



Australian Government  
Parks Australia



# Community Update

DATE 07-11-2022

## Norfolk Marine Park Managers' Update

### Rescued Green Sea Turtle from Emily Bay

#### **Update on condition and prognosis – and thank you!**

Parks Australia is pleased to report the sick juvenile green sea turtle 'Doris' has greatly improved in condition and prognosis in the past two weeks thanks to the outstanding care and treatment provided by Parks personnel together with the Norfolk Island veterinarian, volunteers, and community.

Monday 7 November 2022 marked eight weeks since Doris was retrieved by Norfolk Island National Park Manager Nigel Greenup, Norfolk Marine Park Officer Hannah Taylor, and Norfolk Island citizen scientist Susan Prior. Thank you to the many community members for reporting observations of the turtle's declining health demonstrating once again the power of citizen science in the community.

Thank you to those who have kept the community informed of progress while we have concentrated on the care and treatment of the turtle. Doris will continue to receive veterinary treatment and rehabilitation care and is now considered a good candidate for release back into Norfolk Marine Park.

The difference between Doris's condition now and the extremely poor condition and low likelihood of survival upon her rescue on 12 September shows significant improvement. The turtle's natural behaviours are now returning to normal.

Parks Australia contracted a specialist vet to travel to Norfolk Island and assess the turtle's health and work with the local vet to undertake any required veterinary procedures and administer treatments. Both he and the Cairns Turtle Rehabilitation Centre also continue to provide advice to us together with Norfolk's local veterinarian Candice.

Many thanks to Norfolk Island National Park staff who have been going above and beyond to assist with the turtle's needs, contributing much of their personal time and resources, and to the turtle's volunteers and vet Candice who continue to help deliver a high level of around-the-clock care and treatment.

Thank you also to the community members and businesses who have donated fish and fish off-cuts, greens and other critical resources and to those who have helped obtain and transport items urgently needed from Australia to Norfolk Island.

#### **About sea turtles**

Green sea turtles (*Chelonia mydas*) are listed as endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List and vulnerable under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC Act)*. Other sea turtle species regularly found within Norfolk Marine Park include hawksbill turtles (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) which are listed as critically endangered by the IUCN and vulnerable under the EPBC Act.

Scientists describe sea turtles as a keystone species in recognition of the critical roles they play in supporting ecosystem function and balance. All marine turtle species are experiencing serious threats to their survival. The main threats to sea turtles are marine pollution and changes to important turtle habitats, including coral reefs.

Green sea turtles are considered high risk from the impacts of poor water quality. Reduced water quality resulting from pollutants including sediment entering the marine environment have the potential to affect marine sea turtles' health directly and reduce the viability of habitats necessary for survival.