

SALTWATER crocodile

LIVING DINOSAURS

Crocodiles have existed for over 200 million years.

SIZE: <700CM

DIET: FISH, BIRDS, MAMMALS, MONITOR LIZARDS, SNAKES, EAGLES
NO PREDATORS AS ADULTS

HABITAT: COASTAL AREAS AND RIVERS

FOUND: SOUTHEAST ASIA, NORTHERN AUSTRALIA, INDIA

ROCK AND ROLL

The tooth studded jaws of a crocodile can grab and crush but not chew!

This is why they roll their food to drown it and eat rocks to help their stomach grind.



Saltwater crocodiles are the largest reptiles in the world.

Starting off the weight of a tomato - they grow to 7m, live for 75 years and weight over 1,000kg!

WITH ARMOUR PLATED BODIES AND TOOTH STUDED JAWS, CROCODILES ARE APEX PREDATORS OF THE LAND AND SEA

senses

Pores in a crocodile's jaw bones detect movement and vibrations in the water.

Crocodiles close their ears! A moveable flap covers the external ear opening to stop water coming in when diving.

A crocodile's tongue is bright yellow or orange!

Positioned high for wide screen vision their eyes also feature built in mirrors to see in the dark and a third eyelid for underwater protection.

body

To stay underwater longer, teeth like valves in their heart shut off blood to the lungs, sending more to their muscles instead.

Their stomach is so acidic it digests bones.

Crocodile blood contains a powerful antibiotic that prevents wounds from getting infected.

Crocodiles have 5 fingers and 4 webbed toes. Their legs are larger and stronger than their arms to launch the crocodile forward as it attacks.

Saltwater crocodiles have interlocking teeth designed to pierce and puncture prey.

New teeth are grown every two years.

scales

Covered in bony scales that act as solar panels, saltwater crocodiles trap warmth from the sun, heating their blood and giving them energy.

Belly scales are smooth to reduce friction when moving over ground.

Neck scales are small and flexible so the head can flick back and snap up prey.

Raised scales along the tail, called scutes, increase swimming efficiency by channelling water to each side.

tail

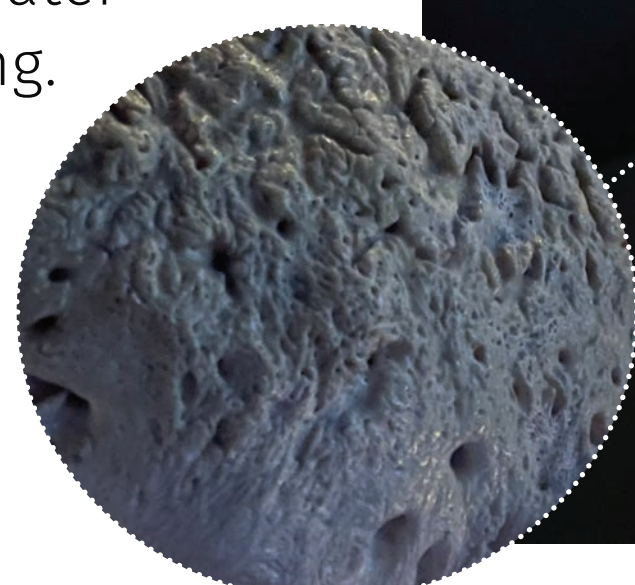
60% of food energy is stored in the tail as fat.

A crocodile's tail makes up half of its body size.

To swim crocodiles sweep their tail from side-to-side. This creates an s-shaped movement that propels them through the water.

A CLOSER LOOK

The scientific name of the saltwater crocodile, *Crocodylus porosus*, means 'pored crocodile'. 'Porosus' refers to the tiny pores found all over a crocodile's skull and jaws. The pores in the skull help to reduce the weight of the skull without reducing its power. The pores also have blood vessels that connect to sensory bumps that detect changes in water pressure- such as prey swimming.



BEHAVIOUR

land & sea



Crocodiles take energy saving to the extreme. Using zen-like powers of relaxation crocs can slow their heart rate to just 2-3 beats per minute and have solar powered scales to heat and power their body.

Able to survive on the land and in water a crocs' quirky talents include holding their breath for over an hour and leaping over low obstacles while running.

Being reptiles, crocodiles cannot regulate their body temperature from within, instead they use their environment to maintain an optimal temperature range. Kickstarting their day with a sunbake, saltwater crocodiles will then submerge, spending hours lurking just below the surface with only their eyes and nose out of the water.

If cold they will bask in the sun, if warm they move into the water or the shade.

Crocodiles will also relax in the sun after eating as increasing body temperature increases the rate of digestion and rate of protein breakdown and absorption.

