The PYTHON Periodical

Vol. 1 Issue 2.

www.northcoastherpetologygroup.org.au/

President's Welcome

Happy 2024!
I hope everyone has had a safe and happy Christmas and New Year.

2024 is shaping up to be an exciting year for the NCHG, with the Aussie Ark Field Trip coming up in February.
The return of our Reptile Expo in April is moving along nicely, with much interest from vendors around the state and country, and we are excited to have 1 Million Turtles featured at this year's expo! With our Mid North Coast being home to 2 unique and critically endangered turtle species (The Bellinger River and Manning River Turtle) I am really excited to have them team with us as part of this year's expo and to help raise awareness and much needed support for our mid north coast turtles.

This year we also celebrate our 25th Anniversary! This is a great achievement for the group, the past few years have been challenging to say the least for the NCHG and many other groups around the country. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the efforts and commitment of past and present members, committees and presidents that have helped create, grow and carry our group to where we are today, and I welcome our current and future members as we continue our passionate journey for herpetofauna over the next 25 years.
Happy Herping,

Stu

IN THIS EDITION

President's Welcome
Feature: Bellinger River Snapping Turtle
In The Herping World
Classifieds
Whats On
NCHG Committee & Membership
For the Hatchlings

FIND US...

P.O. Box 438
Port Macquarie 2444

FEATURE: BELLINGER RIVER SNAPPING TURTLE

Myuchelys georgesi

>>> OVERVIEW

The Bellinger River Snapping Turtle is a species of freshwater turtle only found in a 60km stretch of the Bellinger River.

>>> APPEARANCE

The Bellinger River snapping turtle is medium sized with a shell length up to 185 mm in males and 250 mm in females. It is most easily distinguished from other species by a shell underside (plastron) which is blotchy, darkened scute margins present, silver iris and a horny head shield. In adult turtles, males can be distinguished by the much longer tail.

>>> CONSERVATION EFFORTS

The Bellinger River Turtle is classified as Critically Endangered. In February 2015, a catastrophic mortality event (known as the Bellinger River Virus) occurred across the entire range of the wild population with an estimated 90% of the population being wiped out in just 6 weeks.

Due to its limited distribution and the various threats it faces, conservation efforts are crucial to its survival. Efforts include habitat protection, predator control, and research to better understand its biology and ecology.

A small insurance population were collected from upstream reaches of the catchment and, after completing quarantine, were transferred to Taronga Zoo in early 2016.

Since 2018 there have been 82 juvenile captive bread turtles released in a trial and monitored with radio transmitters. The program has now extended to Symbio Wildlife Park with the females almost at sexual maturity.

Did you know?

The Bellinger River Turtle is among the Top 25 Endangered Turtle species in the WORLD!

>>> HOW CAN I HELP?

- Report sick or dead turtles, by calling our Environment Hotline on 131 555.
- Contact WIRES Rescue Office for wildlife information and rescue advice on 1300 094 737.
- Report turtle sightings on our NSW Bionet webpage or the TurtleSAT website.
- Volunteer with Bellingen Riverwatch and take part in citizen science water quality monitoring on the OzGREEN Bellingen Riverwatch webpage.

IN THE HERPING WORLD

Have a suggestion or submission?
northcoastherp@gmail.com
for more information

TURTLE TAILS- NOVEMBER 2023

November is Turtle Month, and what a splendid occasion to pay tribute to these remarkable creatures.
Michael Boreham delighted us with a presentation on the enchanting Macleay River Turtles. He shared his journey of becoming passionate about turtles and provided insights into his breeding setup, enriching our understanding of these fascinating creatures.
Stuart graced our gathering by introducing us to three captivating turtle species - the Cooper Creek, Eastern Long Neck, and the highly cherished Bellinger River Snapping Turtles, his treasured gems.

Top (L)- NCHG listening intently to Michael
Top (R)- Michael's Macleay River Turtles
Bottom (L)- Stu with a Cooper Creek Turtle.
Bottom (R)- Daya facinated by Stuarts Bellinger River Snapping Turtle

CHRISTMAS PARTY- DECEMBER 2023

NCHG wrapped up our year with a delightful Christmas celebration held at the Town Green Inn.
As we take some well-deserved breaks, embark on journeys, savour delicious feasts, and revel in the holiday spirit, we extend our warmest wishes for a truly joyful Christmas and a New Year filled with health, happiness, and prosperity.

Want to advertise?
northcoastherp@gmail.com
for more information

CLASSIFIEDS

SELLING

Ross McGibbon Photography Fundraising Calendar 2024

The Calendar features 12 of Ross's best images of the year and raises money for the RFDS and the Global Snakebite Initiative.

