

ESTUARINE CROCODILE

Vulnerable

Endangered

Critically
Endangered

Extinct in
the Wild

Extinct



Common name

Estuarine crocodile

Scientific name

Crocodylus porosus

Habitat

Estuarine crocodiles are semi-aquatic animals. They can be found in a wide range of habitats, including rivers, estuaries, creeks, swamps, lagoons and billabongs.

Distribution

In Queensland, estuarine crocodiles are found in northern coastal areas and drainages. They also occur on a number of islands off the Queensland coast.

Description

The estuarine crocodile is the largest (by mass) living reptile in the world! An average male is 4m long and weigh 200–300 kilograms (kg). Females reach around 2.5m to 3m and weigh up to 150kg.

From the side, the jaw line is uneven with 64–68 irregular-sized rounded teeth. The head is generally broad and knobby.

The eyes, ears and nostrils are located on the same plane on the top of the head, allowing it to see, hear and breathe while almost totally submerged.

Estuarine crocodiles can live for more than 70 years.

Importance

It is believed that estuarine crocodiles play an important role in wetland environments by helping to keep the balance in the complex web of life in freshwater and estuarine ecosystems. As apex predators they are at the top of the food chain and deter fish and marine animals from overcrowding and degrading the ecosystem.

Key threats

Estuarine crocodiles were once hunted extensively in Australia by humans for their skin. Humans aren't the crocodiles' only threat: feral animals have been known to destroy nesting habitats and goannas can dig out eggs from nests.

Additional threats to the long-term survival of the crocodile include habitat modification and encroaching human populations.



With our strong homing ability, we are able to find our way back to our territory after being displaced by humans, be it in the same river system or a different river system.

What is being done to help protect and conserve this species

In Queensland crocodiles are protected under a management program that delivers public safety while supporting the ongoing conservation and survival of crocodiles in the wild. This includes population monitoring, research into movement and dispersal of crocodiles, and sonar to detect crocodiles. These activities help to reduce human-crocodile conflict.

Estuarine crocodiles were hunted to near extinction by the 1970s, and with strong efforts made over the past 40 years to conserve the crocodile, they are now classed as a vulnerable species under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*.

Become an estuarine crocodile champion

The best way to help protect crocodiles is to limit the chance of any negative interactions with them. You can do this by being sure to be crocwise if you live in, or are visiting croc country.

- Report all crocodile sightings as soon as possible.
- Stay at least 5m from the water's edge.
- Dispose of your food and fish scraps in a bin.
- Do not feed crocodiles. Be extra cautious at night, dusk and dawn.
- Stay well away from crocodile traps.
- Crocodiles are more active during the warmer months of the wet season.
- Talk to your friends and family about threats to the estuarine crocodile and what they can do to help.

WHICH CROCODILE IS WHICH?

Look at these images of an estuarine and freshwater crocodile and draw a line from the features listed below to the crocodile they match.

- Males commonly weigh 200–300kg
- Broad snout
- Needle-like teeth
- Males commonly weigh around 70kg
- Irregular-sized rounded teeth
- Average male may be 3–4m long
- Narrow snout
- Average male may be 2.3–3m long



We communicate with each other using sound, visual and chemical signals.

