

Turtle Conservation Project in Australia



Highlights

Spend three or five days working on a turtle conservation project in Aboriginal Australia. See tiny turtles hatch from creamy-white eggs and venture to the open waters, help with the tagging and measuring of turtles, and get hands on with all sorts of data collection. At the end of it, there's a chance you'll have a tan, but more importantly, you'll really have helped make a difference.

Australia. 'Neighbours' and 'Home and Away' don't really do this vast land justice. Ditch the dizzying city life of Sydney, shun the cultural capital, Melbourne, and head out into the wild on this working holiday in Queensland. Mapoon on the Cape York Peninsula is an Aboriginal community just 200 kilometres from Australia's most northerly point. With a population of only about 280 people, the area's really kept to its wilderness roots. The coastline here is pretty isolated so it's little wonder it's favoured by four species of marine turtles – the Green, Olive Ridley, Hawksbill and Flat Back turtles.

Scour for ghost nets set adrift from fishing ships, help rangers patrol 24 kilometres of coastline, and work with the Mapoon Aboriginal owners and researchers as they measure and tag nesting Flat Back and Olive Ridley turtles. Whether you fancy taking part in a nesting or a general survey of turtles, you'll still get a fully 'hands-on' experience. But you needn't worry - it's not all work and no play. Although you'll be working hard to protect these species, there'll still be time to see the local way of life and relax.

Is it for me?

If bog-standard holidays where the soul purpose of a week is to lie by the pool, crisping to a frazzle brings you out in hives, look no further. This working holiday will do more than your average holiday ever could to lift your spirits. Eco-conscious types, survivalists and wildlife enthusiasts will fit right in here – as too will hard-workers willing to get stuck in and help the rangers on their quest to protect the turtle population of this area. You'll be working in small teams of like-minded people so there's also the possibility of making friends here too.

Accommodation

During your stay at camp, you'll get three meals a day – all of which is catered for you. Expect breakfasts of cereal, toast, milk and juice, lunches of cold meats and salads, fish, and salad sandwiches, and hearty dinners that'll keep your energy levels up. You'll also get snacks such as dried fruit, biscuits, fruit cake, bread and fresh fruit. If you've got specific dietary requirements make sure you let the team know beforehand, so they can adjust the menu for you.

In terms of accommodation, you'll be staying in raised tourer style tents. They're actually designed to sleep four people, but for your comfort, you'll only ever be sharing with a maximum of one other person. Inside, they've been kitted out with single beds with deluxe mattresses, and pillows.

Itinerary

Participants on this turtle conservation project will work with rangers to assist with identifying nesting turtles, installing feral pig exclusion devices, and collecting and compiling data to develop a sustainable management

Prices from

853 GBP (3 days) per Person

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strategy.

You'll also be involved with patrols of up to 24 kilometres of beach from Janie Creek to the Pennefather River - the traditional country of the Yupungathi people.

Camps are scheduled to coincide with peak nesting times for the Olive Ridley and Flat Back turtles. These occur during the new and full moon phases from July through November. While at camp, you can expect to take part in tasks such as identifying species, incidence, numbers, locations and time frames. You'll also help to quantify the size and structure of nesting populations, monitor trends in the nesting environment, quantify nesting turtle fecundity including clutch size, clutches per season, egg morphometrics, protection of nesting sites, incidence of feral pig predation on unprotected nests, evaluate prototype feral pig exclusion devices, identify and record ghost nets on beach and assist rangers with the removal and disposal of these ghost nets.

Details

Getting there

Fly to Weipa Airport. From here, camp staff will meet you and transfer you to Camp Chivaree. It's about a two-hour drive – the last 30 minutes of which is along the beach.

Price includes

Accommodation, three meals per day and light refreshments as necessary, travel in boats and 4WD vehicles as necessary, opportunities to spend time with Mapoon people, linen.

Price details

Three-day camps cost from \$1275 Australian Dollars per person plus transfers, five-day camps cost \$2125 Australian Dollars per person including transfers.

Available

Jul—Oct

Typical Duration

3 days - 5 days

Comfort level

Down to earth (hostels, camping, huts)

Experience required

A reasonable interest is all that is needed