

Encouraging community involvement in the recovery of the Margaret River Marron

THREATENED SPECIES NETWORK COMMUNITY GRANTS PROFILE



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Endemic to the Margaret River, the range and distribution of the critically endangered Margaret River or 'hairy' marron has declined dramatically in the last 20 years, and there is widespread concern about sustainability of this species.

The Cape to Cape Catchments Group in partnership with the WA Department of Fisheries, local landholders and other members of the Margaret River Marron Interim Recovery Team used a Threatened Species Network Community Grant to implement priority actions of the Margaret River Marron Interim Recovery Plan. These included increasing public awareness of the species, reducing competition from the introduced smooth marron, and monitoring hairy marron habitat and distribution.



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Hairy marron (*Cherax tenuimanus*)

Commonwealth Status: Endangered (EPBC Act 1999).

WA Status: Critically Endangered (Wildlife Conservation Act 1950)

This species of marron is found exclusively in the Margaret River of South-West Western Australia, and it gets its second common name from the clusters of short hairs that cover the head and sometimes the tail. It is believed that the smooth marron that have been introduced to the Margaret River are out-competing the hairy marron for food and habitat. The smooth marron is native to other river systems in South-West WA and is quite common. They are easily distinguishable from the hairy marron due to the lack of hair clusters.

Project outcomes

The project partners purchased marron traps and trained local landholders in fish-out methods. Two very successful community fish-outs of feral smooth marron were held during the project and regular fish-outs continue to be held, creating a 'buffer zone' on Margaret River where feral smooth marron are continuously removed to reduce the pressure on the hairy marron - much to the delight of the residents of a local retirement home who are the recipients of the smooth marron!

As a result of this project, networking among organisations involved in catchment management has resulted in better intelligence gathering and information sharing in this region. Cape to Cape Catchments Group also developed an awareness raising program, including educational resources and signs, with the result that not only has the community become more aware of the species but is heavily involved in its conservation. The hairy marron has effectively been established as a flagship species for the region.

Outputs

Area surveyed:
60km of Margaret River

Volunteers participated: 19

Person days worked: 29

Products

- Hairy Marron / Smooth Marron ID card
- Display banners
- Marron compliance/interpretive signs
- Hairy Marron Recovery Project T-shirts

Expenditure

TSN grant funds - \$18,150.00

Proponent - \$67,824.03

Total project - \$85,974.03

Cape to Cape Catchments Group, 2006. Final Report to the TSN on "Encouraging Community Involvement In the Recovery of Margaret River Marron" (TSN reference WA16/104)

WA Department of Fisheries, 2007. Identifying Freshwater Crayfish in South West WA. <http://www.fish.wa.gov.au/docs/pub/ldCrayfish/ldCrayfishPage02.php?0304>