

# Cat recuperating after being shot with arrow; reward eyed

By Amy Smith, Union staff writer | Posted: Thursday, November 13, 2014 8:52 am

A cat being shot by an arrow in Jefferson County — the second within the past six months — has caught the attention of the Humane Society of the United States.

Jefferson County Chief Deputy Jeffrey Parker said that the organization contacted Sheriff Paul Milbrath after the cat, Lucy, was found with an arrow shot through its shoulder in the Town of Koshkonong last week.

The national branch of the Humane Society and the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office are in an ongoing discussion, with plans for the society to offer a significant cash reward for information leading to the conviction of the person who shot Lucy.

Jeffrey Schemm found his wounded cat on the morning of Wednesday, Nov. 5, outside a barn on the property of his tree service business. Lucy had an arrow used for turkey hunting through the shoulder; it had to be surgically removed, Parker said. Now recovering at her home in rural Fort Atkinson, Lucy is doing better and will make a full recovery, Schemm said.

It is unknown whether Lucy was shot on Schemm's property or somewhere else.

The Jefferson County Sheriff's Office had not received any further information to turn up any new leads as of early this week. However, it was reminded of a report by another area family whose cat was shot with an arrow at the same time two years ago.

On Oct. 2, 2012, the sheriff's office was notified of a cat shot with an arrow on N804 County Highway K, also in the Town of Koshkonong, Parker said.

It had been shot with a bolt arrow, the ammunition shot from a crossbow.

According to the report, the owner had reported that the bolt had entered the animal's cheek and was protruding from its hind leg. Due to the extent of the injuries caused by the arrow, the cat had to be euthanized.

The owner stated that the cat sometimes was a house cat and sometimes an outdoors cat known to roam. However, like Lucy, Parker said, it was a domesticated animal.

The chief deputy noted that it is illegal to hunt free-roaming domestic cats that are not threatening wildlife or someone's personal property.

In 2005, the Wisconsin Conservation Congress — an independent organization created by the state 70 years ago to take public input on conservation issues — was asked whether free-roaming feral domestic cats, which are not



## ON THE MEND

ON THE MEND — Lucy the cat is expected to make a full recovery after she was found shot with an arrow in the Town of Koshkonong last week.

defined as a protected or unprotected species, should be defined as an unprotected species. Unprotected species can be hunted year-round in Wisconsin, meaning the classification would have made it legal to hunt any cat that was found free-roaming, which is any cat without a collar or showing other signs of domestic ownership. Those in favor of the legislation suggested that feral cats expose domestic animals to disease and endanger native songbirds.

The proposal, which was voted down by the Conservation Congress in 2000, was revived after a 2004 University of Wisconsin study found that non-native feral cats were a threat to native animals such as lovebirds.

The study showed that free-roaming feral domestic cats kill millions of small mammals, and song and game birds, estimating that between 47 million to 139 million songbirds are killed each year. Studies estimate there could be 2 million feral cats roaming Wisconsin that are not considered a native species.

However, opponents of the proposal argued such a law would be cruel and archaic, putting domestic cats that have escaped from their homes at risk of death.

When put to referendum in the 2005 spring primaries, the vote was 6,830-5,201. Wisconsin voters in 51 counties supported the proposal, while those in 20 counties rejected it and nobody voted on it in one county, the DNR said. Though the majority of Wisconsin voters backed the proposal, the Natural Resources Board failed to pursue the topic any further.

Chief Parker expressed concern that there might be hunters killing what they consider free-roaming domestic cats because they believe it to be legal.

“Maybe people are out there thinking that feral cats are legally able to be shot,” he said. “But if you come across a cat, you don’t know if it’s a feral cat or someone’s pet.”

Parker went on to explain that most hunters take great pride in the hunt, and someone spending his or her time hunting cats is “nothing more than a coward.

“They (hunters) take pride in being fair and the sportsmanship aspect of it,” he added. “This is something that a large percentage of hunters would never dream of doing.”

Schemm agreed.

“All I can say is this is giving bow hunters a bad reputation,” he said.

Meanwhile, earlier in July, a Jefferson homeowner found another feline shot through the shoulder with an arrow in the City of Jefferson.

Abilene, as the Humane Society of Jefferson County staff named her, was rushed to the Jefferson Veterinary Clinic for treatment. She was left with a large drain to relieve fluid from the wound and able to recover, but still is in very bad shape.

Though her identity was a mystery at the time of the incident and no owner had come forward to claim her 40 hours after the incident, shelter director Lisa Patefield reported in July that Abilene would be going home with her rightful owner to recover from her injuries.

A \$1,000 reward offered by the Humane Society of Jefferson County thus far has failed to lead to the person

responsible for wounding the cat, but the discovery of a second wounded feline — Lucy — is drawing national attention.

Parker noted that there is no way to “make any reasonable assumption that these incidents are related or whether the most recent shooting was intentional or a freak accident.

“There is a better chance that those two incidents (in the Town of Koshkonong) are related versus the one that happened in the City of Jefferson,” Parker added. “Not to say someone with that intent to harm an animal can’t travel, but there is a greater probability that the two in closer geographical proximity are related.”

The chief deputy said patrols of the area around Lucy’s home have been increased. Anyone with information is asked to call (920) 674-7311.