

Threatened Wildlife Photographic Competition

Winners Announced

The **Australian Wildlife Society Threatened Wildlife Photographic Competition** is a national competition that promotes endangered Australian wildlife through the medium of photography.

The Australian Wildlife Society invited photographers to raise the plight of endangered wildlife in Australia. Our Society aims to encourage the production of photographs taken in Australia, by Australians, which reflects the diversity and uniqueness of endangered Australian wildlife.

The annual judge's prize of \$1,000 was won by Tom Burd

The winning entry was a photo of a short-necked turtle.

The short-necked turtle (*Emydura macquarii*) or Murray River turtle, is just one of the freshwater turtle species experiencing significant population declines throughout their native Australian range. It is currently listed as Threatened in Victoria, with up to 67 percent declines recorded in some locations in the Murray River since the 1970s. While adult individuals are naturally very hardy, nest predation by invasive foxes is having a significant impact on juvenile recruitment. Other factors, such as highway collisions and development of wetland areas, are also contributing to their vulnerable state.

This photo was taken during a population survey at Riverglades in Murray Bridge, South Australia. This tiny juvenile was gently returned to the water after having been measured, marked and logged for future reference. Finding juveniles in the river is a rare sight, which makes this photo particularly special!

The annual people's choice prize of \$500 was won by Nicholas Chu

Nicholas' entry was a photo of a crest-tailed mulgara.

The crest-tailed mulgara (*Dasyercus cristicauda*) featured in this photograph was captured in the Strzelecki Regional Reserve in South Australia – proximal to the New South Wales border. This species is one of a few that are being monitored as part of some ongoing biodiversity surveys that are exploring the differences between ecosystems with and without dingoes. The species is currently listed as Vulnerable under the EPBC Act, but it is individually listed as Endangered in South Australia and extinct in New South Wales. Being not commonly known due to its elusive behaviour and relatively inaccessible geographic distribution, I had endeavoured to capture a clear photo of it to raise awareness of the plight of native fauna in semi-arid Australian environments. While there have been some recent sightings of the species in New South Wales, current pressures such as overgrazing by livestock and feral animals, coupled by a long period of drought, are reducing the survivability of the species.

Thank you to all the contributors to the Society's Threatened Wildlife Photographic Competition – please enter again next year. A selection of the photographic entries is featured in the Spring edition of our quarterly magazine *Australian Wildlife*.