

ADELAIDE | 28-29 SEPTEMBER

AUSTRALASIAN TURTLE SYMPOSIUM 2026

Conference program



Two days of science, culture, conservation and connection

FINAL PROGRAM

8:00-9:00 Main Foyer	Registration	
9:00-9:10 Main Auditorium	Conference opening Sylvia Clarke	
9:10-9:30 Main Auditorium	Welcome to Country - Kurna Robert Taylor	
9:30-10:15	SESSION 1 - POPULATIONS, WATERWAYS AND EARLY WARNING Session chair: Mike Thompson	
9:30-9:45 Main Auditorium	Turtles and changing water regimes in the floodplains of Australia Deborah Bower	University of New England
9:45-10:00 Main Auditorium	Seeing the Missing Generation: A National Early-Warning System for Freshwater Turtles Ricky Spencer	Intelligent EcoTransformations
10:00-10:15 Main Auditorium	Ngarrindjeri Thukabi Monitoring: Culture, Conservation and Science of Freshwater Turtles on Country Scotte Wedderburn	Adelaide University
10:15-10:40	Morning tea and networking	Main Auditorium
10:40-11:30	SESSION 1 CONTINUED Session chair: Mike Thompson	
10:40-10:55 Main Auditorium	A Smelly Refuge: Freshwater Turtle Populations in a Wastewater Treatment Plant Emma Kynaston*	STUDENT La Trobe University
10:55-11:10 Main Auditorium	Effectiveness of conservation actions for the last self-sustaining wild western swamp turtle population Gerald Kuchling	Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions
11:10-11:25 Main Auditorium	Effect of cold-water pollution on the growth of juvenile <i>Emydura macquarii</i> Jacquie Bennett*	STUDENT University of New England



MAIN AUDITORIUM

Talks and keynote

11:30-12:05

SESSION 4 - ENGINEERING RECOVERY

Session chair: Ligia Pizzatto

11:30-11:45

Engineering solutions to turtle conservation: shifting away from constraints of the naturalistic fallacy

James U. Van Dyke
La Trobe University

11:45-12:00

Turtles on the Edge: Applied Research and Innovation for Threatened Freshwater Turtle Conservation

Ben Hoekstra and Keira McGrath
Burnett Mary Regional Group

12:00-12:05

Quarrying and potential risks to the Manning River Turtle Catchment

Jennifer Granger
Manning River Turtle Conservation

SPEED TALK

KEYNOTE | 12:05-12:55

What the river remembers

Turtles, treaties and the politics of water

Emma Carmondy

Commissioner for the River Murray - South Australia

After keynote Symposium group photo

Main Auditorium

12:55-2:25

Lunch

Downstairs Library
Displays, posters and workshop continue during lunch, including photo competition voting and silent auction bids.

DOWNSTAIRS LIBRARY

Lunch program

DISPLAY SESSION

TURTLE project - Biohaven and Basking Island installs and community events

Jennifer Munro
Northern and Yorke Landscape Board

The Unusual Pet Vets

Dr Amelia Cottle
Unusual Pet Vets

Australian Freshwater Turtle Art

Mikayla Durrant
WILD Conservation Pty Ltd

Turtle Tales from the West: Bibra Lake, Yellagonga, Albany

Joyce Gadalon, Ainsley Goldsack and Elly Nitschke
Walliabup Wildlife Warriors / Wetlands Conservation Society

Fox-proof fencing projects in the Lower Lakes

Jeff Whittaker
Strathalbyn Field Naturalists

POSTERS

Do Cane Toads pose a threat to the critically endangered Mary River turtle hatchlings?

Tina Ravenneau
Tiara and District Landcare Group

Beyond Nesting: Evaluating BioHaven Islands for Turtle Habitat, Biodiversity Enhancement and Pollutant Removal

Meg Shooter
Western Sydney University

The Keystone Repair Index: Prioritising Ecological Leverage Points for Wetland Restoration

Aliesha McIntosh
Western Sydney University

Duduroa Dhargal Aboriginal Corporation

Valda Murray
Duduroa Dhargal Aboriginal Corporation

BOARD ROOM WORKSHOP - WALK-INS WELCOME (MAX. 20)

Engaging Schools in Freshwater Turtle Conservation

Carla Eisemberg, Danielle White, Deborah Bower and Ricky Spencer

FIRST NATIONS SPACE - Main Auditorium - Reserved for First Nations only



MAIN AUDITORIUM

Finding and tracking

2:25-3:15

SESSION 3 - FINDING, TRACKING AND UNDERSTANDING

Session chair: Bethany Treglown

2:25-2:40

Tracking a Little-known Turtle: Post-release Movement of Captive-bred *Myuchelys purvisi*

STUDENT

Thong V. Pham*

Western Sydney University; Centre for Technology and Nature Conservation; VinUniversity College of Health Science

