SALTWATER CROCODILE

CROCODYLUS POROSUS

SALTWATER CROCODILES ARE CLASSED AS **LEAST CONCERN**

The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species classifies saltwater crocodiles as least concern. The population is stable across Australia, and there are fragmented populations throughout Southeast Asia to the Indian subcontinent and Pacific Islands.

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SIZE AND APPEARANCE

Saltwater crocodiles are the largest living reptiles, with males reaching lengths of up to 6 metres (20 feet) and weighing over 900 kilograms (2,000 pounds). They have broad, elongated snouts, powerful jaws filled with sharp teeth and armoured scales covering their bodies. Adult saltwater crocodiles typically have dark grey or greenish-brown coloration, providing effective camouflage in their aquatic habitats.

DIET

Saltwater crocodiles are apex predators, feeding on a wide range of prey including fish, birds, mammals and even other crocodiles. They are opportunistic hunters, using stealth and ambush tactics to catch their prey. Saltwater crocodiles have a highly efficient digestive system, allowing them to extract maximum nutrients from their food and go extended periods without eating.

THREATS

Saltwater crocodiles face few natural threats due to their formidable size and strength. However, they are vulnerable to habitat loss and fragmentation caused by human activities such as agriculture, urbanisation, and dam construction. They are also hunted for their skins, which are highly valued in the fashion industry, and for their meat and body parts, which are used in traditional medicine.

BREEDING

Saltwater crocodiles are solitary animals except during the breeding season. Males engage in aggressive displays and vocalisations to establish dominance and attract mates. Females build nest mounds of vegetation near water bodies, where they lay clutches of 40 to 60 eggs. They guard the nest fiercely until the eggs hatch after about 80 days.

DID YOU KNOW?

Saltwater crocodiles have one of the strongest bite forces of any animal, with the ability to exert pressures exceeding 3,700 pounds per square inch (16,460 kilopascals). They use their powerful jaws not only for hunting but also for communication and establishing dominance within their territories.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION

Saltwater crocodiles inhabit coastal regions, estuaries and mangrove swamps throughout Southeast Asia, Northern Australia and the eastern coast of India. They are found in freshwater, brackish, and marine habitats, where they play a crucial role in regulating ecosystem dynamics as top predators.

Current Distribution

