

Media Release:

4.11.08

Second Crocodile Caught in Katherine River

Northern Territory Parks and Wildlife Service have recently captured a 2m crocodile from the Katherine River at Ballongilly Farm – the second saltwater crocodile caught in the last fortnight.

Department of Natural Resources, Environment, The Arts and Sport (NRETAS) senior scientist Dr Anne Walters said the warmer weather is resulting in the increased activity of crocodiles.

“Now that the weather has warmed up the trapping efforts by our wildlife officers are coming to fruition,” Dr Walters said.

“Traps are permanently set up during the dry season throughout the Katherine River and if public sightings are received additional traps are also put in place.

“The crocodile captured at Ballongilly Farm on Saturday 1 November was caught in one of the permanent traps which NRETAS wildlife officers check and re-bait continually.

Dr Walters said crocodile management is a priority for staff in the region, and the recent captures highlights the successful efforts of the wildlife management team.

“Crocodile traps throughout the Katherine River are monitored by three Katherine based Parks and Wildlife Officers,” Dr Walters said.

“Darwin based ranger Tom Nichols has commenced training in spotlighting and harpooning techniques with local staff in Katherine, which will further enhance skills in crocodile management.”

Dr Walters said it is important that the public remain aware that estuarine (saltwater) crocodiles can inhabit waters throughout the Darwin and Katherine regions of the Northern Territory, including freshwater rivers and billabongs.

“There are signs throughout all public sections of the Katherine River advising the public that both saltwater and freshwater crocodiles inhabit the area,” Dr Walters said.

“Traps are removed once the wet season starts and the water level in the Katherine River rises, so the public must remain particularly vigilant during this time.”

Members of the public are encouraged to report estuarine crocodile sightings to Parks and Wildlife on 8973 8888.

Ends

Media Note – for more information contact Anne Walters on 8995 5007

Image - Parks and Wildlife Service Officers Tom Nichols, Robert Risk and Michelle Foate with the crocodile captured in the Katherine River at Ballongilly Farm

Issued: 9.15am Wednesday, 5 November 2008