cat as an invasive mesopredator which could be suppressed by the presence
99 of apex predators could be within invaded habitats, suppressed by apex predators which has a

Commented [v3]: You need a sentence at the beginning of this paragraph, outlining what overlaps in activity tell us about likely interactions.

Commented [v4]: Provide Latin name

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100 with direct implications for wildlife management, especially ~~mainly~~ when the dominant one
101 is limited (Brook, Johnson & Ritchie 2012).

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102 We conducted a camera-trap survey on Bohol Island in an attempt to uncover tempo-spatial
103 co-occurrences of terrestrial vertebrate species on regularly used trails with the confirmed
104 presence of cats in the protected primary rainforest (Zone I), a transition zone along the
105 border of the primary rainforest with the agricultural landscape (Zone II), and inside the rural
106 landscape in the proximity of human settlements (Zone III). Our objectives were to: (1)
107 ~~Create~~ create a general inventory of camera-trapped taxa; (2) ~~Model~~ model the species
108 accumulation curve using previous knowledge of the possible number of mammalian, avian
109 and reptile species detectable by camera-traps; and (3) ~~Compare~~ compare the diel activity
110 levels of cats with those of potential prey and competitors.

111 **Materials & Methods**

112 *Study site*

113 Our study was conducted under research permit No. 2014-04, issued by DENR,
114 Region VII, Philippines, between July 2nd and December 4th, 2014 in the surroundings of the
115 town of Bilar, Bohol Island, Philippines. The landscape consists of a mixture of distinctive
116 flat rural areas near human settlements, used as rice fields and plantations for various crops,
117 steep karst hills covered by brush and secondary forest, and primary rainforest in protected
118 areas. The town of Bilar lies between two conservation areas, the Rajah Sikatuna Protected
119 Landscape (RSPL) and the Loboc River Watershed Forest Reserve. RSPL is the second
120 largest protected sanctuary on Bohol, covering 11,034 ha of a mostly hilly limestone
121 environment rich in characteristic landforms such as ravines, sinkholes and caves. The
122 altitude in RSPL varies between 300 and 826 m above sea level. The forest canopy is multi-
123 layered, with trees reaching up to 20 m in height. Members of the families Dipterocarpaceae,
124 Moraceae and Melicaceae dominate the canopy. Certain regions of RSPL have been reforested

125 with white teak (*Gmelina arborea*) and Honduras mahogany (*Swietenia macrophylla*)
126 (Barcelona *et al.* 2006). The average annual precipitation reaches 1,600 mm; the rainy season
127 typically lasts from June to December, with an increase in precipitation to 200 mm per month.
128 The driest month is April when approximately 40 mm of rain falls.

129 *Sampling design*

130 We monitored three types of landscape typical of tropical regions and deployed
131 cameras in groups, one camera per location, at eight trapping sites (Fig. 1): Zone I – protected
132 primary rainforest including the Watershed Forest Reserve (site WS), interior of RSPL (site
133 SP) and abandoned farms in the early stages of succession into RSPL (site SF); Zone II –
134 transition zone between the primary rainforest of RSPL and rice fields close to the village of
135 Bulak (site BU), transition zone between RSPL and rice and corn fields close to Logarita
136 Springs (site LS), and transition zone between RSPL and the farms of the village Binantay
137 (site BI); Zone III – mixture of brush and degraded forest and plantations on the edge of the
138 village of Subayon (site SU), and at Bohol Habitat Conservation Center on the edge of the
139 town of Bilar (site HB).

140 *Sampling procedures*

141 We used 41 weatherproof infrared digital camera traps – 29 units of Ltl Acorn
142 5210MC (Shenzhen Ltl Acorn Electronics Co., Ltd.) and 12 units of SPYPOINT IR7
143 (SPYPOINT^{MD}, G.G. Telecom). Prior to the study, we tested both types of cameras in a week-
144 long trial which was focused on the difference in detection rates for moving objects. No
145 difference larger than 10 % between numbers of independence events was found. Both types
146 of cameras were also used in every habitat to avoid a bias from site-specific detection rates.
147 Cameras were set up to perform the same delay between recordings – SPYPOINT to take 2
148 two images with a delay of 10 ~~see~~ between consecutive triggering, and Ltl Acorns to take one

149 picture followed by a 5 ~~s-sec.~~ video, with a 5 ~~s-sec.~~ delay between triggering. Video
150 sequences served as an additional tool for the identification of species.

