



Term 2, Lesson 1

Threats to Freshwater Turtles

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify the threats to freshwater turtle species;
2. Describe how the threats impact turtle populations.

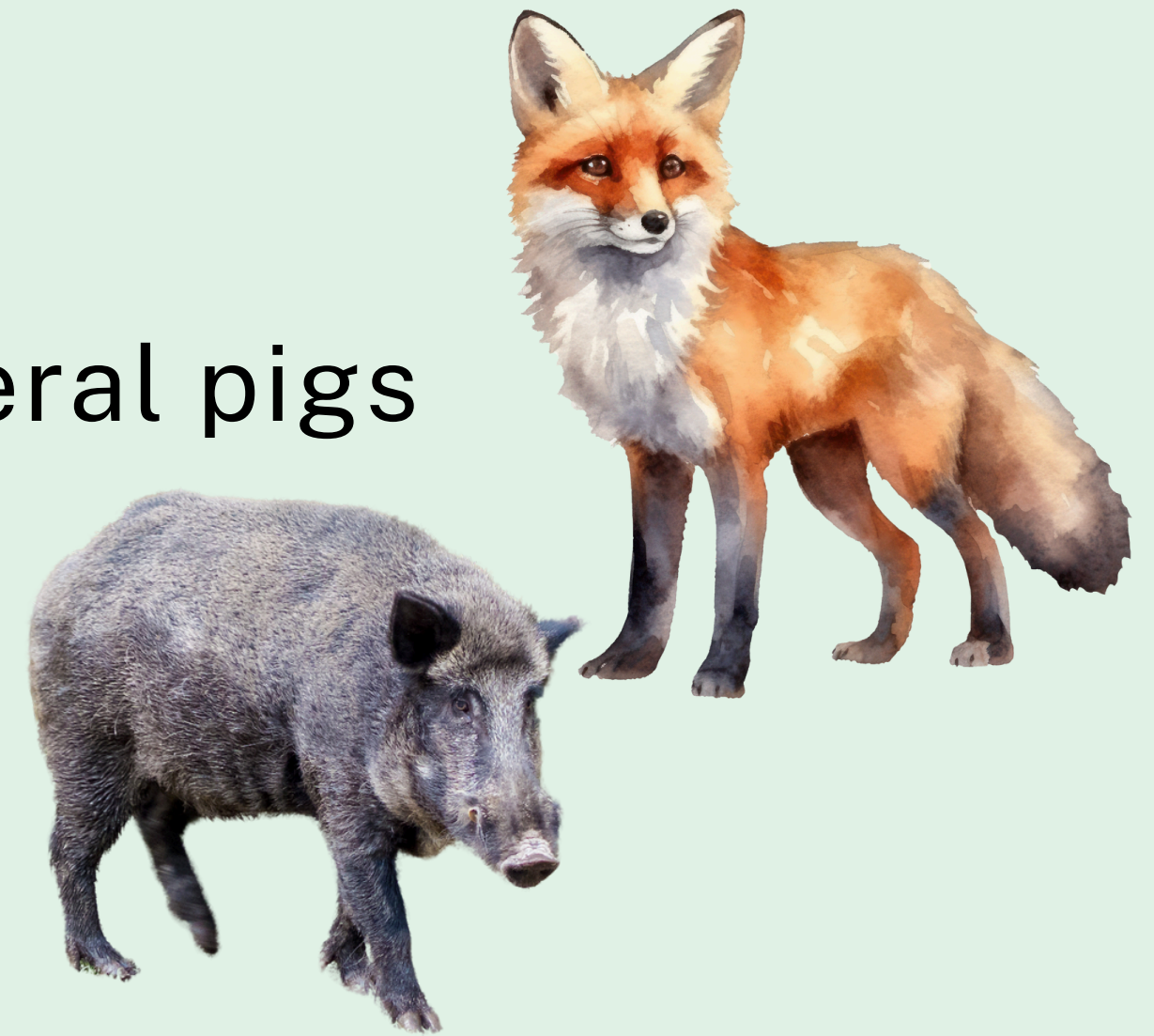


Photo credit: Dr. James Van Dyke

Freshwater turtle declines

Habitat loss and degradation - urbanisation, agricultural activities, land clearing and dam construction reduce the availability of suitable habitats, nesting sites and food sources.

