

CITY OF BELMONT

Turtle Tracker – Field Manual (SOSNT)

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City of Belmont

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Important Contacts

In the event of an emergency CALL 000.

Council Contact	Researcher Contact	WA Wildlife
Shania Hunt – Environmental Officer shania.hunt@belmont.wa.gov.au 9477 7295	Anthony Santoro SOSNT@murdoch.edu.au	172 Hope Rd, Bibra Lake 9417 7105 <i>If you find an injured turtle call WA Wildlife to find out where to take it.</i>

Volunteer Insurance

You **MUST** complete and sign the **DBCA volunteer registration** form at the conclusion of your 'Turtle Tracker' training session, indicating you have received all required health and safety information. The SOSNT staff will submit the completed forms to DBCA. This is a legal requirement as part of the insurance being provided.

Step by Step Guide

Getting Started

Ensure that you:

- ✓ Downloaded the TurtleSAT app and register an account
- ✓ Have your mobile phone, hat and water bottle.
- ✓ Have your Turtle Trackers Pack with the following:
 - High visibility vest & gloves
 - Disposal bags
 - Mesh square & tent peg
 - Information sheets & pen:
 - Job Safety Analysis (JSA)
 - Shift Summary note pad to tally your sightings during every shift
- ✓ Have notified a family member where you are going if you are volunteering alone.
- ✓ Are wearing appropriate clothing (long trousers, long sleeved shirt, hat, wet weather gear).



General Advice

1. Keep as much distance as possible and try to stay behind the turtle. This will allow the female turtle to continue her nesting journey with as little disturbance as possible; reducing the chance she will abort the nesting attempt.
2. Try to avoid picking the turtle up until she has completed nesting. When nesting female turtles are picked up they will generally void their bladder water and abort the nesting attempt. If safe to do so allow the female turtle to cross any road by herself rather than picking her up. Do not attempt to stop the traffic.
3. In case of mass nesting event, a text will be sent out to volunteers asking for help!

Shift Summary Report

Scan QR code on shift summary note pad at the end of every shift. Enter the total numbers for that shift and click SUBMIT. This data contributes to knowledge and conservation of the species. It is also essential to submit accurate and timely records of volunteering time to ensure insurance cover applies and your hours count toward volunteer rewards.

For more information visit <https://www.dbca.wa.gov.au/parks-and-wildlifeservice/volunteering-with-parks-and-wildlife>

Project Location

The turtle tracking will take place within Tomato Lake, Belmont. A site map can be found below with amenities and previous nesting locations.



When a Turtle is Located

1. Observe the turtle from a distance.
2. Record sighting or nesting using the TurtleSAT app.
3. Take a photo of the turtle that includes the surrounding environment of its initial location.

Turtles Moving Towards Wetland

Monitor turtle from a distance of at least 10m until it safely enters water, protecting from predators such as birds. If turtle needs assistance, using gloves provided, pick up the turtle and take it as close to the water as possible.

Turtles Moving away from Wetland

Monitor turtle from a distance of at least 10m until it nests (or returns safely to wetland). Protect from predators such as birds.

Nesting Females

1. Once a turtle begins nesting, record the location of the nest in TurtleSAT.
2. Once turtle has finished nesting, protect the nest as described below.
3. Monitor your turtle as she returns to water safely, assist in protecting her where necessary.

How to Protect a Turtle Nest

Using the **equipment** provided (1x Mesh square (50x50cm, with 25mm holes), 4-8 tent pegs) follow the steps below:

1. Place the mesh over the nest, with the nest centred.
2. Insert the pegs to hold the mesh in place. If only 4 pegs, place at corners of mesh. If more pegs, also place 1 about halfway along each side. When inserting pegs into soil, ensure they are angled outwards to avoid damaging any buried eggs and completely underground to avoid trip hazards or pegs being removed.
3. Secure mesh as flat and close to the ground surface as possible.
4. Cover mesh with <1 cm layer of soil, leaf litter, grass etc.
5. Remember to record the nest as protected in TurtleSAT, with a photo of the location if possible.

Turtle Handling

Grasp the turtle from behind with your hand between the back legs (palm over tail, thumb on top of shell and fingers underneath) and support the head with your other hand if necessary. Hold the animal away from your body. This way you avoid the hind legs that may cause minor scratches by their small claws. Holding the turtle away from your body will also avoid any bodily secretions from the turtle.



