



South Western Snake-Necked Turtle

Booyi

Chelodina oblonga

The South Western Snake-Necked Turtle is the only native freshwater turtle that lives in Perth. You might know them as the long-necked turtle or the oblong turtle and they probably live in a wetland near you.

Did you know:

- Adult South Western Snake-Necked Turtles are underwater apex predators of wetlands
- They are estimated to live for 30-40 years
- Female turtles leave the wetland and travel up to 800m (average 70m) to nest during spring and summer (peaking September-November)
- They can survive dry conditions by burrowing into mud or leaves and living off stored body fats (aestivation)
- They are listed as a “near threatened” species

Threats:

- Cars and predation
 - When females leave the wetland to nest they are in danger of being attacked by dogs, cats, birds, and foxes, and being hit by cars on roads. Hatchlings face the same dangers returning to the water
- Land clearing and development
- Climate change
 - Wetlands are drier or may take longer to fill up forcing extended aestivation, missed breeding seasons, and potential starvation
 - Changes in weather conditions impact timing of breeding, nesting, and hatching
 - Less rain may increase the risk of predation during nesting season. Rain provides a level of protection to nesting females and eggs by dispersing scent trails and disguising soil disturbance around nests hiding evidence from predators.
- Poaching and illegal removal of turtles from lakes
- Pollution of wetlands from stormwater runoff



Commonly asked questions:

Q: I've found an injured turtle what should I do?

A: If you find a dead or injured turtle please contact the WA Wildlife Hospital on 9417 7105 (172 Hope Road, Bibra Lake)

Q: What should I do if I see a turtle on a road?

A: If you find a turtle on the road and have time, please wait and watch it to see that it makes its way across safely. Minimal interference is best. If you think it is in danger of being hit by a car, you can carry it to the other side of the road in the direction it is heading. They do have sharp claws on their feet and are likely to release the contents of their bowels, so best to pick it up with both hands (placing your fingers under the shell and your thumbs on top of the shell) and hold it securely but away from your body.

Q: What if I don't have time to wait for the turtle to get to safety or want to make sure it can cross back over when it's done nesting?

A: Take note of the turtle's location, contact City of Melville Council on 9364 0666 and request to talk to the Natural Areas Community Officer who can direct one of our volunteer Turtle Trackers to go out and ensure the turtle is safe and able to get back to the wetland after laying its eggs.

Q: A turtle has laid eggs in my yard and I'd like to make sure the eggs are protected, what should I do?

A: Please contact City of Melville Council on 9364 0666 and request to talk to the Natural Areas Community Officer who can organise mesh to be placed over the nest.

Q: I've found some hatchlings, should I take them to the wetland?

A: Yes, you can take hatchlings to the nearest wetland.

