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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Call for Greater Crocodile Awareness Crocodile attacks can be avoided through education



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**ATTACHED PHOTO:** *An adult male saltwater crocodile weighing over 500 kg launches itself out of the water in less than a second (Big Gecko, permission is given for use with articles based directly on this press release, contact us directly for a higher resolution version if required)*

Dr Adam Britton, a crocodile specialist with Darwin-based *Big Gecko*, believes that it's time for a new Territory-wide public awareness campaign about crocodile safety.

There have been three incidents in the NT in as many weeks where both visitors and locals have had near-misses with crocodiles. In the latest example, serious injuries were incurred and the person only escaped because of the quick action of her husband.

In all three cases, the victims seriously underestimated the potential danger that crocodiles posed or they simply didn't realise there was any danger. That points to a lack of awareness of crocodiles, and that's a big worry in a place where crocodiles are easy to encounter.

Awareness campaigns about crocodiles and crocodile safety in the NT are not new – there was a very successful one back in the early 1980s called *Living with Crocodiles*. Now, nearly 30 years later, the landscape has changed quite a bit and there are many more crocodiles. Recent studies and capture records have shown crocodiles moving into areas they haven't been seen before, including further upstream well away from the tidal rivers most people think is their only home.

These facts, more than ever before, reinforce the need for a new and widespread awareness campaign about crocodiles and crocodile safety. People need to understand the benefits that crocodiles bring for tourism

and industry, while also understanding the simple precautions they can take in the bush so they remain safe. It's not difficult, it just requires a little education.

As Dr Adam Britton says "It's all about getting the balance right. Crocodiles help to put the NT on the world stage because we have so many of these enduringly fascinating creatures. Let's make sure we're not on that same stage for the wrong reasons – let's ensure that people are safe around crocodiles."

*Dr Britton can be contacted for further information, comments or interviews on either 0407 185182 or 08 89884607 or by email at [gecko@crocodilian.com](mailto:gecko@crocodilian.com)*

*Big Gecko is a Darwin-based consultancy focussed on research and conservation of crocodiles. Further information about Big Gecko is available at <http://crocodilian.com/big-gecko>*