NCHG Members receive a $10 discount off their order.

https://rmrphotography.com.au/limited-edition-2024-fundraising-calendar/

WANTED

WANTED: Breeders/ Vendors for our Upcoming Expo. See details on our "Upcoming Page"

WANTED: Details of past members for our 25th Anniversary Event. Please email northcoastherp@gmail.com

Wanted: Your listings! Buying or Selling? Contact us to be included in our next Python Periodical

LINKS

NSW Reptile Keeper Licenses

Native reptiles are protected by law so if you want to keep a native reptile as a pet you'll need a biodiversity conservation licence granted under the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 from the Department of Planning and Environment (National Parks and Wildlife Service).

It is illegal to keep exotic (non-native) reptiles.

NSW Frog Keeper Licence

Native frogs and amphibians are protected by law so if you want to keep one as a pet you'll need a biodiversity conservation licence granted under the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 from the Department of Planning and Environment (National Parks and Wildlife Service). The only non-native (exotic) amphibian that can be kept as a pet without a licence is the axolotl, Ambystoma mexicanum. All other non-native frogs and amphibians cannot be kept as pets because they may become invasive and spread disease.

UPCOMING...

>>> NCHG EXPO RETURNS!

When: 27th April 2024 10am-3pm
Where: Port Macquarie Panthers Auditorium.
Adults: $5
Children under 12: $2 (Under 4 Free)
https://www.ticketebo.com.au/nchgreptileexpo2024

PANTHERS PORT MACQUARIE
Reptile Solutions
1 Million Turtles COMMUNITY CONSERVATION PROGRAM
ABSOLUTE

NOW ACCEPTING VENDORS!
northcoastherp@gmail.com
for more information

>>> CALENDAR 2024

February	4th: Aussie Ark
March	1st: General Meeting
	3rd: World Wildlife Day
	20th: World Earth Day
April	5th: General Meeting
	27th: Reptile Expo

>>> AUSSIE ARK FIELD TRIP

February's meeting will be our Aussie Ark field trip.
9:30am: Brunch (BYO) @ Roadies Cafe, Gloucester
Travel together to Aussie Ark meeting point where an Aussie Ark Ranger will meet us.
Cost: $75 per person
Return Aussie Ark Induction form & Field Trip Attendance form BY 19th January

AussieArk

OUR COMMITTEE

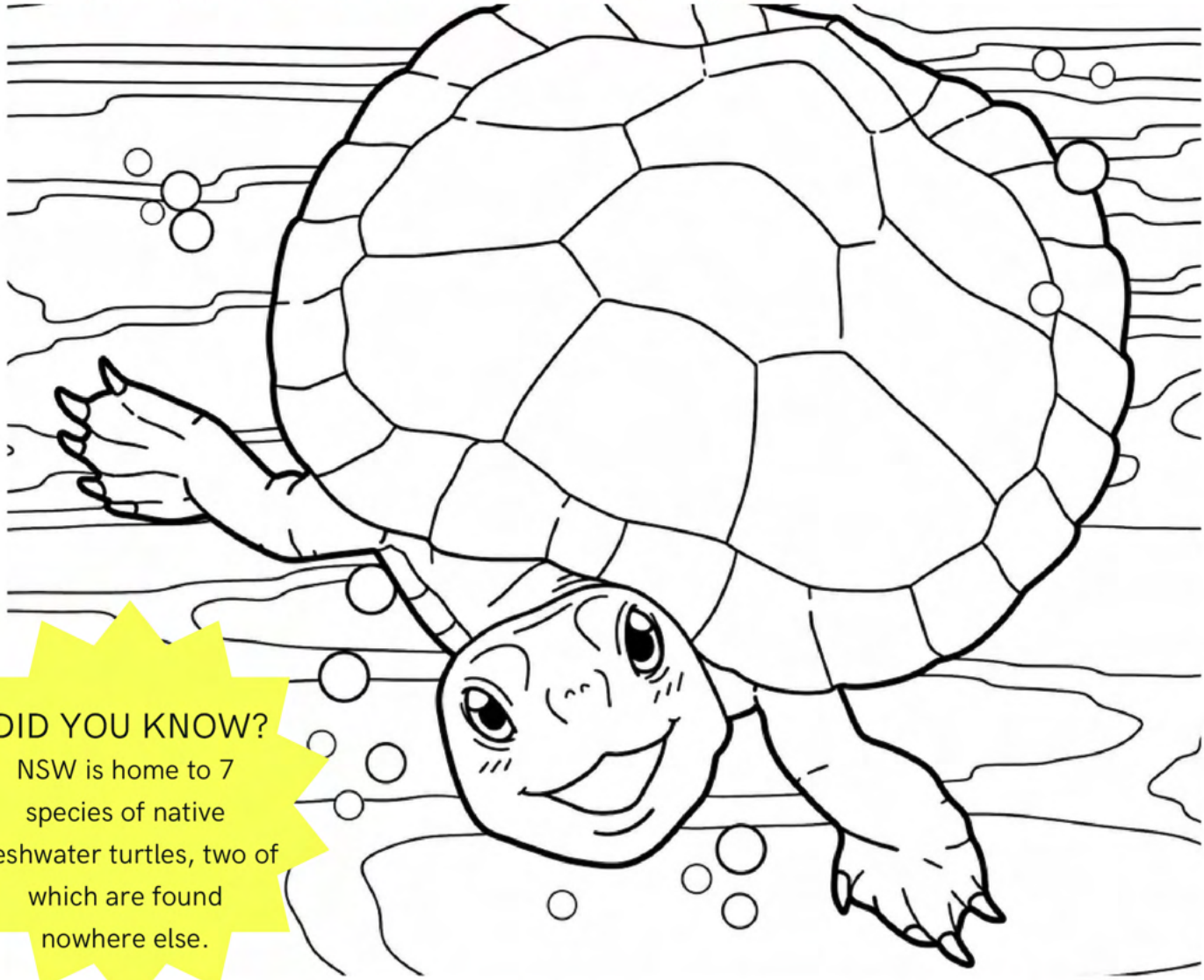
President: Stuart Johnson
Vice President: Michael Banicek
Secretary: Rebecca Potts
Treasurer: Alicia Palmer-Johnson
Committee:
Mark Willis, Allison Quinn, Ron Walker
Social Media/Website: Chaney Boyle

