

TURTLE Project

Together Understanding and Restoring Turtles in our Landscapes and Ecosystems



Freshwater turtles are declining across South Australia – and together, we can help.

Our goals

- Raise awareness of turtles and why they matter
- Collect vital data with the help of landholders and other citizen scientists
- Protect turtle nests and habitats through on-ground action
- Create a South Australian turtle management plan to guide future conservation



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Things you need to know about turtles

If you live near the River Murray, one of the Lower Lakes, or a wetland, your property may provide habitat for up to 3 different species of freshwater turtle:



Broadshell turtle



Eastern long-necked turtle



Murray short-necked turtle

Turn over the page to learn more about these species!

This project is supported by the Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board and a range of partners with funding from the South Australian Government's Landscape Priorities Fund.





Broadshell turtle

- The largest freshwater turtle in South Australia
- Very long neck and no black markings on underside of shell
- Eat fast-swimming fish and shrimp
- Require deep, permanent water
- Move up to 500 m from the water to nest in autumn (and occasionally spring)
- Hatchlings may remain in the nest for up to a year
- Rarely seen but may be caught accidentally on fishing lines



Eastern long-necked turtle

- Eat waterbugs, small fish and dead animals in the water
- Often have green algae covering their shells (not harmful)
- Play important roles in improving water quality
- Release a pungent smell if disturbed
- Move from water bodies to seek new habitat (at any time) and to nest (from October to December)
- Can travel many kilometres across land
- Can survive weeks out of water if necessary
- Hatch from nests in autumn and occasionally spring



Murray short-necked turtle

- Eat water plants (including algae), waterbugs and small fish
- Require permanent water
- Sometimes bask on logs and rocks
- Nest on land between October and December
- Hatch from the nest 6-8 weeks later

All 3 species

- Eat dead animals and play important roles in improving water quality
- Need water plants to hide in as babies
- Are under threat from fox predation (eggs and adults) and road accidents

How you can get involved

The TURTLE Project encourages people to:

- Record turtle and nest sightings in TurtleSAT
- Install basking sites
- Create turtle islands
- Protect nesting areas
- Safely release turtles caught on fishing lines (take to a vet if injured)
- Control feral animals
- Install turtle friendly fencing
- Attend local events and share information
- Share the word about turtle conservation
- Keep up with the latest updates by following flow.landscape.sa.gov.au/turtle-project

Together, we can protect turtles for the future.