

Sting.Stab.Strike

Estuarine (saltwater) crocodiles

What do they look like?

Crocodiles have short limbs and a heavy muscular body covered with rough scales. They keep growing all their lives and an adult male can grow up to 5.5 metres. Crocodiles can hold their breath underwater for more than an hour, keeping very still waiting for prey. But don't be fooled — crocs can swim up to 32 kilometers per hour, and run short distances on land as fast as 17.6 kilometers per hour and can certainly catch you! Crocodiles have a long, powerful tail that helps them swim this fast. They also store fat in their tails, so they can survive for up to two years without eating if necessary.

Where do they live?

Estuarine crocodiles live in rivers and freshwater swamps across the north of Australia — northern Western Australia and Queensland and all of the Northern Territory. They like to travel and can be found up to 100km inland and sometimes visit beaches in these areas.

Why are they dangerous?

Their big teeth! Crocodiles are carnivores and eat whatever they can catch in the water or along the banks including fish, turtles, frogs, birds and pigs. Crocs don't chew their food, they either tear off large pieces or swallow their prey whole. Some species can eat up to half their body weight in one meal. As you can imagine, if a crocodile bites a person it results in massive damage and severe bleeding.

How to avoid them?

Always obey crocodile warning signs and never enter the water where crocodiles might live, even if there is no warning sign. Always stand a few metres back from the water's edge and stay well away from slide marks on the bank. Never dangle your arms and legs over the side of a boat. If you see a crocodile (even a small one), don't go near it, annoy it, touch it, poke it or feed it, you might become a crocodile snack.

What to do if you get hurt?

An adult will get the person out of the water as soon as possible, but first make sure it's safe before entering the water. Call 000 immediately and apply pressure to the wound to control the bleeding while you wait for the ambulance.

To learn how to be Crocwise, visit *the Department of Environment and Science website*.

Report all crocodile sightings on 1300 130 372 even if you've reported the animal before.

