

### Viewing the Red Crab spawning in 2013



Renowned as one of the world's great migrations, the journey made by red crabs from the plateau rainforest to the ocean's edge is a spectacular event that will soon to reach its completion, with the mass spawning (release of eggs into the sea) by millions of female crabs.

Although it is difficult to predict exactly what nature will do each year, it is reasonably well understood that females spawn on an outgoing morning tide during the last quarter of the moon.

It is currently expected that most spawning will occur around **January 6<sup>th</sup> 2013**. It is likely that some crabs may begin spawning a day or two earlier and others will continue three to four mornings afterwards with diminishing numbers as time progresses.

Parks Australia

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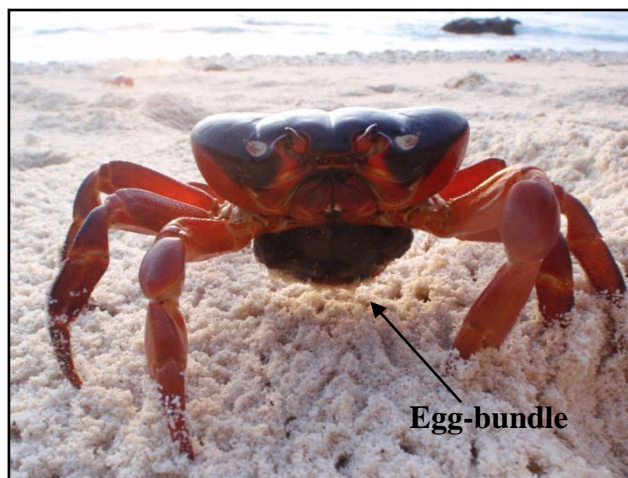
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When they spawn, females go down to the water's edge under the cover of darkness, around two hours before sunrise (which is about 5:30 am). If you want to watch the spawning, be on the beach by 4 am and bring a torch and your camera! As soon as the females spawn they commence their return migration immediately, departing the beaches and moving inland. Please drive carefully to avoid returning female crabs and be prepared to rake them out of the way after watching the spawning.

### Some of the best locations to view the red crab spawning

- **Flying Fish Cove** - Has easy access and is a great place to observe the spawning. The Cove car park will be closed to vehicles, so please park at the Post Office.
- **The Resort- Waterfall Cove** - If you are staying at the resort, this is a great place to go. Cliffs on either side make for a spectacular backdrop as thousands of crabs descend the walls. Just walk down the track coming off the turning loop out the front of the Resort and you'll be there in 5 minutes.
- **Ethel Beach** - Is an ideal location with plenty of beach to watch spawning crabs. The road will be closed to vehicles at the gate into Ethel Beach, so please park at Lily beach or up the hill before the steep section of the road. If you park at Lily, arrive and leave early because the road will be covered with thousands of female crabs on their return migration, possibly for the first kilometre or more. If you intend to stay till after sunrise, it may be best to park higher up the hill. The chalk pit is 1.5 km along the road from Ethel Beach, but you can get a bit closer and park along the road edge if needed. Best to leave your car pointing uphill and towards town so you don't have to do a three-point-turn over crabs.



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Please carry a rake in your car and if there is any risk of hitting crabs, and provided **it is safe to do so**, slowly drive around crabs or get out and clear crabs out of the way before proceeding. It is especially important to avoid deaths of egg-laden females so they get a chance to spawn.

Red crabs and robber crabs are protected and killing them due to deliberate or reckless behaviour may be subject to a \$5500 fine.