



MEDIA RELEASE

Stolen Property Impedes Katherine Crocodile Management

Crocodile management in the Katherine region has become that little bit tougher following the recent break-in of the Parks and Wildlife Service compound in Katherine.

Parks and Wildlife Service wildlife management senior scientist Anne Walters said the break-in resulted in the alleged theft of several valuable items such as a 3.8m punt, a Navman depth sounder, a 12 volt solar panel and a box of equipment (crocodile box) used for catching and restraining crocodiles.

“Parks and Wildlife Service staff realised the Chardon Street compound had been broken into on Saturday morning and suspect entry was gained through a hole cut in the security fence at the back of the compound,” Dr Walters said.

“We have reported the incident to NT police who are investigating and urge the public to contact them on 131 444 if they know or saw anything about the break-in, which we believed occurred between 6.30pm on 22 September and 8am on 23 September.

“The loss of this equipment has greatly reduced the capabilities of Wildlife Operations staff in implementing crocodile management within the Katherine River such as the removal of saltwater crocodiles from the river and therefore the alleged theft poses a public safety issue.

“The punt, also known as a small flat-hulled dinghy used to access hard-to-reach areas, is particularly important to us and will cost more than \$1000 to replace should we be unable to recover it.

“The punt is made from oxidised aluminium and its bow is black.

“As saltwater crocodiles begin to move around during the build up to the wet season it is vital the equipment is found as we cannot be certain these items will be sourced before the wet season begins.”

Dr Walters said that nine saltwater crocodiles had been removed from Katherine River so far this year and this number is expected to increase substantially as the breeding season approaches.

She said people can report Katherine region crocodile sightings to 0407 958 405.

Ends

Media Note – For more information contact Anne Walters on 8973 8857

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