151 We placed all cameras opportunistically on the most frequented trails or their
152 junctions and, according to the expected size of target vertebrates, we fastened cameras with a
153 belt onto the trunks of trees or bushes nearest to the trail, at a height of up to 0.5 m, with a
154 focal point approximately 2 ~~meters~~ from the lens. All cameras were active 24 hours a day; all
155 records in infrared mode were available only in a black-and-white version. **No bait was used.**

156 *Identification of taxa*

157 Two observers, VB and TJ, independently identified all species visually from images
158 and videos; the results were mutually crosschecked, and disagreeing or unidentifiable records
159 were excluded from the analysis. Based on available databases (Heaney *et al.* 2010; BREO
160 2015; Lapage 2015), we made a list of terrestrial mammalian and avian ground-dwelling
161 species known or expected to occur on Bohol (Table 2). From reptiles, we included only the
162 largest four-legged taxon, the yellow-headed water monitor (*Varanus cumingi*). Members of
163 the order Chiroptera and the strictly arboreal Philippine colugo (*Cynocephalus volans*) were *a*
164 *priori* omitted. The conservation status of each species was assessed following IUCN (2015).

165 Due to the limited nature of the recordings, for the identification process **and the**
166 **calculation of a species accumulation curve** all taxa the size of a mouse (*Mus musculus* and
167 also the insectivorous *Crocidura beatus*) were pooled into the group called ‘mice’, and all
168 species of rats (*Rattus* spp. and *Bullimus bagobus*) into the group ‘rats’. In addition, both
169 known species of squirrels (*Exilisciurus concinnus* and *Sundasciurus philippinensis*) were
170 grouped into one taxon: ‘squirrels’. For purposes of *overlap* analyses between cats and their
171 competitors and prey, we pooled both native carnivore species into a group called ‘civets’ and
172 put mice, rats and squirrels into the group ‘rodents’. Ground-dwelling species of birds were
173 the second analyzed group of prey.

174 *Data analysis*

175 Photographs were defined as independent events (or activity records) when the delay
176 between two consecutive images of an individual exceeded 10 min. For each species and
177 Zone, in Table 4-2 we reported occurrences of species at cameras represented by independent
178 events (Lazenby & Dickman 2013).

Commented [v8]: But these could be the same individual at different times? Are they truly independent then?

179 We used a species accumulation curve based on the cumulative number of camera-
180 trapping days, computed in EstimateS Version 9.1.0 (Colwell 2013), to find out if our survey
181 lasted a sufficient number of days to capture the 22 selected terrestrial vertebrate species
182 known from Bohol. We followed Tobler *et al.* (2008) and calculated well-performing
183 estimators of species richness: the non-parametric abundance-based estimator ACE, and the
184 non-parametric incidence-based estimators ICE and Jackknife 1. An abundance-based
185 rarefaction approach with 95% confidence intervals and 1,000 random iterations of sample
186 order was used.

Commented [v9]: But in the previous section you said you combined species into taxa to estimate the spp accumulation curve. So it is not clear how it was used to reveal whether you had captured all 22 species.

187 The pair-wise temporal overlap of selected activity patterns was analyzed using the R
188 statistical environment package ‘*overlap*’ (Meredith & Ridout 2014). Following Ridout and
189 Linkie (2009), we applied kernel density estimation on circular data pooled within all study
190 sites. The coefficients of overlap (Δ) were calculated with a smoothing parameter of 1.0. We
191 used a smoothed bootstrap of 10,000 resamples to determine standard errors and 95%
192 confidence intervals. We only analyzed combinations of pairs of species, which scored at least
193 30 independent events in the activity record (Ridout, pers. comm.) in a given environment.

194 The number of independent events used for calculation of the activity pattern overlap for
195 each analyzed group of animals and each location is shown in Table 3.

