



## Matt the Feral Cat

### SITE ACTIVITY

#### What Can Be Learned?

Cats and foxes are amazingly efficient and effective predators. Both are introduced to Tasmania and both have a devastating effect on native wildlife. Many animals that exist in Tasmania have died out on the mainland partly due to predators such as the fox. Tasmania is lucky to have, and acts as a kind of refuge for, a huge variety of small native mammals - but these are under threat by feral cats, and the recent introduction of the European fox.

Foxes and cats threaten native animals not only because they are so good at hunting, but because they are not selective hunters. Cats and foxes will prey on almost any small mammal. Many of these small animals are nocturnal - the darkness of the night means they are less able to be seen by predators.

This game could also be played with a fox instead of a cat.

#### Materials Required

One blindfold for each player.  
Open playing area (with marked boundaries)

This game has been taken from *Outdoor Environmental Games*, published by The Gould League of Victoria. Used with permission from the Gould Group.

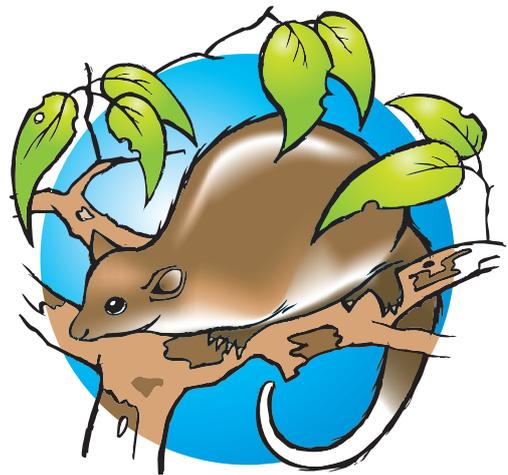


#### The Activity

All the players except one, form into pairs of Tasmanian nocturnal animals. The pairs have two minutes together to decide on and practise an individual recognition call that will allow them to identify each other in the dark.

One player becomes Matt the feral cat and starts off in the middle of the playing space. ALL players are blindfolded (including Matt). They must find their own partner by call alone, before Matt finds them.

Each time Matt moves he must 'meow'. He catches his prey by placing his hand on the players head, who must then retire to one end of the playing space. Partners who have found each other are safe and move to the other end of the playing space. The game ends when Matt has caught 4 animals.



Urban Wildlife E-Set suited to lower primary students.

#### FURTHER INFORMATION

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