

Media Release:

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Wildlife Permits Caution

The Northern Territory Parks and Wildlife Service has reminded Territorians that it is illegal to remove wildlife from its natural habitat and that permits are required to keep most vertebrate wildlife.

Jon DeLaine from the Parks and Wildlife Service's Wildlife Management Unit in Alice Springs said a permit to Keep Protected Wildlife is required to enable people to legally possess vertebrate wildlife within the Northern Territory.

"In order to acquire a permit to keep wildlife you must purchase the animal lawfully, through a pet shop or breeder who has a current permit to keep and trade wildlife," Mr DeLaine said.

"The provision of permits and the permits system enables the Parks and Wildlife Services to monitor wildlife held in captivity.

"This allows us to detect illegal wildlife activities such as animals that have been illegally acquired and kept in captivity or animals that have been illegally imported or exported in or out of the Territory."

A recent incident involved Parks and Wildlife rangers, assisted by police, seizing a number of snakes from the Tennant Creek area, following information from the public.

Parks and Wildlife Service Senior Ranger Jim Cruise said both snakes were collected illegally from the wild and held without a permit.

"The public are our eyes and ears regarding the illegal possession of wildlife and often provide us with vital information on illegal reptile trade and possession, Mr Cruise said.

Mr DeLaine reminded Territorians that people can face a maximum penalty of up to five years jail or \$55,000 fine under the *Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act*, if found in illegal possession of wildlife.

"Parks and Wildlife Service regard breaches of this Act as serious matters and we work strongly towards protecting our native animals," Mr DeLaine said.

"Current permit holders are also reminded that permits to keep protected or prohibited wildlife expired on 31st January 2008 and returns were required to be submitted by 21st February 2008.

"Permit holders should make every effort to ensure they have submitted the 2007 returns paperwork to the Permits Office."

Information on permits to keep wildlife can be obtained on our website www.nt.gov.au/permits or by calling 8999 4486.

Ends

Media Note – for more information contact Jon DeLaine on 8951 8283

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