



Media Release

Gary Higgins
Minister for the Environment

Bess Price
Minister for Parks and Wildlife

Don't clam up on National Threatened Species Day

7 September 2015

The Territory Wildlife Park has unveiled a spectacular memorial graveyard to commemorate National Threatened Species Day.

The Giant Clam Memorial Graveyard has been a collaborative project involving the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA), NT Fisheries, NT Seafood Council and the US Marine Rotational Forces.

“It is a fitting and moving tribute to this magnificent animal. The clam shells used at the memorial graveyard are from more than 200 seized by AFMA officers between November 2013 and April 2014 from six apprehended illegal fishing vessels,” Environment Minister Gary Higgins said.

“The fishermen were illegally harvesting Giant Clams, Trepang and Hawksbill turtles from the Evans Shoal area (350 km north-west of Darwin).”

The confiscated shells were brought back to Darwin and the illegal fishing boats were destroyed and the masters of each vessel were convicted.

“AFMA, the Australian Border Force and Royal Australian Navy’s Northern Command were instrumental in the apprehension, detention and successful prosecution of the illegal fishermen – their work is important for the preservation of species like Giant Clams. A special thanks to them,” Mr Higgins said.

AFMA donated 58 of the Giant Clam Shells to the Territory Wildlife Park so that a permanent Giant Clam Memorial Graveyard could be created.

“National Threatened Species Day is commemorated each year by zoos and wildlife parks around Australia and the Territory Wildlife Park’s memorial graveyard will shine a spotlight on issues such as poaching and habitat destruction,” Parks and Wildlife Minister Bess Price said.

“The display is the result of a wonderful team of workers, volunteers and supporters including local businessman Jan Fikus (JF Stonecraft) who donated the granite memorial headstone and the US

Marine Rotational Forces who volunteered their manpower and assisted Wildlife Park staff to build the graveyard, installing the shells by hand. Some of the shells weigh more than 200 kilos!

“I thank everyone involved in the project.”

Interpretive signage has been installed adjacent to the memorial graveyard and will provide visitors with more information about the history of these clams, what will happen with the remaining shells and how visitors can help stop wildlife crime.

ATTACHED: Photos of the Giant Clams confiscated, the memorial graveyard being developed and the opening today

Photo attributions

- Boat pic – Photo courtesy of AFMA
- Graveyard work and opening pics – Photo courtesy of Territory Wildlife Park

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