196 **Results**

197 *Species inventory*

198 During the whole survey period, lasting 155 days, we ~~managed to accumulate~~ 2,885
199 trap days and 2,034 independent events. The combined capture rate across all sites was 73.1
200 events per 100 trap days. The list of all 30 animal taxa recorded is shown in Table 2.

201 The most frequent native species was the barred rail (*Gallirallus torquatus*), captured in 183
202 independence events. We did not record four expected bird species: *Megapodius cumingii*,
203 *Coturnix chinensis*, *Turnix sylvaticus* and *Gallinago megala*. On the other hand, we ~~succeeded~~
204 ~~in confirming~~ the survival of the Philippine warty pig (*Sus philippensis*). Given its size, it
205 was probably a male individual that was captured, only once, on three images on August 9th
206 (6:35 pm) in a mud wallow in the interior of RSPL (Fig. 2).

207 We found that feral cats most often occurred in the Zone II and III, and we did not
208 record any cats were absent inside the primary forest. A similar trend was found for ground-
209 dwelling birds. Most rats and other small mammals were recorded in the transition Zone II
210 between the RSPL forest and agricultural land. Along with feral cats and domestic dogs, we
211 also recorded all three medium-sized mammals occurring on Bohol – the common palm civet
212 (59 events), Malay civet (16 events) and long-tailed macaque (*Macaca fascicularis*) (7
213 events). Humans were also captured but excluded from the analysis.

214 Within all eight sampling sites, we captured 18 of 22 previously specified target taxa,
215 which corresponds to a success rate of 81.8% ~~in~~ of the species inventory (100% of mammals
216 and reptiles, 69.2% of birds). We used these 18 taxa for calculating the species accumulation
217 curve (Fig. 3). The mean estimated species richness computed in EstimateS was 19.67 species
218 (ACE = 19.655, ICE = 19.547 and Jackknife 1 = 20.019.99). We recorded 15.89 species
219 (72.2% of expected species) in 1,000 trap days. The eight target species of mammals were
220 captured in 1,723 trap days; similarly, nine ground-dwelling birds were recorded within 1,435
221 trap days.

222 *Temporal overlaps*

Commented [v10]: You should remove this figure. Adjust the numbering of the others accordingly.

223 We recorded cats only in transition Zone II and ~~inside~~ the rural landscape ~~in the~~
224 ~~proximity of~~ ~~close to~~ human settlements (Zone III). Diel activity patterns of cats differed
225 among zones (Figure 4). Cats showed a decrease in ~~the late-late~~-afternoon activity near
226 villages, whereas **activity in** the transition area peaked right before noon. Generally, the
227 activity of cats by daylight was higher in transition zones; in **secondary urban areas** cats were
228 recorded mainly at night.

Commented [v11]: What are these?

229 The highest overlap in ~~the~~-activity patterns between cats and rodents (Table 4) was
230 found in the rural landscape of Zone III, and between cats and ground-dwelling birds in
231 transition Zone III (Figure 5).

232 Both categories of potential prey showed **shifts** in temporal occurrence within sites,
233 based on the presence of cat (Figure 6). As seen, the peaks of rodent activity decreased in the
234 hours before sunrise and increased after sunset, whereas the activity of ground-dwelling birds
235 peaked about 4 hours sooner at sites where cats were not recorded.

236 The overlap between the diel activity patterns of cats and both species of civets is
237 shown in Figure 7. Cats **exhibited** roughly consistent activity throughout a 24-hour period,
238 with no apparent shift caused by the nocturnal occurrence of sympatric civets.

240 Discussion

241 According to our knowledge, to date- no study of the behavior and ecology of **feral**
242 cats has been conducted in the Philippines, nor any camera-trap-based species inventory on
243 Bohol. With the exception of the Philippine pygmy squirrel, *Exilisciurus concinnus*, we were
244 able to capture and identify every non-volant mammalian species **recorded as occurring** on
245 Bohol larger than a mouse, including an individual of *Sus philippensis*, which is considered to
246 be close to extinction (Oliver 1993), even by local people. ~~Compared to known species,~~
247 ~~e~~Camera traps captured 81.8% of **known** ground-dwelling mammalian, avian, and reptilian

248 species, similar to the 86 % captured in the Amazon ~~moist-rain~~ forest (Tobler *et al.* 2008) or
249 ~~89% in~~ the lowland rainforest of Borneo (~~89%~~, Bernard *et al.* 2013); both those camera-
250 trapping studies were restricted to mammals. In addition, the initially steep shape of our
251 general species accumulation curve corresponds with ~~these~~ studies conducted in tropical
252 ecosystems and confirms the robustness of the approach. Similarly to Rovero *et al.* (2014), we
253 captured the majority of selected species in 1,000 trap days, considered a reliable threshold
254 enabling the detection of rare species (O'Brien 2011).

