

4 KEY QUESTIONS TO IDENTIFY TURTLES

of the Bellinger and Kalang catchments

There are three freshwater turtles known from the Bellinger area. If you want to know which one you've seen, you can get a good idea by taking note of four things, none of which require you to pick the animal up.

1 Where did you see it?

Eastern Long-necked Turtle

- In the Kalang River.
- In the Bellinger River, including downstream of Lavenders Bridge at Bellinger.
- In creeks and dams
- On land, away from water, often crossing roads.

Murray River Turtle

Emydura macquarii

- In the Bellinger River mostly upstream of Lavenders Bridge at Bellinger.
- In the Kalang River.
- Not usually seen on land unless basking or laying eggs and even then it will remain close to the water.

Bellinger River Snapping Turtle

Critically Endangered NSW & Commonwealth

- In the Bellinger River mostly upstream of Lavenders Bridge at Bellinger.
- Not usually seen on land unless basking or laying eggs and even then it will remain close to the water.

2 How long is its neck and head?



Neck is up to 60% of the length of the shell.



3 What colour are its eyes?



4 Does it have a 'helmet' or head shield?



Obvious cap of hard skin on top of head.

It's never recommended that you capture a turtle or pick it up, especially if it looks sick, but there is one more thing on the underside of the shell that can help tell these three turtles from each other...

Are there black lines along edges of the plates on the underside of the shell?



Eastern Long-necked Turtle



Murray River Turtle



Bellinger River Snapping Turtle

IF YOU FIND A SICK OR DEAD TURTLE, CALL ENVIROLINE ON (02) 6659 8200



BELLINGEN RIVERWATCH