

Rosemary Island Hawksbill Turtle Tagging Program

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Rosemary Island in the Dampier Archipelago supports globally significant hawksbill turtle nesting beaches. The Rosemary Island marine turtle tagging program is a primary capture-recapture study of hawksbill turtles during their peak nesting period (October). Low numbers of green and flatback turtles are also tagged during the two week census. The program is one of the longest ongoing studies of marine turtles in Western Australia with the first turtles tagged on Rosemary Island in the 1985–86 turtle nesting season. The program was formally established in 1993 and tagging of hawksbill, green and flatback turtles was conducted on an *ad hoc* basis throughout the summer months. Since the 2003–04 turtle

nesting season the program has focused on hawksbill turtles and has involved a targeted two week tagging program in October using index beaches. The program is run by the Department of Environment and Conservation's (DEC) Marine Science Program and the field component is delivered by DEC's Pilbara Region. All tagging data (including tag recoveries) from this program are held in the DEC Western Australian Marine Turtle Research and Monitoring (WAMTRAM) database. Data from this program are yet to be analysed. Funding for data analysis has recently become available so data will be analysed in the near future.