

fact sheet

FITZROY RIVER TURTLE

(*Rheodytes leukops*)



SPECIES FACTS:

- Listed as 'vulnerable' in Queensland and nationally
- First discovered in 1980
- Grows to a length of 25cm
- Medium to dark brown in colour with white ring around eyes (silver-blue in juveniles)
- Adults have distinct rough parallel ridges on shell and conical lumps on neck
- Juveniles up to 95mm have distinctive serrated edge on their shells similar to snapping turtle juveniles
- Found only in the Fitzroy Basin
- Prefers riffle zones, and fast flowing water with rock, gravel, or sandy bottoms
- Is often referred to as a 'bum-breathing turtle', as it can breathe through its bottom



Close up of head and neck. Note the tubercles on the neck.

UNDER THREAT FROM:

- Nest predation
- Loss of habitat due to stream bank disturbance
- Nest trampling
- Decline in water quality



Turtle hatching - note the black "dog-like" nose and caruncle (egg tooth)



The Fitzroy River turtle egg is the smallest of these six Australian freshwater turtle eggs

Hatchling posture showing cloacal respiration through gaping cloaca.



HOW CAN YOU HELP?

- Replant local species on degraded creek banks
- Fence riparian vegetation to control grazing
- Minimise run-off of agricultural chemicals
- Control feral and domestic animals
- Report any sightings to the Environment Protection Agency




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FITZROY BASIN ASSOCIATION

Photos courtesy of - Dr. Col Limpus
- Craig Latta - AFTCRA Inc.

To report any sightings, contact the Environment Protection Agency
FITZROY BASIN ASSOCIATION ON (07) 4999 2800 OR
GREENING AUSTRALIA QUEENSLAND ON (07) 4923 7543