

Primary entry #7: Tighes Hill Public School



# TIGHES HILL TRIBUNE



**PROBLEM:** A feral cat caught in the act. *Picture: Louis Rodger*

## Feral cats are becoming a big nuisance

By **OLIVER GERARD, LOUIS RODGER** and **JOE EASTWOOD**

**FERAL** cats – predators and pests, but once a pet. Many of us have seen one, a lethal predator endangering our native species.

To date, 63 species of native vertebrates have been driven to extinction and countless more are endangered due to these silent predators. Over 75 million animals are killed by them each night and there are more than 13 million cats over Australia.

They are mostly focused near city areas such as Newcastle, Sydney and Melbourne. Cat specimens have been found weighing over 18 kilograms.

Unfortunately, it is also a problem all over Australia, especially in Kakadu, home to many endangered species such as the northern quoll and the black footed tree rat.

This issue is now also affecting the local community of Tighes Hill, with many residents reporting an increase in the number of feral cats roaming their streets and even living under houses.

Resident John Rodger found two feral cats living under his house.

"They're a problem, especially with pets and plants."

The government has methods to deal with the cats, including barrier fencing, shooting and trapping. Caught feral cats should be taken to an RSPCA shelter.

## Learning by numbers

By **EVA MORRIS**

**DOCTOR** Elena Prieto-Rodriguez, a mathematics lecturer from the University of Newcastle and a Tighes Hill parent, has volunteered her time to share her expertise and vast knowledge with some lucky students.

Dr Prieto-Rodriguez is an inspiring person. She has a PhD in Computer Science from the University of Newcastle, which she obtained in early September 2005, and she also has a Bachelor of Science (Mathematics) from the Complutense University of Madrid, Spain.

Dr Prieto-Rodriguez's interest in maths began early, as she had always liked it as a young student. "I first started with maths, and I started working on it because I quite liked it at school," she said.

Then she began working in computer science "because much of the applications of mathematics today are in computer science".

She came to Tighes Hill Public School during the term to work with the students in the 5/6 Opportunity Class about binary numbers; decoding binary messages, how computers operate, how the internet works and much more.

During Dr Prieto-Rodriguez's sessions, students took part in a variety of challenging, hands-on



**VOLUNTEER:** Dr Elena Prieto-Rodriguez working with Sarah and Eva from the Opportunity Class at Tighes Hill Public.

tasks. The first was an introduction to binary numbers and how these are used for computer programming. Students had to decipher codes to find secret messages. A fun but difficult task was listening to different pieces of music and identifying high and low notes and convert them into binary code.

One of the most enjoyable tasks from the term was using Nexus

tablets to program a mini-robot to take him through a series of obstacles. Students really looked forward to each visit from Dr Prieto-Rodriguez.

Dr Prieto-Rodriguez came to the school because she enjoys teaching and wanted to help out as other parents do.

"Some parents volunteer in the gardens, some volunteer in the

canteen, some are very good at knitting, some are very good at all kinds of things, so I was thinking, what could I do? And mathematics was it!"

Dr Prieto-Rodriguez also hopes that by working in mathematics and computer science, she will have an impact on the teachers and learners of these subjects in the future.



**BANNED:** Tighes Hill Public students Lilly, Tama, Heidi and Joey say no to nuts.

## Tighes Hill Public not going nuts

By **DAYNA GARSIDE** and **JOSEPH TREGILGAS**

**TIGHES** Hill Public School has instituted a nut-free environment across the entire school.

The school made the decision because several of their students have serious nut allergies that are potentially life threatening.

One of the most common allergies is to nuts, with some cases causing an ana-

phylactic reaction.

Tighes Hill student Heidi found out that she had a nut allergy when she was aged only one. Contact with nuts causes her throat to swell up and she can't breathe.

The nut-free policy means all students, staff and community members need to take great care about making sure all nut products are

not brought into school.

All classrooms have had soap and paper towel dispensers installed to ensure everyone washes their hands before and after eating times.

Lots of posters and signs have been put up around the school to remind everyone to keep nut products at home.

Over time, people have realised the importance and have been very willing to show their support.

## Australia's best value home loans<sup>+</sup>

Because Newcastle Permanent is customer owned, we've continued to pass on more value to customers in home loan interest rate cuts in the last 5 years than any of the major banks. That's why our range of Home Loans is just so good. It's no wonder *Money* magazine and *Smart Investor* have both named us Australian Home Lender of the Year – ahead of all the major banks.

So if you want to experience the benefits of customer owned banking, switch to Newcastle Permanent today. You could save thousands!

13 19 87

[newcastlepermanent.com.au/winner](http://newcastlepermanent.com.au/winner)



Here for good.

