

MEDIA RELEASE

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Tasmania's Roadkill Black Spots Claim 200,000 Lives

New research shows that wildlife deaths on Tasmania's roads occur mainly in "roadkill black spots". The research by CSIRO scientist Dr. Alistair Hobday is featured in a film to be premiered in Hobart this Friday.

"Pretty much everything that lives in Tasmania, we've seen dead on the road," said Dr. Hobday. "We've estimated that around 294,000 animals are killed on Tasmania's roads every year. Of that number, 70 per cent are hit in roadkill black spots, which only exist on small sections of the road."

The endangered Tasmanian Devil is one of the top ten animals most commonly killed on the road.

"3,392 Tasmanian Devils are killed on the road each year based on our research. That's around five per cent of the whole population, which is likely to be a significant impact given the pressure of the Devil Facial Tumour Disease," said Dr. Hobday.

Roadkill black spots exist in only 20-30 per cent of Tasmania's major roads. Focussing roadkill management on these areas could halve the number of wildlife deaths.

"Our results show that dropping your speed to 80 km/h on ten per cent of the road could reduce the amount of roadkill by up to 50 per cent, and it would only increase your travel time between, say, Hobart and Launceston, by three minutes," said Dr. Hobday.

Locally made documentary **Tasmania: Your Roadkill State** looks at how our journeys can fatally interrupt the nocturnal journeys of Tasmania's wildlife. Tasmanian Devil conservationist Geoff King has been monitoring roadkill in the North-west of the State for ten years.

"Devils are attracted to roads on their nightly journey through their home range. Roads are a sort of sink with a lot of feeding opportunities on them. I find roadkill on my local roads every morning. Slowing down at night could save the lives of a lot of Tasmanian Devils and other wildlife," said Mr. King.

Tasmania: Your Roadkill State will be premiered at the State Cinema at 8pm on Friday 21 November. For tickets please contact the Tasmanian Conservation Trust on 03 6234 3552. Copies of the film are available for media from Chloe Lucas on 0407 001 534.

Dr. Hobday's paper 'Distribution and abundance of roadkill on Tasmanian highways: human management options' is published in *Wildlife Research* this Monday 17 November – copies available from the author.

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