

Charles Darwin University
Bare Sand Island
DURATION: 3min 05

AUDIO TRANSCRIPT

MICK GUINEA: Bare Sand Island is approximately fifty kilometres from Darwin and due west of Darwin and the primary research there is the sea turtle biology and its focusing on Flat Back sea turtles. They're the major species. And it's also a species that we know very little about in Australia.

I started research in that area in 1986 and from there its developed. Each year its grown larger and larger and we've expanded our scope of research.

The student camp started in 1995 and we've been running them every year since then in the June July period, during the University break.

With our research as it started we were standing on the edge of the unknown and each year we're still standing on the edge of the unknown.

Each year we're finding new and varied things about the turtles. We have different numbers of turtles, we have different sand temperatures, we have different survivorships depending on beach vegetation so the students are really given the opportunity to have a look at something that's not scripted its variable but there's good numbers of turtles and they get hands on experience. Real hands on experience.

They actually get to measure and tag the turtles. They get to dig the nests up after they've been hatched. So they get an experience that is well worth in their future careers – it demonstrates an ability for field work and also it demonstrates an ability to collect data in a very systematic manner.

We've had students from New Zealand, from Brazil, from Denmark, from the Netherlands and also from just about every university of Australia. They've come here. And they've gained the experience, and then they actually become Environmental Officers specializing in sea turtle biology for various companies.