>>> NORTH COAST HERPETOLOGY GROUP INC.

- Meeting Schedule:
  - 1st Friday of each month starting at 7:00 PM
  - Location: Lions Club Hall, Hastings River Drive, Port Macquarie
- Meetings feature Guest Speakers, movie nights, Show & Tell sessions, outings, and special events for extra herping fun!
- Membership Fees:
  - Single: $15
  - Couple or Family: $25

See you there!

FOR THE HATCHLINGS



DID YOU KNOW?

NSW is home to 7 species of native freshwater turtles, two of which are found nowhere else.

L	B	P	A	T	G	V	E	N	W	A	J	M	D	W	E	P	E	O	E	X	F	W
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C	H	O	U	A	U	S	C	A	K	S	D	K	M	C	E	I	O	G	S	I	Z	W
F	T	U	Z	Z	S	K	H	R	Z	V	H	Q	J	A	L	M	N	G	Y	P	K	V
S	T	Q	P	Y	P	T	V	E	H	M	X	L	N	P	I	E	G	E	H	T	G	R
N	I	H	S	F	S	R	R	H	L	U	H	K	J	A	M	K	N	T	M	E	S	L
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P	H	X	O	Z	M	Y	C	Z	N	F	O	F	A	A	P	E	C	L	N	I	Y	F
P	T	K	E	N	D	A	N	G	E	R	E	D	U	C	N	L	K	I	N	Y	Q	B
I	D	E	T	C	E	T	O	R	P	B	Z	L	Z	C	L	L	V	A	I	T	N	J
N	H	Q	B	A	B	V	C	P	V	C	O	G	V	X	A	I	M	T	N	U	O	Y
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P	Q	J	Q	X	O	J	X	G	R	I	V	E	R	S	Y	S	T	E	M	O	X	X

Q: WHERE DO TURTLES ALWAYS GO TO BUY PETROL?
A: THE SHELL STATION

Q: WHAT KIND OF PHOTO DID THE TURTLE TAKE ON HIS IPHONE?
A: A SHELLFIE

I HAD A TEACHER BACK IN PRIMARY SCHOOL CALLED MR TURTLE. A VERY ODD NAME BUT HE TORTOISE WELL.

WHAT DO YOU CALL A TURTLE THAT LOVES PHOTOGRAPHY?
A SNAPPING TURTLE!

TURTLE FIND-A-WORD

BELLINGER	ENDANGERED	MACQUARIE	PLASTRON	SHELL	TAIL
CARAPACE	FEET	MANNING	PROTECTED	SMILE	TURTLE
EGGS	LONG NECK	NATIVE	RIVER SYSTEM	SNAPPING	