CROCODILES ARE PATIENT AND POWERFUL PREDATORS THAT AMBUSH THEIR PREY.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

By sunbaking or lying motionless in the water, energy is only used when these patient predators launch out of the water to ambush their food.

THE CROCODILE ROLL

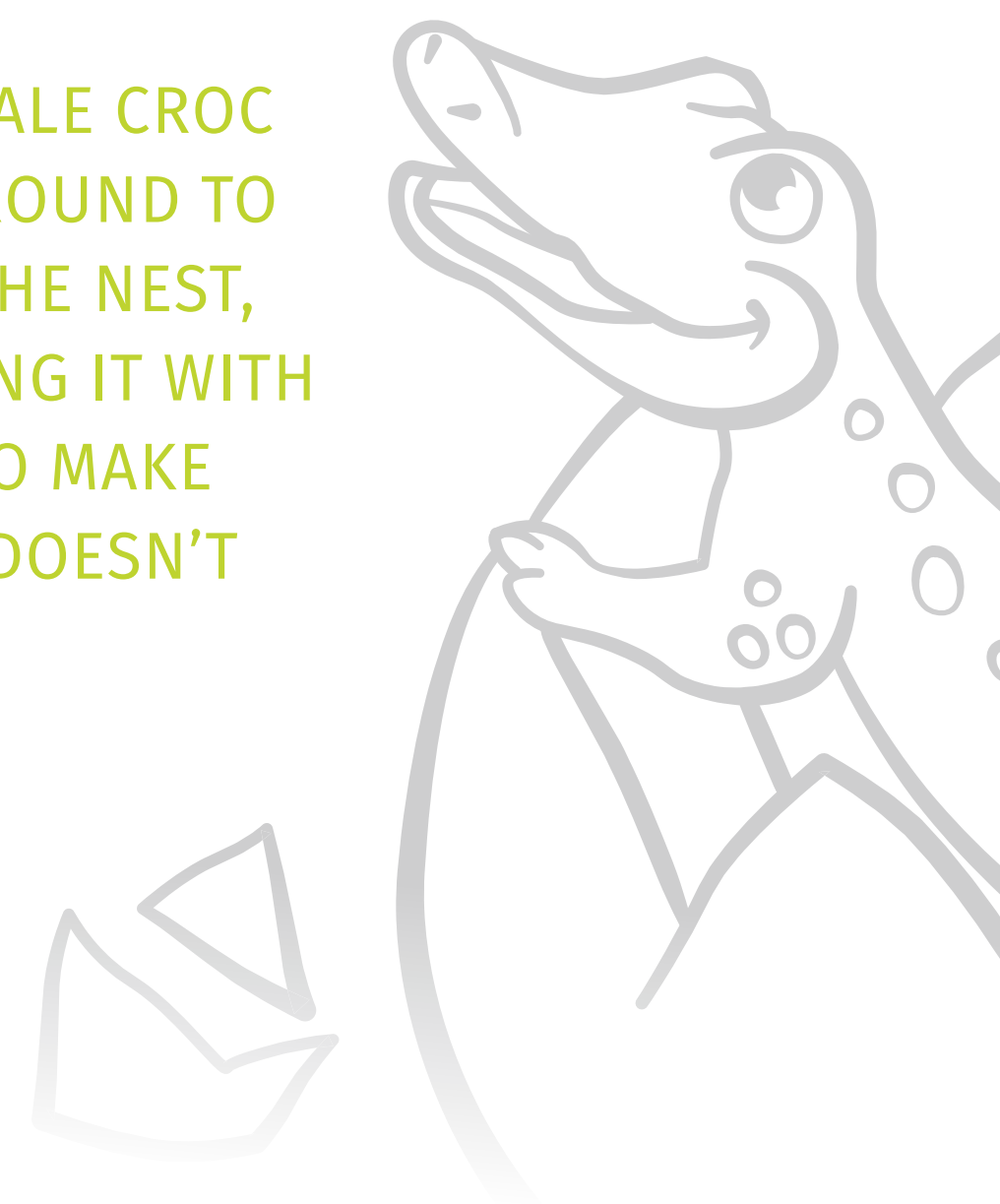
Crocodiles grab their prey and move to deep water, where they repeatedly roll to try and drown or break the neck of the prey.

Instead of chewing their food they swallow it in large chunks. To break down their chunky food, crocodiles swallow rocks!

The rocks help to grind up the food in their stomach, getting more nutrients out of it. Energy from their food is stored in their tail as fat.

This becomes such a good store that it is estimated large crocodiles can last up to 2 years between meals!

THE FEMALE CROC STAYS AROUND TO GUARD THE NEST, SPLASHING IT WITH WATER TO MAKE SURE IT DOESN'T DRY OUT



DID YOU KNOW?

