



Volunteer Information

Welcome prospective volunteers!!!! Before applying to become a volunteer for 5 weeks (6 December 2023 – 12 January 2024) with the Ningaloo Turtle Program (NTP) please read the following information.

Ningaloo Turtle Program

The Ningaloo Turtle Program (NTP) is based in the amazing Ningaloo Marine Park, part of the Ningaloo Coast World Heritage Area. The primary aim of the NTP is to support the conservation of marine turtles along the Ningaloo Coast. Volunteers are the key to the success of the NTP; your time will help our efforts to conserve marine turtles, which are threatened with extinction world-wide. Please note, the NTP is not a tagging program, we are a morning track count monitoring program.

Being a volunteer

You will spend 3 - 6 hours every morning (starting at sunrise) walking designated sections of beach recording important turtle nesting information such as successful nests, unsuccessful nesting attempts and evidence of nest disturbance and predation. Volunteers often see adult female turtles returning to the sea and are sometimes lucky enough to see hatchlings emerge from nests and run to the sea. Volunteers are also required to participate in data entry, data quality assurance, equipment maintenance and cleaning, and assist with turtle rescues. There may also be the opportunity to assist Parks and Wildlife staff with evening beach education patrols.

Volunteers will gain experience in marine turtle monitoring techniques and make a hands-on contribution to turtle conservation in a World-Heritage listed marine park. It can be hard, hot work but with great rewards. You will meet like-minded people, get fit and have fun!

Volunteer requirements

- No previous experience or specific education level is necessary to participate in the NTP. Anyone can apply! Volunteers are trained in all required techniques.
- Volunteers are required to pass a competency-based assessment in the field to become a certified 'Turtle Tracker'.
- Once you are a certified 'Turtle Tracker', you will be walking a section of beach by yourself.
- **Possession of a manual driver's licence and senior first aid qualification** (or the ability to obtain them both prior to program commencement) are **essential**.
- You must be **18 years old** to participate.
- All volunteers are required to participate in the program for the **full five week duration**.
- A **moderate level of fitness** is required to participate in the program. You must be able to walk up to 5km in soft sand, sometimes over rocky terrain and sand dunes in very hot weather (temperatures range between the high 30's to mid 40's during summer in Exmouth).
- You will be sharing accommodation with other volunteers, so being friendly, happy, respectful and courteous goes a long way!
- You are required to **make your own way to Exmouth and home again**.
- A participation fee of \$1300 is required upon successful acceptance into the program including a non-refundable deposit of \$500.
- Volunteers must be prepared to work approximately **35 hours per week**, involving early starts (0530am).

- All volunteers are required to participate in early morning monitoring activities, maintenance and cleaning of equipment and remote camping (volunteers on rotation, each doing one or two trips of 3 nights during their stay).
- International volunteers are not covered by the Parks and Wildlife Service volunteer insurance so must have appropriate travel insurance to cover any medical costs and provide Parks and Wildlife with a copy of this. A copy of your visa is also required to check your eligibility for volunteer work.
- Volunteers must present fit for work each time they are on duty and act in accordance with the Parks and Wildlife Service Code of Conduct. Breaches of the Code of Conduct will result in disciplinary action, which may include eviction from the program, in which case no refund of volunteer participation fees would be offered. Random breath testing may be carried out through the course of the program and failure to comply or pass tests may lead to eviction from the program.
- Volunteers must not let any other activities or other forms of employment affect their participation in the NTP and completion of duties. Secondary employment must be approved by Parks and Wildlife in accordance with the Parks and Wildlife Code of Conduct.

Program dates and cost

There will be a maximum of 12 external volunteers accepted into the program with each volunteer required to stay for the full five weeks of the program. All participants accepted into the 2023-24 NTP will need to arrive no later than 5:00pm on Wednesday 6 December 2023 and be ready to commence training the following morning. Volunteers will finish monitoring on the 11 January 2024, which will be the last night of accommodation provided and an end of season social gathering. We suggest departing from 12 January 2024 onwards.

These dates are not flexible. If you wish to arrive earlier or stay in Exmouth after the program has finished, please organise your own accommodation for that period.

