

Field Guide to the

# Wildlife of the Top End

The Environment Centre NT seeks partners to help produce a comprehensive, professional and informative Field Guide to the Wildlife and Protected Areas of Australia's Top End. If you want to help people know more about Australia's amazing tropical wildlife and where you can see it, we'd love to collaborate.

This will be the first broad-coverage handbook to wildlife of northern NT, including 500-600 species in a single volume; indispensable in your backpack or glove box, on your bookshelf or veranda.

Through this project we aim to raise awareness about our wildlife amongst the wider public, inclusive of residents, international visitors, and professionals, and provide access to accurate

and helpful information. We believe this is vital in empowering people to make conservation-minded choices.

The book follows the success of guides to wildlife of Greater Melbourne, Brisbane, and our own popular *Weeds of Northern Australia*, and enjoys the generous backing of some of the highest quality NT and Australian nature photographers.



Environment Centre NT

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# Invest in this project

If you are interested in investing in this project please contact us. We are seeking additional partners to provide funds, in-kind and promotional support. In return we are offering the opportunity to have your logo on the cover, and be acknowledged in the text and promotional materials. If you have something in mind, we would be happy to discuss our various sponsorship packages with you.

## About our author

Lindley McKay has 20 years experience as a wildlife ecologist including over a decade working in government and university in the Top End. He is an accomplished wildlife photographer and has authored two wildlife books, *Frillneck!* and *A Field Guide to the Amphibians and Reptiles of Bali*.



### Crab-eating or White-bellied Mangrove Snake

*Fordonia leucobalia*

**Description:** a stout, medium-sized snake with head not particularly distinct from neck, from the mangroves. Colour extremely variable, often brownish but can be any combination of colour from red with blue markings (common around Darwin), black and white, yellow or green.

**Similar species:** other snakes with normal tails (ie not paddled-shaped) are always drab grey, brown or olive and have distinct heads

**Biology:** active day and night, but most activity probably occurs in crabholes below the surface. May be highly abundant in good habitat. Feeds on crabs, pinning down the crab with the body and tearing off the legs,

reptiles



swallowing the crab piece by piece; the only snake worldwide to dismember its prey before consumption

**Habitat:** mangroves, particularly areas inhabited by large crabs

**Distribution:** the coast of the Top End and



### Agile Wallaby

*Macropus agilis*



**Description:** a small kangaroo, standing up to 1 m high. Yellow-brown to grey-brown above, becoming paler below. A pale line on face from around the mouth through to below the eye, and a horizontal pale mark on the upper hindleg. These marks are obscure in some individuals.

**Similar species:** the Antilopine Wallaroo is larger and lacks pale lines on face and hindlegs. Black Wallaroo much darker in colour. Euro larger, generally stockier, woollier with increasing aridity of habitat, and never in groups.

**Biology:** Gregarious, often in large groups, but sometimes alone. Active primarily in the morning, evening and night, typically resting in the shade of dense vegetation during the day's heat. Young can be born anytime but most often between May & August; gestation is around 30 days and young take 6 - 8 months to leave the pouch, and takes several further months to be weaned. Grazes opportunistically on a variety of plants, their dig-

mammals

gings in search of roots or tubers are a common sight in sandy soil. As one of the most abundant large grazing animals of northern Australia, is a key prey species for crocodiles and indigenous peoples.

**Habitat:** tropical savannahs & woodland

**Distribution:** Kimberley, Top End &



For more information please contact:

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