The temperature of a crocodile's nest determines if boys or girls are born! If the nest is less than 30°C the hatchlings will all be female. If the above 32°C they will all be males.

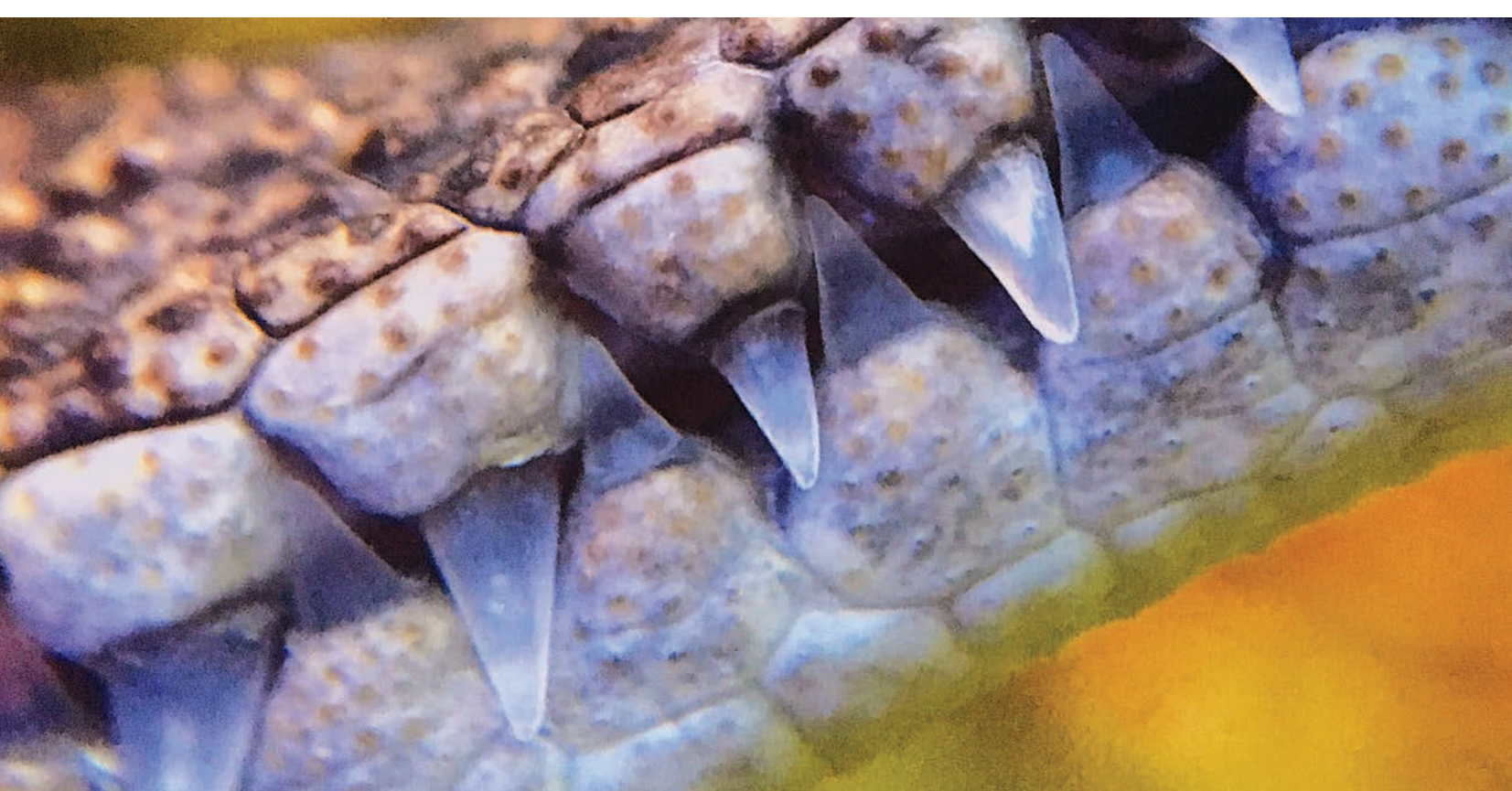
FRESHWATER SALTIES

Although they are named 'Saltwater' crocodiles, they can be found 240km upstream in fresh water.

HURDLES

Crocs can lift their whole body off the ground while running at 19km per hour.

When the eggs are ready to hatch, the baby crocodiles start chirping. This helps to indicate the mother to help them dig out of the nest. She then immediately takes them straight to the water's edge in her mouth, where she watches them until they can feed and look after themselves



A CLOSER LOOK

A crocodile's jaw closes alike a zipper, trapping food inside.

A CLOSER LOOK

Crocodiles have a vertical pupil, this helps give them an ultra - wide vision.

