

Donation to help marine turtles

By Jennie Gilbert, co-founder and co-director of Cairns Turtle Rehabilitation Centre

The Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia recently launched an email appeal to members to help fund the purchase of two water tanks for the Cairns Turtle Rehabilitation.

The tanks were needed to act as water storage and settlement tanks for incoming water supplies to the turtle rehab tanks because the incoming water contains a lot of sediment, as the centre's pumping site is located up a tidal creek surrounded by mud flats. This dirty water quickly blocks up the filters, creating less-than-ideal conditions in the rehab tanks. The two new water tanks were needed to act as primary settlement tanks, removing a lot of the suspended solids from the incoming water before it reaches the filters on the rehab tanks.

There were smiles all around at the Cairns Turtle Rehabilitation Centre when the two 11,000-litre water tanks arrived at the centre. Purchase of these tanks was made possible through the kind generosity of members of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia. The tanks will be used to store water, which in turn will be pumped into the eight tanks currently at the centre. With fluctuating tides at this time of the year, the water quality can be affected, therefore causing concern. Other problems arise with seasonally low tides that at times can prevent adequate amounts of water being pumped up to the tanks. These new storage tanks will now ensure there is always enough water available and the water quality will be of a high standard for the wellbeing of the sick and injured turtles in care. Currently the centre has a "full house" with eight turtles in care. Of the eight in care, three turtles are the endangered olive ridleys, along with three hawksbill turtles, which are also endangered. Hence the importance of good quality water for their successful rehabilitation and future release.

Cairns Turtle Rehabilitation Centre relies on volunteers, financial support from the public and other donations to maintain the ongoing successful rehabilitation and release of marine turtles in Far North Queensland.

Everyone at the Cairns Turtle Rehabilitation Centre would like to say a "big thank you" to all at WPSA for assisting in the ongoing recovery of turtles that have been brought in for rehabilitation. Thank You!!



Jennie Gilbert with one of the tanks donated by the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia



This juvenile hawksbill turtle came in from Dunk Island with floaters disease. When it arrived it was really sick and had to be on a drip for approximately a month. The carers at Cairns Turtle Rehabilitation Centre did not know if it would survive, but with lots of care and attention it started eating after three months. The turtle was named Hawkii; it has been in care for twenty months and will be released within the next four to six weeks with a tracker attached to see where it travels after making a successful recovery.