The total participation fee, which includes the cost of accommodation, is **\$1300**. A non-refundable deposit of \$500 is due by 30 September 2023 upon notification of acceptance into the Ningaloo Turtle Program. You will be required to pay the balance by 14 October 2023

Volunteer arrivals

Volunteer accommodation will be available from Wednesday 6 December 2023 in Exmouth townsite. A minivan driven by one of the Team Leaders will be organised to transport volunteers from the airport to their accommodation on 6 December only. If you arrive any earlier a shuttle bus into Exmouth is available at your own expense (~\$40). If you are driving up in your own vehicle or catching the bus, a meeting point will be arranged to show you to your accommodation. Likewise, on departure, transport will be provided on Friday 12 January 2024 to the airport. If you decide to depart any later then a shuttle bus to the airport is available at your own expense.

Accommodation and living conditions

- Conditions in Exmouth in summer can be very hot: 35-45 degrees.
- Two types of accommodation are provided. The majority of your time will be spent in shared accommodation in the town of Exmouth. Volunteers will share accommodation with other members of the NTP (fellow volunteers). This will be a villa type accommodation with twin bedrooms, a shared bathroom and kitchen. Your accommodation will be within easy walking distance to supermarkets and the town centre.
- Please note, while every effort is made to have same-gender twin bedrooms, this isn't always possible. You may be asked to share a room with someone of the opposite gender. Please advise the NTP Coordinator prior to arrival if you are not comfortable with this.
- Food is at volunteers' own expense while in Exmouth.
- Volunteers will stay also at a remote camp within Cape Range National Park adjacent to Ningaloo Marine Park. While camped in the National Park you will be 50km from Exmouth. Swags, sleeping bags and pillows are provided but you may bring your own if you wish. You will need to bring a beach towel. The remote camp facilities (located 200m from the beach) include:

- Long drop toilet and very basic cold shower facilities with limited fresh water (easier to just have a swim!)
 - Camp style cooking facilities
 - Basic food is provided while camping and meals will be cooked by participants on a shared basis
 - No phone reception at camp, limited reception in other areas of the National Park
 - 3-4 days at a time will be spent on a rotational basis at this camp.
- Exmouth is subject to periodic cyclone events. The Ningaloo Turtle Program falls during cyclone season and therefore heavy rain and cyclonic weather may affect the activities of the Program. In previous years it has meant that monitoring has been cancelled for a few days until the weather has passed. Adequate supervision, guidance, cyclone shelter & accommodation are provided, and emergency procedures are followed during these rare events.

****Please note, Cape Range National Park is remote, located 40 - 90km from Exmouth and is not accessible by public transport so some volunteers find it useful to have their own car whilst in Exmouth so as to access the snorkelling spots and best beaches in their own time.**

****Bicycles are often for sale on the local noticeboards and can be purchased cheaply then re-sold upon departure.**

Monitoring

Training

Training will be provided in track monitoring, data entry and QA, turtle biology and ecology, and turtle-visitor interaction protocols. Training takes approximately one week and is primarily a combination of theory sessions, field-based exercises and informal competency assessments. On completion of training, volunteers become certified "Turtle Trackers".

For more information and to download monitoring manuals please see the "Training" section on the NTP website. It is a great idea to have a read of this before you arrive.

Monitoring

Volunteers spend approximately 3-5 hours every morning (starting at sunrise) walking designated sections of beach recording important turtle nesting information such as successful nests, unsuccessful nesting attempts and evidence of nest disturbance and predation. Volunteers often see adult female turtles returning to the sea and are sometimes lucky enough to see hatchlings emerge from nests and run to the sea. Volunteers also may be required to assist in turtle rescues, which may take time and is often hot, heavy work (but very rewarding!). Volunteers may also assist with data uploading, maintenance, cleaning and and charging of equipment and other tasks as they arise.

Your first monitoring day will be approximately one week after your arrival (once you are found competent in "Turtle Tracking"). From here you can expect to be rostered on every morning with an occasional morning off. You monitor your designated section by yourself, with transport in and out from the beach on the 'turtle bus' driven by a Team Leader. On some days you will be rostered on for data quality assurance in the afternoons. The rest of the day may include hanging out in Exmouth or taking part in NTP official social activities such as snorkeling within the Ningaloo Coast World Heritage Area (two or three per week). There will also be free time set aside for you to do as you please. There may be the opportunity to assist Parks and Wildlife staff with other programs throughout the region, including evening beach education patrols which involve educating members of the public about correct turtle viewing protocols. We encourage volunteers to take the time to rest in the afternoons, as the heat, physical work and early starts can take their toll on the body.

