



## Kimberley Land Council

### MEDIA RELEASE

#### **Crocodile management top priority for Kimberley rangers**

Increases in crocodile numbers and reports of aggressive behaviour have led Kimberley Land Council rangers to make crocodile management their top priority, to ensure public safety and awareness.

In June there were 10 sightings of large crocodiles near Beagle Bay in 14 days including reports of a crocodile stalking fishermen and a the discovery of about five baby hatchlings.

To ensure public awareness and safety, the Nyul Nyul and Bardi Jawi Rangers from the Dampier Peninsula and the Nyikina Mangala Rangers from the Fitzroy Valley are working with the Department of Parks and Wildlife to create local area crocodile management plans.

As part of their research the ranger groups met up with the Dhimmuru Rangers, who travelled from the Gove Peninsula to Beagle Bay, to share their knowledge and experience on managing crocodile populations in the Northern Territory.

Nyul Nyul Ranger Yoshi Akune, whose group hosted the exchange, said it was great to share knowledge about the similarities and differences in crocodile management between the groups.

“We shared ideas and talked about which strategies work better. It was also great to hear about how the Dhimmuru Rangers had gone about educating the public. Making sure locals and especially tourists are aware of sightings and follow warning signs will be a really important part of our management plan,” he said.

Mr Akune said the Kimberley ranger groups were focusing on collecting data about crocodile sightings and were calling on community members to notify them of all sightings.

“We have been relying on the community to keep us informed; and so far they have been really great in giving us information on the date, time, size, location and behaviour so we can track all the data,” he said.

“We’ve also been doing patrols and in the last year we have trapped two crocodiles and relocated them to the Malcolm Douglas Wilderness Park. Trapping and relocating crocs doesn’t guarantee an area is going to be free from crocs but it is something we are looking at doing more of.”

Kimberley Ranger groups have been working closely with the WA Department of Parks and Wildlife to trap and relocate crocodiles in the area, but also to start to develop a West Kimberley Croc Management Plan to guide future strategies to ensure public safety.

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**Croc breakout box – Nyikina Mangala rangers hunt rogue croc**

The Nyikina Mangala Rangers are on the hunt for a rogue crocodile that has been causing problems at a popular camping area on the Fitzroy River.

The Kimberley Land Council facilitated rangers and the Department of Parks and Wildlife have set up a trap along the river with the aim of trapping the crocodile so it can be relocated to Malcolm Douglas Wilderness Park.

Nyikina Mangala Ranger Kimberley Watson said a crocodile in the area had recently snatched a pet dog and shown aggression to the public.

“This is a really popular area for fishing and camping, so our number one priority is to ensure people’s safety,” he said.

“We set up the trap on the banks of the river and baited it with a barramundi in the hope of luring the croc into the trap, so we can then relocate it.

“Over the past few years we have been receiving increased reports of aggressive and territorial saltwater crocodiles in the Fitzroy River. People need to remember that this is their natural habitat and we should respect these powerful predators at all times.”