Photo credit: Vicky Hartill

If a Relatively Fresh Dead Turtle is Located

Using gloves place dead turtle in plastic bag and call WA Wildlife (ph 9417 7105) for advice on the nearest Wildlife Centre. If you are near Bibra Lake you can take it directly to WA Wildlife (172 Hope Road, Bibra Lake) where they will check if any viable eggs are present for incubation.

Using Mesh to Protect a Turtle Nest from Predation

Equipment required:

- 1x Mesh square (50x50cm, with 25mm holes)
 - 4-8 pegs
1. Place the mesh over the nest, with the nest centred.
 2. Insert the pegs to hold the mesh in place. If only 4 pegs, place at corners of mesh. If more pegs, also place 1 about halfway along each side. When inserting pegs into soil, ensure they are angled outwards to avoid damaging any buried eggs and completely underground to avoid trip hazards or pegs being removed.
 3. Secure mesh as flat and close to the ground surface as possible.
 4. Try to cover mesh with <1 cm layer or soil, leaf litter, grass etc to camouflage the mesh.
 5. Remember to record the nest as 'protected' in TurtleSAT, with a photo of the location if possible.

Step 1



Step 2



Step 3



Step 4



Volunteer Code of Conduct



Department of Biodiversity,
Conservation and Attractions



Volunteer Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct guides behaviour and decision making. Applicable to all volunteers assisting the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions Parks and Wildlife Service (DBCA), it outlines principles of acceptable behaviour, acknowledging the role as Parks and Wildlife Service volunteers.

Parks and Wildlife Service adopts as the foundation of its Code of Conduct the principles of the Western Australian Public Sector Code of Ethics and the department's values, as follows:

Personal integrity

We act with care and diligence and make decisions that are honest, fair, impartial, and timely and consider all relevant information.

Relationships with others

We treat people with respect, courtesy and sensitivity and recognise their interests, rights, safety, and welfare.

Accountability

We use the resources of the State in a responsible and accountable manner that ensures the efficient, effective, and appropriate use of human, natural, financial and physical resources, property and information.

Environmental responsibility

We are passionate and relish our responsibility to care for and protect the natural environment. This often entails taking a long-term perspective, building and sharing scientific knowledge, and working with other agencies, communities and stakeholders. We know we cannot do this alone and are motivated to partner with and empower others.

Work ethic

We believe that persistence, dedication, and a realistic perspective are important to ensure responsive environmental and conservation outcomes. We are innovative and progressive, showing courage, initiative, and creativity in our responsibilities, in partnership with the community.

Teamwork

We value and rely on each other to be safe and to work effectively across the diverse lands, waters and activities that we manage across the State.

In volunteering with DBCA, it is your obligation to be aware of our purpose and values and ensure that these are always reflected in our behaviour. By registering as a DBCA volunteer, you must be familiar with the Code of Conduct and sign off on its provisions via the volunteer registration form.

The full version of Parks and Wildlife Service's Code of Conduct is available to view or download here: https://www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/images/documents/about/working/code_of_conduct.pdf

Job Safety Analysis (JSA)

Supported by



Research partnership



Partnership with



Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions



JOB SAFETY ANALYSIS

Region or District: Bibra Lake

Date: 30/08/2021

Job: Turtle Tracker

Location of job: ☒ Field

Job description: Track nesting female turtles existing at Bibra Lake, log sightings of turtles and nests. Help install nest cages to protect hatchlings if needed.

