



MEDIA RELEASE

Endangered Gecko Breeding Program at the TWP

A new breeding program at the Territory Wildlife Park may help preserve a rare gecko species listed on the recently released NT Threatened Species List.

TWP curator Dion Wedd says the Yellow -Snouted Ground gecko is very difficult to find and has been listed as a vulnerable species in the NT and, as endangered under the federal EPBC (Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation) Act.

“The breeding program was started at the TWP in 2001 with an aim to holding animals as an insurance policy if their status is deemed critical,” Mr Wedd said.

“Last week the three breeding adult pairs produced six juveniles and four eggs between them.

“Our breeding adults are housed together all year round in pairs, with the females normally producing several clutches of eggs per year.

“To ensure the best possible outcomes from the breeding program it is imperative that the females are given plenty of calcium in their diets whilst producing eggs and soon after laying the eggs are removed and incubated artificially.

“The babies are miniscule and are really cute, normally a uniform brown with fine white spotting.

“The adults are attractively marked in a series of blotches that run down the body and onto the tail.”

Volunteer Ted Johansen has been working with TWP Reptile Keepers for approximately two years to research the geckos and the reasons why they may be threatened in the wild.

“I have been studying the Yellow-Snouted Ground geckos along with several other gecko species in the NT for four years,” Mr Johansen said.

“Although more research is required, it appears that the gecko has a very limited distribution, and may be affected by fire, as are many leaf litter dwelling species.

“So far 36 species of geckos have been found in the NT and we hope to find out more about the possible threats these species face through ongoing monitoring in and around Darwin.”

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Media Note _ For more information contact Dion Wedd on 89887208 or Ted Johansen on 0439 730 367. Please credit Dion Wedd for gecko photograph.

Issued: 3.00pm Friday, 23 March 2007