

# CROC FACT SHEET



## 1 How long have crocodiles been around for?

Modern crocodiles have been around for a little more than 100 million years, but their ancestors first appeared nearly 240 million years ago.

## 2 How old can a crocodile get?

Saltwater crocodiles can live over 70 years and grow to an average of between 4 and 5 metres in length. The longest confirmed crocodile in the NT came from the Mary River in the mid-1980s and measured 6.2 metres.

## 3 How much does a crocodile weigh?

Baby crocodiles weigh as little as 60 grams, but large adults can weigh more than 15,000 times this! On average, however, wild adults up to 5 metres in length weigh between 400 and 500 kilograms.

## 4 How many crocodiles live in Australia?

There are approximately 150,000 saltwater crocodiles across northern Australia and at least 100,000 freshwater crocodiles.

## 5 Which waterway has the highest density of crocodiles?

Most rivers contain an average of five crocodiles per kilometre, but the Mary River in the Northern Territory contains an average of nearly 15 crocodiles per kilometre, making it the river with the highest density.

## 6 What is it about a crocodile that makes it a great movie star?

Crocodiles both frighten and fascinate people with their stealthy nature and ability to learn patterns, and their lightning fast strike. Their prominent teeth and the cunning expression of their jaw line, however, is probably what puts them front and centre on the big screen.

## 7 How many eggs can a female crocodile lay in her lifetime?

All female crocodiles can lay up to an average of 50 eggs nearly each year. That's a possible 2000 eggs in a lifetime! In a healthy population less than 1 percent of the eggs, however, will survive to reach maturity.

## 8 When is breeding season?

Saltwater crocodiles have a long breeding season. Adults start mating in September each year, and from November through to April the females lay their eggs in nests of long grasses, mud and leaves on the banks of freshwater creeks and swamps. Freshwater crocodiles have a short breeding season. Adults mate in July and August and from mid August to mid September females lay eggs in holes dug in the sand banks of freshwater rivers.



## 12 What do crocodiles eat?

Crocodiles are opportunistic predators and will catch and eat just about anything. Their digestive system is capable of breaking down bones and shell, but can't easily digest plants, hair, nails or hard insect parts.

## 13 How good is a crocodile's sense of smell?

Crocodiles can smell food and water from hundreds of metres, possibly kilometres, away and can locate food in the grass through smell alone.

## 14 How long can crocodiles hold their breath?

A large adult crocodile can hold its breath for nearly a couple of hours if it needs to.

## 15 Crocodiles live in muddy rivers and billabongs, how do they resist infection?

Crocodiles have an extremely powerful immune system and are able to fight virtually any bacteria found in the wild. They become susceptible to disease, however, if they are stressed, especially if they are low down in the crocodile social hierarchy.

This fact sheet was created with the help of Dr. Adam Britton, Big Gecko / crocodilian.com

## 9 How fast can crocodiles swim/run?

Most crocodiles can swim around 10kph and can run up to 11kph in short bursts. Freshwater crocodiles have been recorded galloping at 17kph! In comparison, a fit human can run at 25kph.

## 10 Can crocodiles strike underwater?

Crocodiles strike underwater even when they can't see as they have sensory organs that line their jaws and inside their mouth and can feel pressure changes in the water. They must, however, lift their head above the water to swallow their food.

## 11 How strong is a crocodile bite?

Crocodiles have up to 68 teeth in their jaw which replenish constantly and can bite down with more than 2 tonnes of pressure.



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