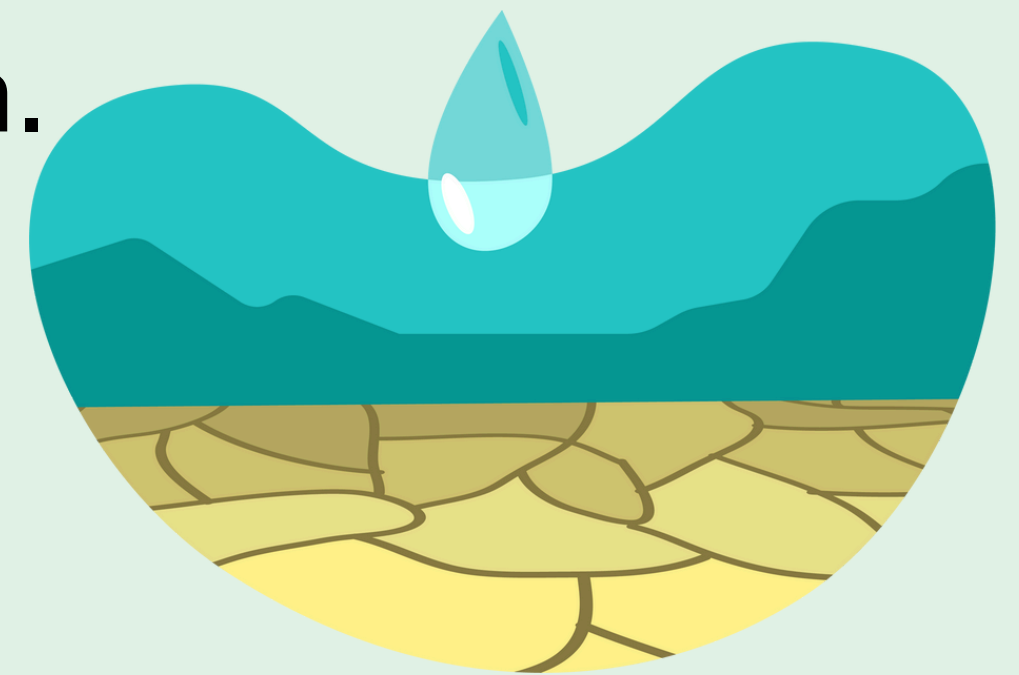
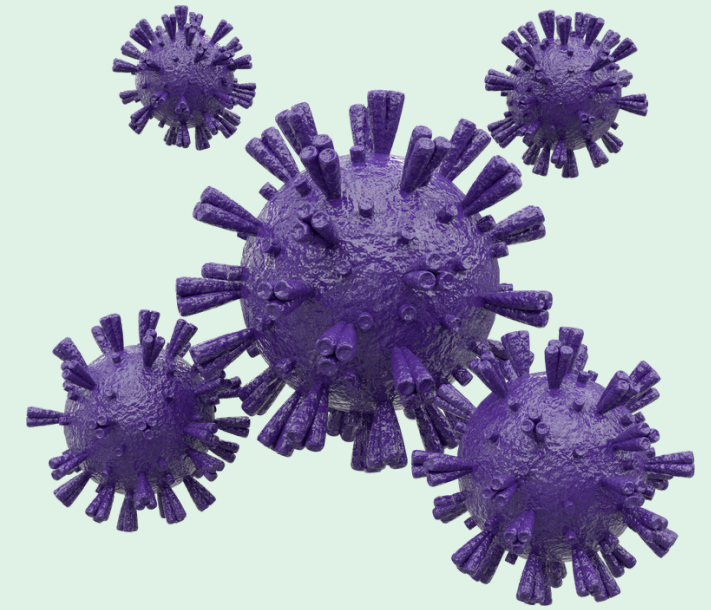
Predation by introduced predators - Feral pigs and foxes pose a significant threat to freshwater turtles and their eggs.



