

8 Living with crocodiles

It seems ironic that our oldest living reptiles, with origins dating back millions of years, are treated with such little awareness and respect. Australia has two crocodile species – the Freshwater (or Johnston’s) Crocodile and the Saltwater (or Estuarine) Crocodile. The Freshwater Crocodile is almost exclusively found in fresh water but the Saltwater Crocodile is typically found in both. It has a larger movement pattern, home range and territorial region.

The **Freshwater Crocodile**, *Crocodylus johnstoni*, is the smaller of the two species, with an average length of about 2 m, although some specimens can grow to 3 m. It inhabits inland freshwater creeks, rivers and billabongs, feeding mainly on fish but also insects, spiders, turtles, small reptiles, and water rats. Reptile catchers in the Northern Territory are sometimes called to remove small Freshwater Crocodiles from pools and spas.

Freshwater Crocodile.

Image: Stewart MacDonald

