



# Newsletter

Edition 4 - November 2004



Green Tree Frog  
(*Litoria careulea*)

## NT Parks & Conservation Masterplan: Consultation & Planning Progress

**The release of the final NT Parks and Conservation Masterplan has been extended from December 2004 to April 2005.**

During the initial consultation period involving meetings, presentations and the release of various issue papers, it became clear that an extension was required to allow more time to research and resolve the many issues across the stakeholder groups.

The public response to the release of various issue papers has been good, with 20 formal submissions and various requests for further information or offers of assistance.

Current consultations continue to prove positive. The NT Cattlemen's Association and Parks and Wildlife have entered into an agreement to contract a consultant with the relevant expertise and experience to develop a strategy for biodiversity conservation for pastoral lands. The conservation strategy is scheduled for completion in December 2004.

Consultation with the Northern Territory Tourism Commission (NTTC) and the tourism industry led to tourism industry workshops being held in Darwin, Katherine and Alice Springs. For further information on the outcomes of these workshops, see the tourism article overleaf.

A recent draft *2004 Biogeographic Regions Report* was completed by Parks

and Wildlife scientists. The report provides on a bioregional basis - a comprehensive analysis of the Territory's biodiversity, tenure, reservation, land use, management issues and special values. The 2004 Biogeographic Regions Report will be released as a supplement report to the NT Parks and Conservation Masterplan document in April 2005.

The Masterplan is currently being drafted by Parks and Wildlife planners, in consultation with relevant stakeholders and utilising feedback already received in response to the issue papers.

You will be kept informed of the Masterplanning process via the NT Parks and Conservation Masterplan website, newsletters and advertising.

For more information on the consultation or planning process, please contact the Masterplan Project Officer on 1800 813 337 or email [ParksMasterPlan@nt.gov.au](mailto:ParksMasterPlan@nt.gov.au).

### Web Forum

To subscribe to the NT Parks Masterplan web forum or to view the latest updates, please visit our website at [www.parksmasterplan.nt.gov.au](http://www.parksmasterplan.nt.gov.au)

### Contact Us

Individuals or groups wishing to meet to discuss relevant issues can contact our regional planners or contact the Parks Masterplan Project Officer on 1800 813 337 or email [ParksMasterPlan@nt.gov.au](mailto:ParksMasterPlan@nt.gov.au).

Billby  
(*Macrotis lagotis*)



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NT Parks and Conservation  
Masterplan Newsletter

## Tourism in Northern Territory Parks

**Parks and Wildlife planners are exploring ways to enhance tourism and recreational opportunities through providing a diverse range of experiences and activities in NT parks. The aim is to create a unique tourism experience, that differs from what the rest of Australia currently offers.**

Tourism brings significant benefits to parks including visitor enjoyment and education, cultivation of a conservation ethic, capacity to promote cultural values, enhanced public support for parks, employment and regional economic development. Tourism can provide a mechanism to support conservation and cultural values through educating visitors, providing a revenue source and also human resources to manage sites.

Park visitor activities are wide ranging and include passive recreational activities such as nature appreciation through to more active pursuits such as climbing, abseiling, fishing and four-wheel driving.

Activities within parks need to be managed in ways that minimise impacts to natural and cultural values and impacts on other park users. Finding ways to maximise the benefits of recreation and tourism whilst minimising their possible side effects is the goal of managing park based recreation and tourism, requiring a joint effort by land owners/

*The Territory's Park System is the primary drawcard for Tourism in the Northern Territory.*

managers and the tourism industry.

The NT Government firmly believes that if tourism is developed with the interests of Indigenous people and natural heritage in mind, tourism will support the long-term sustainability of the Territory's cultural and natural assets.

The cultural dimensions of a park refer to Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultural values.

Tourism can provide benefits to local Indigenous interests by providing opportunities to educate visitors about Indigenous beliefs and traditional associations with the land. It can provide opportunities for employment and income generation and contribute to community development. Indigenous people have also identified that tourism can play a large part in reviving their traditions and beliefs.

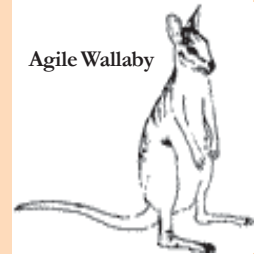
### **Tourism Workshops**

The aim of the workshops was to discuss tourism development and the Park Estate in relation to the development of the Masterplan.

The attached table provides a snapshot of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that were raised in the regional workshops.



Gum Nuts



Agile Wallaby



Frillneck Lizard

## Draft Masterplan - Consultation Plan

**It is anticipated that the draft Masterplan will be released for public comment early in 2005.**

The draft will be made available on the Masterplan website or to obtain a written or electronic copy on CD please contact the Masterplan Project Officer on 1800 813 337.

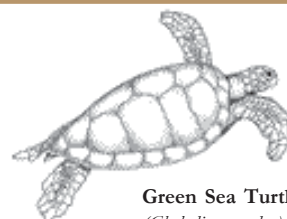
The public consultation plan for the release of the draft Masterplan will include:

- Media Releases
- Newspaper Advertising
- Radio Advertising
- Information Fliers
- Public Meetings
- Advertising on the Website

There will be an 8 - 12 week period from the release date in which the public will be invited to provide comment.

