

## Media release

7 September 2020

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### Cradle Coast Authority to track cat movements

Cats are the second most popular pet in Tasmania and they play an important role in the lives of many Tasmanians. But where do our cats go when they run out of our doors in the morning?

Cradle Coast Authority's (CCA) Natural Resource Management (NRM) team, in collaboration with the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment, is starting the Cradle Coast Cat Tracker Project to uncover the movements of domestic cats in the Cradle Coast region. The project aims to discover the size of a domestic cat's home range, which is the area in which the cat spends most of their time. The data will also show how many properties a cat visits, how many roads they cross and whether they spend time in adjoining bushland or if they prefer urban habitat.

This research will help us understand the movements of domestic cats in semi-urban areas and will assist cat owners with making informed decisions about their cat's safety and care.

The project will be following 20 domestic cats from the Cradle Coast region. Using a light-weight GPS tracker, that has been approved by the animal ethics committee, attached to a cat harness, each cat's movements will be recorded over a nine-day period. The data will then be downloaded and displayed on a map to show the owner where their cat has been and how far they travelled.

CCA's Regional Cat Management Coordinator, Dr Margot Oorebeek, is excited to start the project and will be looking for volunteers through September and October.

"A similar project has been conducted in South Australia in 2015 and delivered some amazing results. The cats in that study had a median home range of one hectare, but some covered as much as 31 hectares and crossed an average of 3-4 roads per day," said Dr Oorebeek.

Most of the cats tracked in the South Australian study were city cats surrounded by busy roads and house blocks, whilst this study will provide insights into what semi-urban cats get up to.

"Many cats from the Cradle Coast region live in a semi-urban or rural environment; with fewer busy roads and a more open landscape our cats in the Cradle Coast might travel much further afield".

Cat owners from the region can volunteer to have their cat tracked by going to the Cradle Coast website and filling out a short owner survey. ([www.cradlecoast.com/cat-tracker/](http://www.cradlecoast.com/cat-tracker/))



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**Image: Cat with harness and GPS.**

*CCA is jointly owned by the nine Councils of western and north-western Tasmania, to help them achieve regional outcomes and maintain strong local government, by working together.*

