

# Maugean Skate Awareness Project

Raising community awareness of the endangered Maugean Skate, one of Tasmania's lesser known species.

## Project summary

Delivering this project between July 2022 and March 2023, Cradle Coast NRM worked with species experts from Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS), Department of Natural Resources Environment Tasmania (NRET) Threatened Species and Wild Fisheries Management and relevant local community and recreational fishing stakeholders. We used a variety of community-based activities to reach a diverse range of audiences. Sharing the current scientific knowledge of this species in a variety of ways ensured that more people from the West Coast and from all over Tasmania gained a much greater understanding and appreciation of this significant species.

## Project achievements

### Maugean Skate website

[maugeanskate.au](http://maugeanskate.au) - an informative and accessible webpage was fittingly launched on National Threatened Species Day and the webpage has since received more than 1500 views! It has provided people with background information on the species and its habitat, the threats that it faces, links to other relevant organisations and a summary of the skate-based educational activities delivered between Nov 2022 – Mar 2023.

### Inaugural Skate Art Exhibition (SKATEX)

SKATEX was a Maugean Skate inspired art competition and exhibition designed to raise awareness of the species in a creative way. The website provided an image library for artists to access to aid their inspiration.

The exhibition, held in Strahan in January, attracted 76 entries and commenced with an official launch and awards event attended by more than 40 community members. SKATEX then continued until the end of February with the Skate Art Trail across 11 venues in Strahan and Queenstown. Two mini-exhibitions continued from March to June with the display of Strahan Primary School children's art and small selection of skate art pieces in a Strahan shopfront (courtesy of West Coast Council) and in two IMAS Hobart offices with high visitation.

### Interpretive signage

Interpretive signs have been produced on a large 'egg case' stencil frame. The interpretive signs are accompanied by bronze sculptures: a male and a female Maugean Skate, two egg cases and two crabs which are mounted on large stone blocks. The tactile nature of the sculptures will elicit an enhanced level of interest in the skates.

### Community events

The level of skate recognition and species literacy has increased significantly with delivery of six community events across northern and north-west Tasmania, a visit to Strahan Primary School as well as a partnership with Tasmania Parks & Wildlife, Summer Discovery Ranger Program on the West Coast.

## What next?

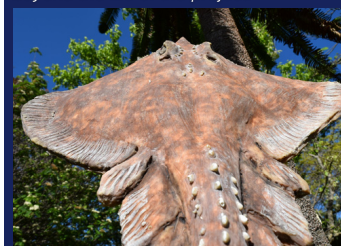
CCNRM attended an ex-situ conservation meeting with NRE, IMAS and Australian Govt reps. CCNRM have submitted a funding proposal to the Regional Delivery Partners Program that if successful would support an urgently-needed five-year Maugean Skate surrogate breeding program. The project would also facilitate improved detection and monitoring of the species with new technology and include a community engagement component which would build on the success of the activities that have been funded by the Environment Restoration Fund.



Four pullup banners detailing the life cycle of 'Macquarie Harbour's Special Maugean Skates' were designed and distributed to members of the Stakeholder Reference Group to utilise for raising awareness.

**WE CAN'T LET OUR SKATES FLATLINE FOREVER**

1,100 bumper stickers were produced and disseminated widely and these will continue to reach a wide audience beyond the life of the project.

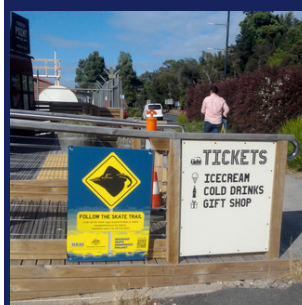


Three life-sized latex models were commissioned of a male and female skate and two egg cases. These aided in the provision of interpretive activities at school visits, Discovery Ranger Program and other community events

As another project legacy, CCNRM purchased 'King Billy Skate', masterfully carved by Nigel Griggs out of King Billy Pine. The sculpture will tour local libraries and other public spaces to continue to raise awareness of this elusive and cryptic endangered species



2000 postcards to promote SKATEX were carefully designed to incorporate a skate with Macquarie Harbour in the background and assisted people to make the important link that Macquarie Harbour is the last known home for this species in the world.



40 signs to promote SKATEX were strategically placed around the township of Strahan.

55 limited edition T-shirts were designed and presented to all the artists who participated in SKATEX further contributing to increasing awareness.