

# *Turtle Watch News 4*



July 2011

Welcome! Great progress this month for *Turtle Watch* ...

## **Applause! ... for our first Turtle Education Event**

The first of our community education events was held on Saturday 16th July at the Cockburn Wetlands Education Centre (CWEC). This presentation was conducted by Dr Jacqueline Giles and was part of the 'Get Wild About Wetlands' school holiday program, a partnership between CWEC and the City of Cockburn. The event was well attended (over 50 participants), with enthusiastic participation in the question and answer segment, where 3 lucky students answered turtle ecology questions to receive a copy of 'Yakkinn the swamp tortoise: The most dangerous year' by Gerald and Guundie Kuchling. Sincere thanks to Dr Jacqueline Giles for sharing her expertise with the community and to CWEC and the City for holding the event.

## **Future Turtle Education Events**

Two turtle education events are scheduled for August and September:

- ✚ Sunday 21st August 10-3pm at the Canning River Eco Centre: Community Science Fair – turtle activities stall organized by Elaine Lewis, with input from Caitlyn Bartholomaeus, PhD candidate who is conducting research on the oblong turtle.
- ✚ Friday 30 Sept 6-8pm at the Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre: Frogfest – including a talk on turtles presented by Elaine Lewis.

Elaine's community fair stall aims to highlight issues impacting on the survival of the Oblong Turtle through various educational activities, while the talk will outline aspects of Oblong Turtle behaviour.

Everyone welcome.

## **Surveillance Cameras:**

Joe Tonga (Consultant) has three surveillance cameras ready for use in the project. These cameras are totally covert. If a fox enters the sensor zone it will capture it! Joe reported experience has proven that it usually takes a minimum of 21 days having a camera in the field to record a fox. Joe also reported fox scats have been found in all three areas of the project.

## **Can you help?**

Does anyone have a turtle mould I can borrow or know where I can purchase one? If you do, please contact Elaine Lewis at: [Elaine.Lewis@det.wa.edu.au](mailto:Elaine.Lewis@det.wa.edu.au) Elaine wants to make chocolate turtles for the CREEC Science Fair.

**Turtle Watch Aims:** 1. Identify predator/s involved in the destruction of oblong turtle nests at three sites – Herdsman Lake, Bibra Lake and Canning River. 2. Foster partnerships between the community, research organizations, educational institutions and industry in relation to the conservation of oblong turtles.

### ***Turtle Hotline* Poster Promotion**

*Turtle Hotline* posters encouraging community participation are on display at the 3 sites – Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre (HLWC), Cockburn Wetlands Centre (CWC) & Canning River Eco Education Centre (CREEC).

Reports of turtle hatchling sightings have been received. Two hatchlings were handed into the HLWC. One was found near the Shenton Park Lake, Herbert Rd, Shenton Park early in June – it was dehydrated but revived with water. The second hatchling was found on a limestone path, near the bridge over the drain outside HLWC on 13th June - also dehydrated but quickly revived. Both have been placed in the HLWC aquarium for extra care before release.

### **Partnership with UWA**

Elaine is working with third year UWA Science Communication students to develop a communication plan for *Turtle Watch*. On 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 15<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> May meetings were held with three Science Communication students working on the project. Elaine attended the final presentation of the communication plan on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> May. Recommendations were made. The project *Turtle Watch* team will consider the implementation of these recommendations. Sincere thanks to the students for their contribution to the project.

### **Turtle Education Pack**

Elaine commenced the collection of resources for a turtle education pack. The library search continues. CWC, Excelsior Primary School and Friends of the Western Swamp Tortoise contacted Elaine about sharing their education resources. Elaine will continue to liaise with these groups.

### **Oblong Turtle Collaborative Research Group**

The last meeting of the Oblong Turtle Collaborative Research Group was held on 24<sup>th</sup> May. Interested stakeholders are welcome to contact Elaine for further information.

### **E-bulletin**

The third e-bulletin was circulated to the various stakeholder groups:

1. *Turtle Watch* project team: Dr Jacqueline Giles (Oblong Turtle Consultant); Joe Tonga (Camera Surveillance Consultant); and Dr Jennifer Pearson (Community Education Consultant).
2. Eco-education centres: Roger Harris (HLWC); Vicky Hartill & Denise Crosbie (CWC); and Hayley Bullimore & Tanya Porter (CREEC).
3. Oblong Turtle Collaborative Research Group: Dr Catherine Baudains, Dr Jane Chambers & Dr Mirela Tulbure (Murdoch Uni); Caitlyn Bartholomaeus (Murdoch Uni PhD candidate – oblong turtle research); and participants listed in 1 & 2 above.
4. City of Cockburn: Climate Change Adaption funding for an ‘Oblong Turtle Population and Recruitment Capacity Study’ (CWC).
5. Environmental and Landcare departments/organisations committed to oblong turtle conservation e.g. DEC, SERCUL.
6. Friends/volunteer groups interested in oblong turtle conservation e.g. Friends of Herdsman Lake and Canning River Regional Park Volunteers.

Feedback to the third e-bulletin was received from CWC, CREEC, HLWC, SERCUL, Friends of the Western Swamp Tortoise and Coolbinia Primary School.

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### ***Turtle Watch Information***

For further information, you are welcome to contact Elaine Lewis at:

[Elaine.Lewis@det.wa.edu.au](mailto:Elaine.Lewis@det.wa.edu.au)

#### **Please REMEMBER:**

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Thank YOU



Australian Association for Environmental Education -WA

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