



October Turtle Talk

IT'S TURTLE TIME. GET AMONGST IT.



THE FLATBACK TURTLE - THE TRUE-BLUE AUSSIE TURTLE.

Did you know that the female Flatback turtle nests only on Northern Australian beaches and nowhere else in the world? The Flatback turtle also migrates to forage only as far as the Australian continental shelf. How lucky are we in Port Hedland to see this incredible species right on our doorstep?

Yes, it's turtle time again. The sand is warming up and Care for Hedland has been busy preparing for this year's **Volunteer Turtle Monitoring Program**, which runs from November until March 2025.

PORT HEDLAND IS UNIQUE.

There are very few Flatback Turtle nesting beaches in WA that occur so close to town. That is why our monitoring program is so important. The data collected by staff and volunteers provides insight into Flatback turtle biology and behaviour. This is used to help manage and protect local populations for years to come.

Turtle monitoring is a great activity for all the family. A number of families come out on the weekend and help with track count data collection and then go for brekky or shopping afterwards. It's a great way of doing something outdoors together and a unique experience.

THE TURTLES NEED YOU.

If you have wanted to volunteer but haven't gotten around to it, now is the time. Anyone willing to help is encouraged to attend the Turtle Monitoring Training Weekend on October 26 and 27. It's fun for the whole family. On Saturday (10am-2pm), you'll learn about turtle biology and data collection methods.

On Sunday morning, we will head to Cemetery Beach for a practical training session on track monitoring methods from 8 to 9am.

This is a unique opportunity for the local community and visitors alike to be actively involved in Sea Turtle Conservation. To register for the Turtle Monitoring Training Session or for more information, please contact Morning Coordinator, Jess Walker on **0459 474 639** or you can email her on: turtle@careforhedland.org.au

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Saturday 26 October** Turtle Monitoring Training. Fun and informative training session held for local volunteers from 10am – 2pm at Gateway Village, Nimingarra Court, South Hedland.
- **Sunday 27 October** Turtle Monitoring Training. Morning training session on Track Monitoring Techniques at Cemetery Beach 8am – 9am.

Tax Deductibility Status: The Care For Hedland Environmental Association is a tax deductible community environmental group. It relies on donations and sponsorships received to fund its work. All donations received \$2 and greater, are eligible. To find out how you can donate and help Care For Hedland Environmental Association continue its great work in the community and help to protect our local environment, please contact Morning Coordinator – Jess Walker on 0459 474 639 or email turtle@careforhedland.org.au

TRACK MONITORING TIMES

- Commencing 28 October 2024 until 1 March 2025.
- Cemetery Beach: Daily monitoring from 6am. Meet at Cemetery Beach carpark.
- Pretty Pool Beach: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 6am. Meet at lower Pretty Pool carpark.

What you can do to protect the Turtles

We know nobody wants to harm or cause stress to the turtles, so here are some tips to follow so that you can watch them nest successfully. Win/Win!

• Give her space! Stay at least 1.5m behind her.

• Remain low, quiet and still – STOP, DROP, ACT LIKE A ROCK!

• NO Torches – Give your eyes 10 minutes to adjust to the darkness. If you must use a torch, use a red light – Turtles cannot see red light very easily and you'll protect your night vision too!



• NO flash photography – this WILL scare her and she will NOT get to see her nest

• Please do not drive on the beach – you can crush nests and hatchlings!

• It is critical that you do NOT TOUCH or ride the turtle – if you see anyone doing so, please report it!

• Please keep dogs on the leash during the nesting season – dogs can scare the turtle and disrupt nesting, after all, a turtle has never seen a dog before!

COULD YOU BILLET A VOLUNTEER?

Each year, the Community Turtle Monitoring Program attracts volunteers from out of town. Most are from interstate, and a few come from overseas. If you have a spare room or perhaps you are going away on holidays, please consider hosting a volunteer.

- Note: #1:** Care For Hedland is responsible for volunteer transport.
- #2:** Volunteers are responsible for their own food and personal items.
- #3:** Typically, they stay between one to four weeks.



AUSTRALIAN MARINE TURTLE SYMPOSIUM

Port Hedland was proudly represented at 6th Australian Marine Turtle Symposium 14-16 October in Townsville, Queensland. Care For Hedland presented and had representation in attendance to hear the latest from around the nation for sea turtle monitoring and conservation.

Principal Partner



Have you liked us on Facebook? Follow our Care For Hedland Turtle Monitoring Facebook page and keep up to date with daily updates from the beach, photos and upcoming events.

For information on the Hedland Community Volunteer Turtle Monitoring Program, please contact Morning Program Coordinator, Jess Walker – 0459 474 639 or turtle@careforhedland.org.au

Hedland Community Volunteer Turtle Monitoring Program is an initiative by the Care For Hedland Environmental Association and is proudly supported by principal partner BHP, Department Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, the Town of Port Hedland and North West Telegraph.