255 The absence of cats in the interior of primary rainforest seems not to be driven by
256 distance from the nearest human settlements, given that all three monitored sites were up to
257 approximately 3 km from houses. ~~We suggest that this could result from the absence of~~
258 ~~preferred features and habitats in the rain forest may have resulted in camera traps failing to~~
259 ~~capture cats, cats preferred habitat.~~ Cats typically use a mixture of vegetation cover at a ~~level~~
260 ~~of ground level~~ which provides both cover and open space for observing their prey; ~~and such~~
261 ~~habitat may increase hunting success (Doherty, Bengsen & Davis 2015). The habitat~~
262 ~~heterogeneity hypothesis by Tews *et al.* (2004) predicts that heterogeneous habitats offer a~~
263 ~~greater diversity and density of potential prey than homogeneous ones, which could be~~
264 ~~conceivable for cats.~~ Linear features in space (e.g. tree lines, roads and other corridors) are
265 generally considered to maximize cat's detectability (Crooks 2002; Bengsen, Butler &
266 Masters 2012). ~~Cats, known as users of trails (Trolle & Kéry 2005; Harmsen *et al.* 2010; Anile~~
267 ~~*et al.* 2014), in the Zone I theoretically could disperse in the undergrowth in homogeneous~~
268 ~~forest without linear landscape features, so camera traps on trails might be avoided.~~

269 The presence of competing predators in primary forest ~~also can hardly be unlikely to~~
270 ~~explain the absence of cats. cats' absence.~~ Almost all dogs recorded throughout the surveyed
271 sites were accompanying humans who passed by the cameras. Both species of civets were
272 equally present in all three zones ~~with a distinctive nocturnal activity pattern.~~ The common

Commented [v12]: This section isn't logical as written. First you state that cats use trails, and then you go on to say they might avoid the trails the cameras are placed on in the rainforest. Could you resolve this.

273 palm civet and Malay civet are ~~partly~~ omnivorous (Jennings *et al.* 2009) but they forage ~~at~~ in
274 the habitat of cats, ~~and given their~~ ~~and according to their~~ size we ~~can~~ consider them to be
275 competitors ~~for~~ of cats. ~~Despite this premise~~ ~~Nonetheless~~, cats do not show any temporal
276 avoidance, ~~which refers to their~~ ~~indicating~~ a neutral co-occurrence evolved during almost a
277 500-year co-existence (Jubair 1999). For a more comprehensive view of possible niche
278 partitioning, as found for example between felids on Sumatra (Sunarto *et al.* 2015), a camera-
279 trapping study should be conducted on Negros, where the Visayan leopard cat (*Prionailurus*
280 *bengalensis* ssp. *rabori*) occurs as ~~the~~ a regional direct competitor (IUCN 2015).

281 Our results (Table 3) show that the availability of both prey categories ~~(~~rodents and
282 birds~~)~~, was higher, nearly by orders of magnitude, in both human-altered zones than in
283 primary rainforest. ~~We link this finding with~~ ~~aa~~attribute this to the variety of vertebrate and
284 invertebrate prey, which is more abundant in ~~a~~ heterogeneous landscape~~s~~. In addition, as
285 suggested by Lozano *et al.* (2003), feral cats use a wide range of habitat components to meet
286 their different activity requirements (e.g. hunting, resting), and this landscape offers ~~such~~ a
287 mixture of agricultural ~~landscape features~~ with secondary growth and infrastructure. ~~The other~~
288 reason for the absence of cats in primary forests could be the fact that cats are kept as pets
289 around the world, and even feral cats benefit from human subsidies and leftovers (Ferreira *et*
290 *al.* 2011). Our data clearly support such a tendency to forage ~~relatively~~ close~~r~~ to human
291 settlements, ~~even if~~, ~~however~~ we were not able to determine from our records whether a
292 photographed animal was feral or domestic.