☐ Workshop

Manager approval: Chris Beaton – Acting Manager Parks & Environment

☐ Office

CB Beaton

☐ Other (please specify)

Volunteer:

PPE Required



Head Protection

☐



Ear Protection

☐



Safety Glasses

☐



Protective Clothing

☐



High Vis Clothing/Neck

☒



Hand Protection

☐



Foot Protection

☒

Other, please specify

Training Required

Relevant Procedures or Guidelines

Job breakdown List the main steps involved in the job	Potential hazards Identify the hazard associated with each step	Initial risk rating Assign each hazard a risk rating using the matrix below	Control measures Try to eliminate the hazard, if that is not possible use substitution, engineering, isolation and administrative controls	Revised risk rating Reassess the risk now controls are in place.
Track nesting female turtles existing at Bibra Lake	Walking through bush tracks: Slips, trips and falls-uneven ground Cuts/abrasions, lacerations, fractures	HIGH	Move slowly, keep to cleared path where possible, ensure appropriate PPE (footwear, long pants) are worn	LOW
	Insect and other fauna (snakes) bites & stings	HIGH	Ensure appropriate PPE is worn. Carry a personal First Aid Kit if available. Apply appropriate first aid to type of bite/sting. In case of snake bite call 000 immediately.	LOW
	Effects of warm weather – dehydration, heat exhaustion	MEDIUM	Suggest appropriate clothing to wear and need to carry water/supply water. Make provision for shelter when affected by extreme conditions.	LOW
	Crossing road: traffic incidents Cuts/abrasions, lacerations, fractures, falls-uneven ground.	MEDIUM	Follow WA Road Laws. Do not stop traffic and put yourself in danger.	LOW
	Working in bushland. Branches at eye height	HIGH	Advise of risk and need to be cautious and aware of this issue. Stick to cleared managed pathways if possible.	LOW
	Covid-19	LOW	Follow current Covid-19 guidelines https://www.health.wa.gov.au/coronavirus	LOW
Track nesting female turtles existing at Bibra Lake, while riding a bike, scooter or other similar mode of transport.	Travelling over bush tracks: Slips, trips and falls-uneven ground Cuts/abrasions, lacerations, fractures	HIGH	Move slowly, keep to path where possible, and ensure appropriate PPE (helmet, long sleeves and long pants, closed shoes) are worn. Ensure machine is in good condition and rider is confident and has experience riding a bike.	LOW
Help install nest cages to protect hatchlings	Tools and equipment-use. Bodily injury from incorrect use of tools / equipment	HIGH	Training in correct technique for use, demonstrate safe carrying of equipment, ensure appropriate PPE is worn	LOW
	Covid-19	LOW	Follow current Covid-19 guidelines https://www.health.wa.gov.au/coronavirus	LOW
Pick up turtle and return to wetland	Bites & scratches.	HIGH	Training in correct technique. Ensure appropriate PPE is worn (gloves and long sleeve shirts) Apply appropriate first aid to type of bite/scratch	LOW
Pick up dead turtle for research	Insect and other fauna (snakes) bites & stings.	HIGH	Ensure appropriate PPE is worn. Carry a personal First Aid Kit if available. Apply appropriate first aid to type of bite/sting. In case of snake bite call 000 immediately.	LOW

All personnel involved in the job need to write and sign their name below to confirm they have read, understood and agree to the instructions outlined in this JSA. This JSA is valid for one year. This JSA needs to be reviewed when the task changes, following a near-miss or incident, or annually if the task has not changed.

Review date: 30/08/2022

RISK MATRIX

Use the matrix below to determine a risk rating for each hazard involved in the job.

Likelihood	Consequence				
	Insignificant No treatment required; ≤\$10,000 damage.	Minor First aid treatment required; ≥\$10,000 to <\$50,000 damage.	Moderate Medical treatment required; ≥\$50,000 to <\$250,000 damage.	Major Extensive injuries; permanent disability or impairment; ≥\$250,000 to <\$1 million damage.	Catastrophic Loss of life; ≥\$1 million damage.
Very likely The event is expected to occur in most circumstances; more than once per year.	MEDIUM	HIGH	EXTREME	EXTREME	EXTREME
Likely The event will probably occur in most circumstances; at least once per year.	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH	EXTREME	EXTREME
Possible The event should occur at some time; at least once in 3 years.	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH	HIGH	EXTREME
Unlikely The event could occur at some time; at least once in 5 years.	LOW	LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	HIGH
Highly unlikely The event may occur only in exceptional circumstances; less than once in 5 years.	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	MEDIUM

Risk Rating

Low

Medium

High

Extreme

Risk Acceptance Criteria

Risk acceptable.

Risk may be acceptable with adequate controls.

Risk only acceptable with effective controls.

Risk not acceptable. Implement effective controls and seek approval from manager or supervisor before undertaking task.

