



## SUMMARY ANNUAL REPORT THREATENED SPECIES OR COMMUNITY RECOVERY TEAM

### PROGRAM INFORMATION

<b>Recovery Team name</b>	Western Swamp Tortoise Recovery Team	
<b>Reporting Period (Financial/Calendar Year)</b>	Calendar Year 2007	
<b>Current membership</b>		
	<b>Member</b>	<b>Representing</b>
1. Chair	Lyndon Mutter	DEC - Swan Coastal District - Nature Conservation Coordinator
2. Exec Officer	Jacqui Maguire	DEC – Swan Coastal District
3.	Dr Gerald Kuchling	DEC – Swan Coastal District - Chief Investigator
4.	Dr Andrew Burbidge	DEC Science Division - Research Fellow
5.	Rod Martyn	DEC – Swan Coastal District
6.	Helen Robertson	Perth Zoo - Director Animal Health and Research
7.	Dr David Groth	Department of Biomedical Science, Curtin University of Technology
8.	Jan Bant	Friends of the Western Swamp Tortoise
9.	Prof Don Bradshaw	School of Animal Biology, the University of Western Australia
10.	Terry Morley	Adelaide Zoo
11.	Kat Millar	National Threatened Species Network, World Wide Fund for Nature Australia
12.	Rosalind Murray	Swan Catchment Council
<b>Dates meetings were held</b>	20 July 2007	
<b>One to two paragraph summary of achievements suitable for WATSNU</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Trial translocation of 10 captive bred tortoises to new site in Moore River Nature Reserve. Approval obtained for hydrological modifications so that the translocations could occur.</li> <li>- Translocation of 25 captive bred tortoises to Mogumber Nature</li> </ul>	

	<p>Reserve.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Completion of hydrological study at Twin Swamps and upgrade of bore used to supplement key swamps in dry years.</li> <li>- 26 hatchlings produced at Perth Zoo.</li> <li>- Population monitoring at Ellen Brook, Twin Swamps and Mogumber Nature Reserves.</li> </ul>
<b>List of actions undertaken by Recovery Team (from actions in Recovery Plan)</b>	
<b>Action 1 –Employment of Chief Investigator</b>	Gerald Kuchling has been appointed as a part-time permanent employee with DEC. This ensures greater security for Gerald's continuing involvement in the Recovery Program.
<b>Action 2 – Management of Ellen Brook, Twin Swamps and Mogumber Nature Reserves</b>	<p>Routine management of the nature reserves continued as in past years, including vermin control (baiting for foxes and rats), fence maintenance, weed control and rehabilitation works. In addition monitoring bores with data loggers were established within swamps at all reserves.</p> <p>Specific management works were conducted as follows at each of the reserves:</p> <p><u>Ellen Brook Nature Reserve</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bandicoot trapping and translocation was conducted by DEC and Edith Cowan University.</li> <li>- Ponds creation and replacement of pond liners within the reserve</li> </ul> <p><u>Twin Swamps Nature Reserve</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Preparation for the installation of an upgraded bore to supplement swamps at the reserve (funded through the Biodiversity Conservation Initiative)</li> </ul> <p><u>Mogumber Nature Reserve</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Constructed ponds were manually filled with water over summer due to low rainfall in 2007.</li> </ul>
<b>Action 3 – Tortoise population monitoring</b>	<p>Tortoises were radio tracked at each of the nature reserves over summer (10 at Ellen Brook, 3 at Twin Swamps and 19 at Mogumber). Their movements and aestivation locations were recorded until July when radio trackers were removed.</p> <p>From the monitoring the following populations trends were estimated::  Ellen Brook – increasing trend  Twin Swamps – Decline suggested in trend (no recruitment even through mature adults)  Mogumber – Population increase through translocations.</p> <p>Water levels and quality continued to be monitored within swamps at the reserves.</p>
<b>Action 4 – Captive Breeding</b>	<p>At the end of 2007 there were 181 tortoises at the Perth Zoo (14 adult males and 15 adult females). An additional captive colony has been established in Adelaide Zoo which housed 4 adult tortoises.</p> <p>Some concern at the Perth Zoo of the high egg mortality in 2007 and this will be investigated. New hatchling ponds were installed with further major improvement of facilities are planned.</p>

<p><b>Action 5 – Translocations</b></p>	<p>25 tortoises were released at Mogumber Nature Reserve in August 2007. This was conducted in conjunction with the Perth Zoo, DEC, The Friends of the WST and local adjacent landowners.</p> <p>Moore River Nature Reserve has been identified as suitable habitat for the WST and 10 radio tracked animals were released in a trial translocation at the reserve in early August 2007.</p> <p>Monitoring of those tortoises released demonstrated that the translocations were successful and the animals are recording good growth rates.</p>
<p><b>Action 6 – Education, Sponsorship and Publicity</b></p>	<p>A DEC Biodiversity Conservation Initiative project involving hydrological investigations and a proposed bore upgrade at Twin Swamps Nature Reserve continued throughout 2007.</p> <p>An event to release 25 tortoises to Mogumber NR was held in August 2007 involving Perth Zoo, DEC, The Friends of the WST and local adjacent landowners. The event was highly successful with considerable community involvement.</p> <p>A Landscape article, written by Andrew Burbidge, was published in winter 2007 regarding the WST recovery program.</p> <p>An ABC radio interview was conducted by Lyndon Mutter and a television interview for ABC program Stateline was conducted with Gerald Kuchling regarding the Recovery Program.</p> <p>Education programs at the Perth Zoo continued with approx 20,000 students visiting the endangered species lessons</p> <p>The Friends of Western Swamp Tortoise received several grants to fund activities related to the Recovery Program including seed collection, educational displays and reserve management activities.</p>