Walking

Volunteers are asked to monitor sections of beach varying from 500m to 5km. This will require you to walk over uneven ground and sandy beaches and occasionally to walk up and/or down steep slopes. Volunteers will need to have a reasonable level of physical fitness to walk these distances. If you have any concerns about this or any health conditions that may adversely affect your capacity to perform these duties, please discuss this with the NTP Coordinator **before applying for the program**. It is essential that your health conditions are considered before signing up to the NTP.

Enclosed footwear must be worn during turtle monitoring activities. Sneakers, sandals or reef shoes with enclosed toes are best suited to this form of work. Although the monitoring sites are primarily soft sand, there are rocks, shells, coral and occasionally snakes on the beaches. Suitable footwear will help you avoid injuries therefore volunteers are not permitted to participate in monitoring unless they are wearing enclosed shoes.

Lifting and handling

The handling of items such as camping equipment, and occasionally turtles, will be required from time to time during the monitoring season. Handling of heavy items should be undertaken by more than one person. If you have any doubt about how to lift an item, seek assistance from NTP staff before attempting to proceed.

Communication

Mobile phone reception is not reliably available at most of the monitoring sites or within the Cape Range National Park. Volunteers are trained in the correct use of UHF radios. Once deemed competent to monitor allocated sections of beach alone, each volunteer is provided a handheld radio in their monitoring backpacks for communication whilst on the beach. We recommend volunteers bring a Telstra SIM card as this provider has the best coverage and service in Exmouth and surrounds.

Jurabi Turtle Centre

There will be an opportunity for NTP volunteers to visit the Jurabi Turtle Centre at night to witness turtle nesting activities.

What will be provided?

- Accommodation within Cape Range National Park and Exmouth starting Wednesday 6 December 2023 and concluding Friday 12 January 2024. This includes linen and towels in Exmouth, however please bring your own beach towel.
- Food is provided while camping at the remote camp (approximately 5 or 6 nights during your stay).
- Training in track monitoring techniques, interaction protocols, tablet, GPS and radio use.
- Transport to and from all official NTP activities during the program, **excluding** travel from home to Exmouth and return.
- An NTP monitoring shirt and hat.
- Christmas lunch, a welcome BBQ and farewell dinner.

What to bring

- You must bring money to purchase your own food and be prepared to share cooking facilities. Note, food prices for many items, especially fresh produce, are higher than city prices.
- Sunglasses, hat (broad-brimmed is best), long-sleeved shirt, shorts.
- Enclosed shoes must be worn for all field work. They may get wet. Sandshoes, old sneakers or reef shoes with enclosed toes work well.
- Beach towel, bathers, rashvest for sun protection while swimming.
- Sunscreen.
- Lightweight sarong to assist in sun protection.
- Multiple 1L or 2L water bottles or camelbak. We recommend carrying at least 3L with you, you'll need it.
- Fly net for over your hat.
- Long pants for gorge walking.
- Sleeping bag for remote camping – we can provide if you don't have space.
- Exmouth can sometimes be cool at night in summer, especially when out on the beach, so bring just a couple of warm items of clothing. There is a local op shop if you get stuck.

- Entertainment such as a book or iPod that you can use whilst waiting for the NTP bus after monitoring (there are book exchange places in town). Please note, on mornings with lots of turtle activity and/or turtle rescues, you may be waiting for an hour or two.

Optional:

- Snorkelling gear – you can hire it in town but we recommend you bring your own if you have space
- Camera
- Laptop to watch movies in your down time
- Torch with a red filter. Head torches are recommended for use whilst you are camping. Red cellophane over a white light works well for viewing nesting turtles.
- Your Christmas spirit and tinsel! 🎅

Other important information

- Some volunteers find it an advantage to have their own transport while they are here as it enables them to explore the wonderful local surroundings that the Ningaloo Coast World Heritage Area provides. Exmouth Township is located on the eastern side of the North West Cape and is located at least 40km from good snorkelling and exploring sites within Cape Range National Park.
- As mentioned previously mobile phone reception is not reliably available at most of the monitoring sites or within the Cape Range National Park. In the town of Exmouth, Telstra is the main mobile service provider but Optus will also work. Vodafone will not. We've also found that only Telstra works out on the monitoring beaches. "Pre Paid" SIM cards and recharges are available in Exmouth for compatible mobiles.
- As previously mentioned, Exmouth gets very hot in summer (up to mid to high 40's). Please be aware of this and your own physical limitations before signing up for the program.