In cases where it is not possible to reduce the risk rating to *low*, it is important to ensure effective controls are in place to reduce the risk as much as is reasonably possible.

CONTROL THE RISK

Try to control the hazard by:

- Eliminating it
- Finding a safer alternative
- Isolating the hazard from people using barriers or guards
- Considering relevant policies, guidelines and procedures, training requirements, signage and communication
- Using PPE

Use as many controls as you feel is necessary to effectively reduce the risk of injury.

Consider whether the controls:

- Could introduce any new hazards
- Would reduce the risk injury



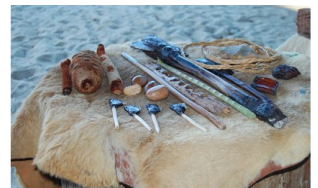
Working together to care for Country

The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) acknowledges Aboriginal people as the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters it manages.

The State Government made significant amendments in 2011 to the Conservation and Land Management Act 1984 (CALM Act) relating to the involvement of Aboriginal people in the management of lands and waters vested with the Conservation and Parks Commission and managed by the department.

The amendments recognise Aboriginal connection to lands and waters and enables Aboriginal people to become more involved in managing Country and using parks and reserves for customary activities. These changes support the department's desire to build strong enduring relationships with Aboriginal people and have put in place a range of strategies, policies and programs that support these commitments.

All individuals, including volunteers, who undertake work by the department must follow and put in place practises to meet these outcomes. Therefore, in your role as a volunteer, it is important to gain an awareness of these important obligations and be aware how your role may impact Aboriginal people and their cultural heritage values.



Joint management

DBCA is strongly committed to involving Aboriginal people in managing land and sea through joint management arrangements.

This is done by:

- ✦ building partnerships
- ✦ working together to make decisions involving land management
- ✦ input into planning and management of country.

Joint management provides the opportunity for the department and Aboriginal people to care for country together. Currently we are working with 30 traditional owner groups throughout the state. This will increase in the future as the department aims to implement more joint management partnerships.

Valuing heritage and culture

DBCA's second management objective is to 'manage the value of the land to the culture and heritage of Aboriginal people'. This is a statutory obligation which the department follows to support cultural obligations.

This means that all work done on lands and waters managed by DBCA, including by volunteers, must respect and consider Aboriginal cultural values, providing opportunity for Aboriginal people to ensure their culture and heritage is protected now and into the future

Cultural heritage

Aboriginal people are spiritually connected to sites of significance, which belong in the landscape. It provides evidence of the lives and existence of Aboriginal people before European settlement though to the present.

Aboriginal cultural heritage is dynamic and may comprise of physical (tangible) or nonphysical (intangible) elements. The physical or tangible can be artefacts, art sites, ceremonial or burial grounds. Intangible elements include peoples' memories, storylines, ceremonies, language.

Heritage can also include more contemporary and/or historical elements such as old mission buildings, massacre sites and cemeteries.

Reconciliation Action Plan 2018-2020

[Reconciliation Australia](http://www.reconciliation.org.au) is an independent, national not-for-profit organization promoting reconciliation by building relationships, respect and trust between the wider Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Through the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program, organisations develop business plans that document what they will do to contribute to reconciliation. DBCA has developed a RAP which was launched in 2018. The plan sets out how the department will strengthen its relationships with Aboriginal Australians and is a tool for cultural change. It details specific actions, responsibilities and timelines to ensure objectives are met.

More information on DBCA's RAP can be found here - <https://www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/images/documents/parks/aboriginal-involvement/Reconciliation%20Act%20Plan%202018.pdf>

Customary activities

The ability to carry out cultural activities on country is an important part of Aboriginal culture and connection to the land. Recent changes to the law have extended opportunities for Aboriginal people to access department-managed lands and waters to carry out customary activities.

The legislation gives Aboriginal people the ability to maintain culture, identity and to meet cultural obligations under traditional law.

To learn more about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements, visit the Share Our Pride website: <http://shareourpride.reconciliation.org.au>.

If you have any questions on DBCA's cultural and heritage work, please contact the Aboriginal Engagement and Heritage Unit manager Rhonda Murphy via Rhonda.Murphy@dbca.wa.gov.au

