

Turtles



Turtle embayment area at Eraring Power Station inlet canal

Turtle species

There are seven types of marine turtles in the world. The six species found in Australian waters are the:

- Green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*);
- Flatback turtle (*Natator depressus*);
- Hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricate*);
- Leatherback turtle (*Dermochelys coriacaes*);
- Loggerhead turtle (*Caretta caretta*); and
- Olive Ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea*).



Release of tagged turtle

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Green turtles in Lake Macquarie

Green turtles are a protected species of marine turtle commonly seen in Lake Macquarie, which can make their way into the Eraring Power Station inlet canal.

Although the canal is a man-made environment, it acts as a safe haven for the turtles by protecting them from boats and fishermen.

Eraring Energy is committed to protecting these special creatures, and works with organisations such as the Native Animal Trust, Taronga Zoo, the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service and other experts to develop plans and policies to manage turtles in the canal.

A number of structures have been removed from the inlet canal to ensure healthy turtles can return to the lake of their own accord. Eraring Energy also constructed a turtle embayment area in the inlet canal based on the advice of an international



Green turtle relocated from the Eraring Power Station inlet canal

turtle expert, Dr Colin Limpus, from the Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service. The embayment area provides a place for the turtles to rest and warm up in the colder weather, and also offers a safe access point for trained Eraring Energy staff to capture turtles that are sick or injured.

Eraring Energy has a licence from the National Parks and Wildlife Service to remove, tag and relocate the turtles. Turtles are removed when their health or safety is assessed as being at risk. When this occurs, the Eraring Energy Environment

team record important information about the turtles, such as size and weight. This information is logged in the Marine Fauna Management Database managed by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service. As little is known about the turtles, the information gathered helps experts to develop conservation strategies for the species. The turtles are also tagged so they can be recognised if encountered again.

Further information about marine turtles can be found on the Department of Environment and Heritage website: <http://www.deh.gov.au/coasts/species/turtles/>