293 Although the ~~general recorded~~ diel activity pattern of cats ~~was~~ ~~roughly~~ consistent over
294 ~~showed a~~ roughly 24-hour consistency periods (Figure 7), a detailed analysis of zones
295 ~~uncovered~~ ~~revealed~~ a decline in ~~the~~ diurnal activity ~~rate~~ in the vicinity of villages, in contrast
296 ~~with~~ ~~to~~ an apparent activity peak before noon in Zone II (Figure 4). Both Zones II and III
297 offered ~~roughly~~ ~~more or less~~ the same number of prey species (Table 2). We could

Commented [v13]: The logic behind this reason isn't clear. Cats are known to exist independently of human subsidies.

298 hypothesize that subsidies provided by humans in villages during the day resulted in cats
329 remaining inactive in shelters and foraging at night. Another possible ~~cause-reason~~ could be
300 the ~~registered~~-tendency ~~of for~~ rodents to be active even during daylight (Fig. ~~ure~~ 5) in the
301 transition zone, ~~and this can~~ ~~which could~~ attract cats. Other prey, ~~which was~~ not recorded by
302 cameras, might also be present (e.g. large insects, lizards). ~~As shown (Figure 6), p~~Prey species
303 ~~performed certain~~ ~~showed~~ shifts in diel activity patterns between sites where cats were, or
304 were not, present (Fig. 6). When cats were absent, rodents tended to forage visibly by day,
305 while the activity of ground-dwelling birds peaked about 4 hours later. ~~We cannot clarify~~ ~~It is~~
306 ~~difficult to interpret~~ the shift in bird ~~activity~~s; one ~~hypothetical~~ reason could be a
307 ~~disproportion in the number of records from sites with and without cats.~~ Rodents ~~shift their~~

Commented [v14]: It is not clear what is meant here.

308 ~~activities to become nocturnal if cats are present and more diurnal~~ (Doherty *et al.* 2015). ~~This~~
309 ~~raises the question is-if-of whether~~ almost 500 years of cat presence in the Philippines has
310 ~~driven adaptive mechanisms of prey and competitors to cope with a new predator or not. Our~~
311 ~~results may suggest that this already happened,~~ similarly to the 4000-year history of the dingo
312 ~~in Australia (Carthey & Banks 2012).~~ Nevertheless, we believe that further research is
313 needed, especially throughout all ~~annual~~-seasons.

314 Knowledge of feral cat diet is paradoxically the least ~~known-researched~~ in tropical
315 habitats with the richest terrestrial biodiversity (Doherty *et al.* 2015; Doherty, Bengsen &
316 Davis 2015). Our findings ~~uncover the first~~ ~~reveal~~ tempo-spatial co-occurrences between ~~feral~~
317 cats and their potential prey in a typical mixture of Philippine landscapes. ~~We confirmed that~~
318 ~~camera traps are capable of capturing small bodied fauna,~~ ground-dwelling birds and highly
319 elusive species, such as *Sus philippensis*, as well. Endangered Philippine fauna exposed to
320 invasive species should rapidly become the target of a broad and long-term camera-trapping
321 inventory survey. For ~~an in-depth-deep~~ knowledge of the dietary intake of ~~feral~~ cats in the
322 Philippines, ~~DNA~~ analysis of scat is ~~reecommendable, and this should be~~

323 ~~prioritized~~ recommended as a priority for ~~by~~ researchers (Nogales *et al.* 2013). In addition,
324 collared and GPS-tracked cats would provide ~~definite~~ information about habitat use and the
325 size of home ranges. Finally, attention should be paid to the cultural value of cats kept as pets
326 within Philippine society, ~~since the beginning of the era of European colonization, mainly in~~
327 ~~terms of the to inform eradication strategies, efficiency of eradication efforts.~~

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330 our study possible: Mr. Isabelo R. Montejo, regional director, and Mr. Eusalem S. Quiwag
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