

# The great animal audit



NEW ZEALANDERS value their animals, particularly those who share their homes.

This fact is clearly evident in the findings of a just-released survey commissioned by the New Zealand Companion Animal Council (NZCAC).

The survey's comprehensive details illustrate the respect and affection held by New Zealanders for their companion animals, says NZCAC Patron Bob Kerridge. "The council's function is to facilitate a harmonious relationship between companion animals, people and the environment. There can be no doubting the impact companion animals have on all phases of our lives.

"The survey will be of great interest to animal lovers and businesses alike. It makes fascinating reading."

On the next three pages are excerpts from the survey. The full document is available free of charge at [www.nzcac.org.nz](http://www.nzcac.org.nz)

## POPULATION SUMMARY

New Zealand is a nation of pet lovers outnumbered by nearly five million companion animals. Sixty-eight percent of New Zealand households own some kind of pet, more than anywhere else in the world.

Cats are the most popular companion animal, with nearly half of all households owning an average of two cats. The total cat population is 1.419 million.

Dogs are the next most popular companion animal, with 29% of households owning a dog. There are 700,000 dogs in New Zealand.

Although cats and dogs are the most popular companion animals, at 1.678 million, fish are the most numerous. The popularity of fish is not surprising considering the huge rise in apartment living and increased proportion of people renting the property they live in.

Birds, rabbits, ponies, horses are also popular, along with a range of small mammals and reptiles.

## POPULATION BREAKDOWN

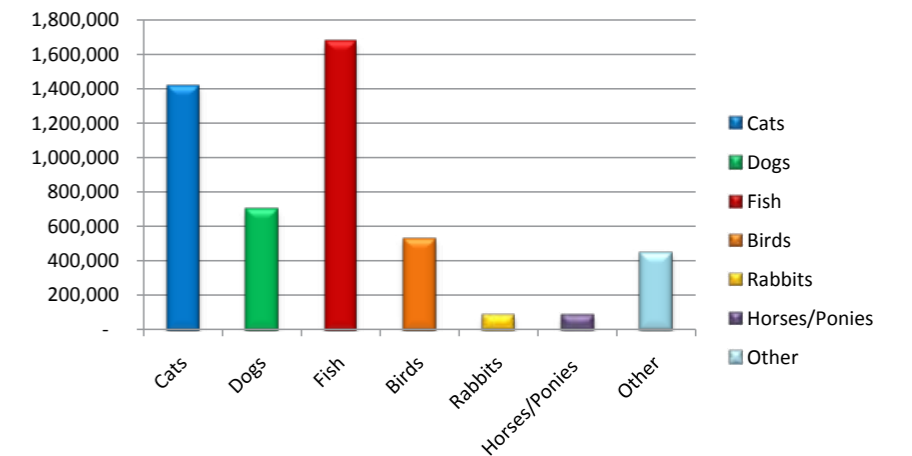
There are 1.672 million households in New Zealand with 68% (1.137 million homes) owning at least one companion animal.

New Zealand has the highest rate of cat ownership in the world. Forty-eight percent of all households (806,000 homes) own at least one cat, with 28% owning one cat and 20% owning two or more cats.

The proportion of households owning a dog is considerably lower at 29% (479,000 homes), with 21% of households owning one dog and 8% owning two or more dogs.

Around one in 10 households owns on average nine fish. Birds are also popular, with the typical bird-owning household (6% of all households) having around five birds.

## Companion Animal Population



## New Zealand Companion Animal Population Breakdown, 2011

Companion Animal Type	Household penetration	Average number in home	Total (000's)
Cats	48%	1.8	1,419
Dogs	29%	1.5	700
Fish	11%	9.1	1,678
Birds	6%	4.9	527
Rabbits	3%	1.7	88
Horses/ponies	2%	3.2	87
Other	5%	4.9	446
None	32%	~	~
<b>Total</b>	<b>68%</b>		<b>4,945</b>

Source: Galaxy Research, 2011

## Companion Animal Population Breakdown by Urban and Rural Areas (%)

Companion Animal Type	Urban	Rural
Cats	77%	23%
Dogs	71%	29%
Fish	81%	19%
Birds	74%	26%
Rabbits	78%	22%
Horses/Ponies	15%	85%
Other	60%	40%

Source: Galaxy Research, 2011

## Urban versus regional

The estimated human population of New Zealand is 4.4 million. The population split between urban and rural areas is 86% and 14% respectively.

The companion animal population breakdown across urban and rural areas follows a similar breakdown, with

slightly higher pet ownership rates in rural and regional areas compared to urban and suburban areas.

As would be expected, there is one significant exception to this – ownership of ponies and horses. The vast majority (85%) of horses and ponies are owned by people living in rural and regional areas. ▶