

# River Murray turtles

What's happening to them?

Eastern  
long-necked  
turtle  
**91%  
decline**

Murray  
short-necked  
turtle  
**69%  
decline**

**Overall LESS  
juvenile turtles  
in the  
river system.**

A 2011 study by Bruce Chessman showed that since the 1970s and 80s there have been significant declines in the number of turtles. It also shows that the proportion of older turtles in their populations is increasing. There are now very few young turtles surviving to replace older turtles when they die.

## Major threats to River Murray turtles

**Foxes dig up nests  
and eat the eggs.**

They can destroy up to **95%**  
of turtle nests in some areas.  
This leaves only 5% of eggs to hatch.

Foxes also prey on and eat female  
turtles while they are nesting.

They are thought to be the greatest  
threat to turtle populations.

Image: M Keevil

**Female turtles move  
onto land to find  
suitable nesting sites.**

**It is here many are struck  
and killed by cars.**



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