2:40-2:55

Five years on: evaluating assisted colonisation of a Critically Endangered freshwater turtle

Bethany Nordstrom

Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions

2:55-3:05

Finding Hidden Turtle Nests from Space

STUDENT

Andy M. Delvaux*
Flinders University

3:05-3:10

Monitoring turtles in the Mount Lofty Ranges - data input for management

SPEED TALK

Sylvia Zukowski

Nature Glenelg Trust

3:15-3:35

Afternoon tea

Posters and display tables downstairs in the Library

Main Auditorium

6:00-9:00

Turtles after Dark

Dinner and networking

Comedian host: Kevin Kropinyeri

Harry's Bar, 12-14 Grenfell Street, Adelaide SA 5000

Limited pre-booked event

MAIN AUDITORIUM

Turtle tales and perspectives

3:35-4:25

SESSION 2 - TURTLE TALES FROM THE NORTH

Session chair: Carla Eisemberg

3:35-3:50

Turtle Tales from the North: Food, Culture and Conservation

Carla Eisemberg

Charles Darwin University

3:50-4:05

When Underground Isn't Safe: Buffalo impacts on *Chelodina rugosa* subsurface refugia

STUDENT

Helen Truscott*

Charles Darwin University

4:05-4:20

Turtles in the Territory

Kane Durrant

WILD Conservation Pty Ltd

4:25-4:40

A Private Keeper's Perspective - Part 1: The Keeping

Andrew Rogers and Gavin Brown

Private Keepers

4:40-4:55

A Private Keeper's Perspective - Part 2: Beyond the Backyard Pond

Gavin Brown and Andrew Rogers

Private Keepers

4:55-5:10

The Symbolic Meaning of the Turtle

Susan J. Pollard

International Association of Jungian Analysts

5:10-5:20

Closing remarks

Information about dinner and Day 2.



8:30-8:35
Main Auditorium

Symposium opening - Day 2
Sylvia Clarke

8:35-8:40
Main Auditorium

Million turtles
Ricky Spencer

Intelligent EcoTransformations

PLENARY | 8:45-9:30 | MAIN AUDITORIUM

The secret lives of freshwater turtles and barriers to their conservation

Eric Nordberg

University of New England

9:30-10:15

SESSION 5 - TURTLES, PEOPLE AND PRACTICE

Session chair: Kane Durrant

9:30-9:45
Main Auditorium

Mary River Turtle Conservation: Thirty years through Integrated Catchment Management
Oliver Scully and Nathaniel Larsen

Mary River Catchment Coordinating Committee

9:45-9:55
Main Auditorium

Turtle Histories from the Murray-Darling
Wesley Smith*

STUDENT

La Trobe University

9:55-10:00

Main Auditorium

Increasing public awareness and education of threatened NSW Mid North Coast and Tablelands turtles
Stuart Johnson

Importance of community awareness raising - NSW

10:00-10:05
Main Auditorium

Paiwalla Wetland
Annie O'Connell

Wetland Habitats (Paiwalla) Assoc. Inc.

10:05-10:10
Main Auditorium

When did the turtle cross the road? Dynamic speed-limit signage for *Chelodina oblonga*
Atlanta Veld

10:15-10:40

Morning tea and networking

Main Auditorium



10:40-11:45

SESSION 6 - PREDATORS, NESTS AND THE JOURNEY TO WATER

Session chair: James U. Van Dyke

10:40-10:55

Main Auditorium

Once bitten, twice shy: teaching foxes not to eat turtle eggs

Ligia Pizzatto

La Trobe University

10:55-11:10

Main Auditorium

Quantifying predation risk hatchling freshwater turtles experience using 3D printed models

Christina Hunter*

La Trobe University

STUDENT

11:10-11:25

Main Auditorium

Turtle Islands - turtles, predators and bystanders

Graham Stockfeld

Turtles Australia Inc.

11:25-11:40

Main Auditorium

Turanggal at Lake Edward

Jazmin Bingham and Thomas Lovett

Burrambies Aboriginal Corporation and Nature Glenelg Trust

11:40-11:45

Main Auditorium

Reducing the number of foxes in the Paiwalla Wetlands

Mike Nicholls

Flinders University

11:45-1:00

SESSION 7 - PANEL AND CLOSING

Session chair: Mike

11:45-12:20

Main Auditorium

Symposium closing panel discussion

12:20-12:45

Main Auditorium

Future conferences

12:45-1:00

Main Auditorium

Student awards and closing

1:30-3:30

BioHaven launch field trip

Pinky Flat, Adelaide - Torrens River
Ricky Spencer
Limited places; pre-booking essential

4:30-6:30

Optional bar catch-up

Verandah Bar, upstairs at the Strathmore Hotel
129 North Terrace, Adelaide

