

Turtle Watch News 12



March 2012

Welcome to what was going to be our last *Turtle Watch* e-bulletin ... but there will be more!

Congratulations and thanks for being part of the turtle trail for the last 12 months!

Lotterywest Grant

The Lotterywest grant that enabled the *Turtle Watch* project to proceed, commenced in April 2011 and was going to finish this month. However, due to considerable community interest in the *Turtle Watch* initiative, a project extension was sought. On 16th March 2012 Lotterywest granted permission to extend the project another twelve months to enable the documentation of:

- New initiatives that have arisen as a result of the project, such as additional community education sessions and a conference presentation, which reflect the project's ongoing success and sustainability.
- Additional camera surveillance and research evidence related to predation of turtle nests.

Furthermore, a meeting of AAEE representatives and eco centre staff was held on Monday 19th March 2012 and the following decisions were agreed unanimously:

- *Turtle Watch* will continue as an ongoing community education program in eco centres, with repeated *Turtle Watch* events planned/scheduled annually.
- The e-bulletin will henceforth be distributed quarterly, in March, June, September and December (instead of monthly).
- Further funding will be sought to expand the *Turtle Watch* project.

On 21st March 2012 another positive step for the future of *Turtle Watch* was made. Joe Tonga, our camera surveillance consultant, agreed to continue to provide to AAEE any video footage he obtained that showed evidence of turtle nest predation.

Sincere thanks to all our stakeholders for your outstanding support and commitment to *Turtle Watch*. Thank you.

***Turtle Watch* conference poster**

The partnership between *Turtle Watch* and ClimateWatch enabled not only the design and printing of 2000 promotional bookmarks, as well as poster advertising for the **Turtle Hotline** and ClimateWatch website ... but also a conference poster. It is anticipated this poster will be part of a *Turtle Watch* presentation at the 17th Biennial AAEE 2012 Conference, *Creating your next Courageous Steps (Next Steps 2012)*, 30th September – 3rd October 2012 in Melbourne.

A draft of the conference poster is currently being reviewed by the writing team.

***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.

Numerous copies of the final poster will be printed, not only for the conference but also for the eco centres involved, to facilitate ongoing promotion of the *Turtle Watch* initiative.

Turtle Education

The *Turtle Education Kit* is being trialled at Coolbinia Primary School this term, at CREEC during events in March and at CWEC in the April. The kit will be available online later this year. For further information contact Elaine:

Elaine.Lewis@det.wa.edu.au

Six community turtle education events were conducted in 2011, two each for CREEC, HLWC and CWEC. These community events, ranging from workshops, to seminars and fair stalls, were funded by the Lotterywest grant. The impact of these events continues, as more are being conducted:

- Sunday 4th March 11am- 1pm, the City of Canning organised a *Jazz in the Park* event in the Kent St weir park, along with a *Turtle Watch* session and display at CREEC.
- Friday 23rd March, 9.30am-12noon, oblong turtle presentations by Caitlyn Bartholomaeus (Murdoch Uni PhD candidate) at Coolbinia Primary School.
- Friday 30th March, CREEC's *Earth Day* celebrations will feature *Turtle Watch* sessions following capacity building training sessions with CREEC staff and volunteers, so they can conduct these workshops.

Future community *Turtle Watch* education events are scheduled, for example:

- Wednesday 11th April 9.30-11.30am, a *Turtle Creations* workshop at the Cockburn Wetlands Education Centre.
- Friday 27th April 4-9pm, a turtle session during *Evening at the Forest*, Baldivis Children's Forest.

It is noteworthy that the above events are not funded by the Lotterywest grant, and therefore illustrate the sustainability of this project.

Turtle Sightings

Many thanks to our turtle watchers. Please keep the reports coming in as they help us build a picture of what is happening in the community.

- Actions:**
1. If you see oblong turtle nesting behaviour in the 3 research areas –
 - Herdsman Lake (Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre, HLWC),
 - Bibra Lake (CWEC),
 - Canning River (CREEC/SERCUL)

please advise the eco centre staff immediately and complete the *Turtle Watch* hotline form. HLWC, CWEC, CREEC or SERCUL will then contact Elaine, who will inform Joe, so that camera surveillance can be set up to determine predator/s involved in the destruction of nests. Thank you.

2. Please report other turtle sightings too. Visit the ClimateWatch website to log turtle sightings: <http://www.climatewatch.org.au/>

Surveillance Cameras:

Joe Tonga (Consultant) is continuing camera surveillance to collect video evidence of nest predation.

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 *Oblonga* Rescue and Rehabilitation Network

The Turtle *Oblonga* Rescue and Rehabilitation Network aims to provide the expertise and capacity needed to save Oblong Turtles in emergency situations. Email:

secretaryoblonga@iinet.net.au

Oblong Turtle Collaborative Research Group

Caitlyn (Murdoch University) and Shino's (UWA) turtle research (PhDs) is progressing steadily. Stuart Dawson (Murdoch University) is a new turtle researcher who commenced his Honours study of turtles this year.

E-bulletin

The eleventh e-bulletin was circulated to 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 (CWEC); and Hayley Bullimore (CREEC).
3. Oblong Turtle Collaborative Research Group: Dr Catherine Baudains, Dr Jane Chambers & Dr Mirela Tulbure (Murdoch Uni); Caitlyn Bartholomaeus (Murdoch Uni PhD candidate); Shino Hamada (UWA PhD candidate); and participants listed in 1 & 2 above.
4. City of Cockburn: Climate Change Adaption funding for an 'Oblong Turtle Population and Recruitment Capacity Study' (CWEC).
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 on the February e-bulletin was received from: Dr Jacqueline Giles, CWEC, CREEC, SERCUL, HLWC and Coolbinia Primary School.

Turtle Watch Information

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

Elaine.Lewis@det.wa.edu.au

Thank YOU



Australian Association for Environmental Education -WA

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.