Information on Exmouth township

Location and climate

Exmouth is located on the North West Cape approximately 1270km North of Perth and has a population of approximately 2600 people.

Exmouth is blessed with a fantastic climate. With no wet season, it is dry and warm all year. Summer daytime temperatures range from high 30's to mid 40's (average 37 degrees). Water temperatures in summer vary from 25 – 28 degrees.

You will be required to work outdoors for a number of hours during the day. You should drink a minimum of 3-4 litres of water each day, get plenty of rest and be aware of the signs and symptoms of heat exhaustion and how to avoid this.

Recreation activities

Exmouth has a fantastic variety of outdoor recreational opportunities that can be taken advantage of in your spare time:

- SCUBA diving, snorkelling (tours or snorkel self-guided from the beach)
- Fishing
- Bush walking in the Cape Range National Park or the canyons to the south of Exmouth
- Kayak hire and tours
- Microlight flights
- Glass bottom boat tours, Yardie Creek boat tour

- Relaxing on the beach
- Coral Bay is less than two hours drive away and also has manta ray tours, quad bike tours etc

Facilities

Exmouth is a small regional town but has adequate amenities and facilities including two supermarkets, a bulk-food store, pharmacy, Westpac Bank, newsagent, post office, basic hospital, dentist, chiropractor, op-shop, surf shop and a number of cafes, restaurants and pubs. You may also like to visit the town 50m swimming pool, grassed BBQ areas overlooking the beach, a gym, tennis courts, sporting ovals and skate park.

Additional information on Exmouth can be found here: <http://www.visitningaloo.com.au/>

Getting here

AIRLINES Qantas operate return flights from Perth to Learmonth Airport (37kms from Exmouth). A shuttle bus meets each flight and for a fee you can catch a ride into Exmouth. The flight takes 2 hours.

ROAD ACCESS Travelling from the south to Exmouth along the North West Coastal Highway, drive 152km North of Carnarvon and turn left after the Minilya Roadhouse – the Exmouth townsite is another 220km. Travelling from the north, turn off the North West Highway 110km South of Nanutarra Roadhouse right onto Burkett Road. From here it's 80km to the Exmouth Minilya Road. At this junction turn right to Exmouth (89km).

The drive up from Perth usually takes around 13 hours and is best split up overnight for safety, somewhere like Kalbarri/Geraldton/Carnarvon etc. Where possible this drive is best shared with other drivers.

COACH SERVICES Check Integrity Coach Lines for current bus schedules between Perth and Exmouth if they are operating. The journey takes around 17-19 hours by bus.

Transport while you are here

Turtle nesting beaches are located about 15 - 35 km from Cape Range National Park. A minibus and/or Departmental car is used to transport volunteers to monitor these beaches. Extra care should be taken when driving on unsealed or unfamiliar roads. Slow down when driving in conditions you are not used to. Vehicles are not provided for recreational activities other than official NTP social outings (two or three per week).

Please note: Using your vehicle is at your own risk and the program cannot be held responsible for any damages that may occur. All drivers are encouraged to drive safely, obey all laws relating to motor vehicles and operate vehicles in a responsible manner.

Wildlife wise

Wildlife often cross country roads, particularly at night and in the early morning. Being aware of this and taking care could save an animal's life and avoid damage to your car. If travelling at night, drive slowly and scan the sides of the road for wildlife (this will also help you keep alert). Remember that animals are very hard to see against a black bitumen road, particularly when it is wet. Take note of wildlife warning signs. They are there to advise you of known 'hot spots'. Animals react differently to approaching cars and it is best to let the animal move off first before passing.

How to apply

Please see the Ningaloo Turtle Program website: <http://www.ningalooturtles.org.au>. Fill out the online NTP application form (found on the website), attach your CV/resume and a cover note telling us why you would like to join the NTP, by 4:00pm (AWST) 1 August 2023.

Any questions?

Visit the Ningaloo Turtle Program website at www.ningalooturtles.org.au. Alternatively, please do not hesitate to contact us (email is the preferred method) and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

- NTP email: ningalooturtles@dbca.wa.gov.au
- Postal address: PO Box 201, Exmouth, WA 6707 (please print “Attention: NTP Coordinator”)
- Phone: NTP Coordinator, Dani Rob (08) 9947 8054 or Parks and Wildlife Reception, Exmouth: (08) 9947 8000.

Thank you for your interest in the program! We are looking forward to the upcoming season and to meeting new volunteers with a keen interest in turtle conservation!

Ningaloo
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