All comments regarding the draft will be carefully considered in the final development of the Masterplan.

If you would like a personal invitation to attend a public meeting in your region, please contact the Masterplan Project Officer.



Green Sea Turtle  
(*Chelodina mydas*)



# NT Parks and Conservation Masterplan

## Tourism Workshops

### Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT Analysis)

#### STRENGTHS

##### FUNDING

- ✓ Destination Development – Available through the Northern Territory Tourist Commission (NTTC)
- ✓ New Tourism Ventures – Available through the Commonwealth Government

##### DIVERSITY IN OUR PARK SYSTEM

- ✓ Adds to the visitor experience
- ✓ Includes the self-drive market, nature tourism, 4WD recreation, bush walking
- ✓ Both high visitation and low visitation areas
- ✓ Range of spectacular attractions
- ✓ Range of environments – desert vs tropical
- ✓ Variety of and unique wildlife and flora

##### STRONG CULTURE

- ✓ Aboriginal cultural connections to land
- ✓ Aboriginal and European historical areas

##### OTHER POINTS INCLUDE:

- ✓ The Ghan has increased tourism/visitors to the NT
- ✓ The NT has a world renowned icon in Uluru
- ✓ NT Government managed parks are free

#### WEAKNESSES

##### INFORMATION AND MARKETING/PROMOTION

- ✗ Many areas are not being marketed/promoted to their full potential
- ✗ Fact Sheets and other information is not always up-to-date
- ✗ Not enough information on threats in parks such as crocodiles, weeds, fire, heat exhaustion, 4WD safety, livestock on roads, health risks such as Ross River, etc

##### INFRASTRUCTURE AND SIGNAGE (INTERPRETATION)

- ✗ Insufficient or not maintained

##### RESOURCES, SUPPORT AND CAPACITY BUILDING

- ✗ Not enough available to develop new tourism ventures
- ✗ Cultural experience opportunities have not yet been well developed and require capacity building

##### MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- ✗ Tourism is seasonal, requiring greater resources to maintain infrastructure and staff during the wet season
- ✗ P&W managers are under resourced and unable to address many management issues such as weeds, uncontrolled access, illegal hunting, etc
- ✗ No formal structure to facilitate engagement and interaction between P&W, Traditional Owners, tourism operators and the tourism industry
- ✗ Visitors do not have enough access to parks staff or information officers

##### OTHER POINTS INCLUDE:

- ✗ Concession operators need greater security than a three year contract in order to establish clientele and infrastructure – a tenure of 3 to 10 years would be more appropriate
- ✗ NTTC only market 'tourism icons' and major attractions such as Uluru and Kakadu
- ✗ Access to many areas is seasonal

# NT Parks and Conservation Masterplan

## Tourism Workshops

### Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT Analysis)

#### OPPORTUNITIES

##### MANAGEMENT - GOVERNMENT

- ✓ Government agencies to work together to develop tourism utilising a strategic approach
- ✓ Coordinated development of cultural tourism – government and non-government – ensuring variety of experience and the required support and resources for capacity building
- ✓ Improve infrastructure and camping facilities

##### PARTNERSHIPS – LAND OWNERS, TOUR OPERATORS, CONSERVATION GROUPS

- ✓ Opportunity to develop 'niche' markets such as birdwatching, bush walking, campfire talks, 4WD training and tours, and ornithologists
- ✓ Collaborate with 4WD networks and develop volunteer-based monitoring
- ✓ Engage visitors and tour guides/operators in research
- ✓ Public/private operators willing to assist in maintaining sites and facilities such as toilets
- ✓ Opportunities for industry to invest in infrastructure as part of developing tourism opportunities in parks
- ✓ Build better relationships with landcare groups
- ✓ Involve Aboriginal Community Ranger Groups in tourism

##### INFORMATION AND MARKETING/PROMOTION

- ✓ Better marketing of parks and associated activities in each park/region on the Parks and Wildlife website and through wide distribution of published material such as Fact Sheets
- ✓ Improve signage within parks and along roads, including the development of 'Welcome to Country' signage

##### OTHER OPPORTUNITIES INCLUDE:

- ✓ Develop a 'Passport for Parks' system similar to WA – a great way for people to remember their visit and incentive for them to visit more parks within their region
- ✓ Develop Junior Ranger programs to provide park-based holiday programs
- ✓ Possibility for pets on leads in some parks and pet services such as pet care while owners are visiting parks

#### THREATS

##### CHANGING TOURISM MARKET/TRENDS

- ✗ Backpacker market has changed from travel by bus to self-drive travel by private vehicle
- ✗ Marketing/promotional material and the tourism industry must be aware of current tourism trends
- ✗ Trend towards shorter holidays

##### MANAGEMENT

- ✗ Lack of capacity building, funding support and resources for new tourism ventures and development of cultural tourism
- ✗ Lack of funding for infrastructure
- ✗ Lack of information on safety issues such as heat stroke while bush walking, 4WD hazards, etc

##### OTHER THREATS INCLUDE:

- ✗ Rising fuel prices
- ✗ Limited accommodation available during the dry (seasonal)
- ✗ Limited access in many areas in the wet season
- ✗ Feral animals, weeds and fires