

What You Can Do to Help

- Look out for turtles on roads and paths surrounding wetlands, particularly between the breeding season of September and February, to avoid running them over.
- For advice on assisting turtles to find their way safely back to the wetlands, see Department of Environment and Conservation *Fauna Notes: Oblong turtle and exotic red-eared slider turtle No. 37* at www.dec.wa.gov.au
- WildCare can be contacted for help with injured or orphaned turtles. Phone the WildCare Helpline on **9474 9055**.
- Report fox sightings to the Department of Environment and Conservation Regional Parks Branch **9219 9290**.
- Report turtle poaching to the Department of Environment and Conservation Nature Protection Branch **9334 0292**.
- Contact TurtleWatch at info@aaeewa.org.au to assist with turtle research.
- Avoid allowing pollutants (such as fertilisers and detergents) to enter stormwater drains that are linked to neighbouring wetlands.
- Use mains and bore water efficiently to avoid the drying out of the wetlands.



Information sourced from: Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) Fauna Notes No. 37; Perth Zoo; DET Turtle Warriors; Department of Water - Water Facts WF2; Giles, J / Friends of Yellagonga Regional Park; ClimateWatch / TurtleWatch

The Oblong Turtle of Yellagonga Regional Park

Protecting Wildlife in Yellagonga



The Oblong Turtle

The Oblong Turtle (*Chelodina oblonga*), also known as the Long-necked Turtle, is the only local native turtle species found in the Yellagonga Regional Park wetlands.

The Oblong Turtle gets its name from its appearance as it has an oblong shaped shell (carapace) and a long neck. The neck is almost as long as its shell and its full length can reach about 50cm.

This turtle feeds on fish, frogs and macroinvertebrates (animals with no backbone such as insects, crustaceans, snails and worms). The turtle hatchlings may also eat aquatic plants, mosquito larvae and midge which can help control potential nuisance midge outbreaks.



Threats to the Oblong Turtle

A number of impacts threaten the Oblong Turtle populations within the Yellagonga wetlands including:

Road Traffic and Loss of Habitat

As turtles instinctively nest some distance away from the water's edge, many are killed while crossing roads situated close to the wetlands. Oblong Turtles are at risk when the female travels to nest and when the turtle hatchlings travel back to the water from their nesting site. Turtles are not easily seen by motorists because they are small and dark.

Increased development around wetlands leads to fragmented and reduced habitat for turtles.



Predation and Poaching

Predation from feral animals is a major threat to Oblong Turtles. Foxes prey on turtles particularly turtle eggs. Other predators include ravens, birds of prey, cats and dogs. The poaching of turtles for illegal pets is also a threat.

Poor Water Quality

High nutrient levels (nitrogen and phosphorous) and heavy metals (e.g. magnesium, mercury and copper) affect the water quality of urbanised wetlands such as those within Yellagonga Regional Park. Turtles may ingest, inhale and absorb polluted water. Turtle shells heavily covered in algae are a sign of high levels of nutrients in the water.

Drying Climate

The drying of wetlands affects turtle populations as female turtles do not tend to reproduce as frequently in dry conditions. Turtle populations are less likely to survive in dry, polluted habitats.