Freshwater turtle declines

Disease - disease and infections can have devastating impacts on turtle populations.

Climate change - rising temperatures may affect nesting success as turtles rely on specific temperature ranges for incubation. Alterations in rainfall patterns and increased frequency of droughts may impact habitat and food availability.



Freshwater turtle declines

Road mortality - Australia's extensive road network intersects with many freshwater habitats creating barriers to turtle movement and dispersal.

Roads adjacent to nesting locations pose a significant risk to nesting females.



International Union for the Conservation Nature - Red List

The primary purpose of the IUCN Red List is to evaluate the conservation status of species and provide information to guide conservation actions and policy decisions.

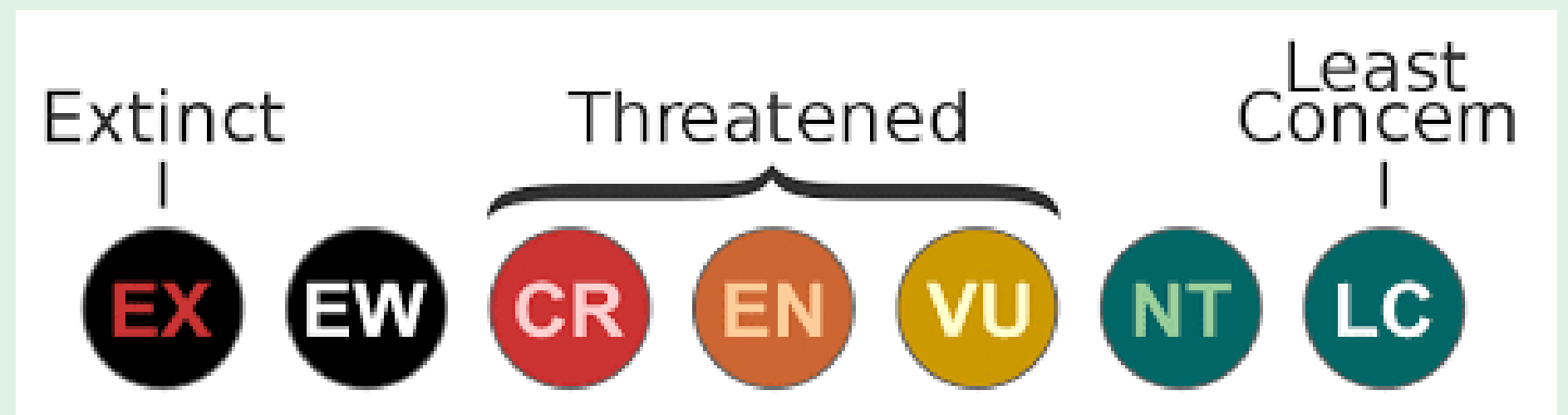
Species assessments for the IUCN Red List are conducted by a global network of experts, including biologists, ecologists, taxonomists, and conservationists.



International Union for the Conservation Nature - Red List

The IUCN Red List Categories are:

- Extinct.
- Extinct in the Wild.
- Critically Endangered.
- Endangered.
- Vulnerable.
- Near Threatened.
- Least Concern.



Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

- The EPBC Act 1999 is a key piece of environmental legislation in Australia.
- Under this act, the Australian Government has the authority to identify and protect species and ecological communities that are threatened with extinction or are otherwise at risk.



Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

- Species listed under the EPBC Act receive legal protection and are subject to specific conservation measures and management actions aimed at preventing further decline and promoting recovery.



Classroom Activities

Activity 1 -

- Choose an Australian freshwater turtle species.
- Identify and describe the main threat to the species.
- Outline the current conservation strategies and present your findings.



Photo credit: Dr. Anthony Santoro

Classroom Activities

Activity 2 -

- Categorise the turtle species from Activity 1 based on their conservation status under the EPBC Act 1999 and IUCN Red List.

