

SALTWATER CROCODILE

HABITAT

The Saltwater Crocodile is typically found in areas where they can easily move between saltwater and freshwater, such as river systems, billabongs, and estuaries,^[1] along Australia's north coast from Far North Queensland all the way around to Western Australia.^[2]

DIET

The young feed on small fish, frogs, insects, small mammals, snakes, and lizards.^[3] The adults feed on just about anything that is accessible from the edge of the water, including turtles, kangaroos, monkeys, birds, bats, and humans.^[4] They approach their prey by swimming quietly, striking, and dragging it into the water to swallow it whole.^[5]

THREATS

They have long been hunted by humans for their eggs, meat, and especially their skin.^[6] Other current threats include habitat destruction by feral buffalo and getting tangled in discarded fishing nets.^[7]

REPRODUCTION

They mate in the wet season from September to October, when water levels are high. 40 to 60 eggs per clutch are laid into nests made of vegetation and mud between November and March. The females guard the nests for 80 to 98 days and then care for the new hatchlings for around 8 months.^[8]

CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT

It is illegal to harvest, farm, and trade crocodiles and their eggs in the Northern Territory,^[9] Queensland,^[10] and Western Australia without a permit.^[11]



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DESCRIPTION

They can grow up to 6m long.^[12] They are mostly grey, brown, or black on the top of their bodies, with darker markings and yellow or white undersides.^[13]

SCIENTIFIC NAME

Crocodylus porosus^[14]

CONSERVATION STATUS

Least Concern^[15]

CLASS

Reptiles^[16]

LIFESPAN

Between 20 and 70 years^[17]

POPULATION SIZE

Around 500,000 as of 2019^[18]

FUN FACT

They were once listed as Vulnerable due to the extensive hunting of their skin but have since recovered.^[19]

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