



Protecting Exmouth's Turtles and Seabirds

The Ningaloo Coast is one of Australia's most important marine wildlife habitats. Exmouth's beaches and nearshore waters support endangered marine turtles including Flatback, Green and Loggerhead turtles and are home to vulnerable seabird species such as wedge-tailed shearwaters, Storm-petrels and coastal Terns. These species rely on dark, natural night skies to nest, feed and navigate.

Artificial light from homes, vehicles and public spaces can disorient wildlife, drawing them inland or off course with often fatal consequences. At Sundrift Exmouth, we are committed to supporting the Shire of Exmouth's and the Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions (DBCA's) conservation objectives creating a community that protects the natural night environment.

This brochure outlines how residents and builders can reduce light pollution in line with DBCA guidelines.

What Is Light Pollution?

Light pollution occurs when artificial light shines outward or upward, brightening the night sky and interrupting natural animal behaviours. Even low level skyglow can alter navigation cues for turtles and seabirds.

At Sundrift Exmouth, public lighting has been designed to:

- Use low-intensity, warm-spectrum lighting
- Be spaced only as required to meet Australian Standards (AS1158 & AS4282)
- Avoid lighting parks wherever possible

Together, we can achieve a neighbourhood that enjoys safe, functional lighting while protecting Exmouth's wildlife and dark, natural night skies.



Why Light Matters

Turtles

- Exmouth beaches are nesting sites for Flatback, Green and Loggerhead turtles.
- Nesting season occurs from November to March (peak December to February).
- Hatchlings use the natural glow of the ocean horizon to navigate to the sea.
- Artificial light, including skyglow, can cause hatchlings to crawl inland where they may die from predation, dehydration or vehicle strikes.

Seabirds

- Shearwaters and other seabirds navigate, feed and migrate at night.
- Young seabirds are highly sensitive to bright white or blue light and may become disorientated.
- Reducing light helps prevent seabird "fall-out" events and supports breeding success.



How you can help

When Designing or Building

Incorporate the following into your home design to align with DBCA's lighting guidelines:

- Provide a copy of this brochure to your builder.
- Minimise the number of external light fittings.
- Select full cut off, downward directed luminaires.
- Use warm-coloured lighting and avoid blue and white LEDs.
- Only use lighting essential for safety or access.
- Direct light fittings away from beaches.
- Install timers, dimmers, or motion sensors to reduce unnecessary lighting.
- Use landscaping or vegetation buffers to naturally shield light.
- Apply block out blinds, curtains or window tinting to limit internal light spill.

Around Your Home

- Turn off outdoor lighting when not required, particularly during turtle nesting season.
- Avoid shining torches, camera flashes or car headlights toward beaches.
- Close blinds after dark in beach facing rooms.
- Use task lighting instead of full room lighting at night.
- Maintain vegetation that provides natural screening.

When at the Beach

- Avoid using torches or headlamps on beaches at night; if needed, use a red filter.
- Do not disturb nesting turtles, stay at least 10 metres back and remain low and quiet.
- Never use flash photography near wildlife.
- Keep dogs away from nesting beaches.
- Avoid parking your car on nesting beaches.
- Follow marked beach access paths and avoid dune vegetation.

Did You Know?

- The Ningaloo Coast is one of the world's most significant turtle nesting regions.
- Light pollution affects navigation, foraging, breeding success and survival for both turtles and seabirds.
- Even small changes at a single home can reduce skyglow in coastal communities.

If You Find Disoriented Wildlife

✗ Do Not

- Pick up hatchlings or adult turtles unless directed by DBCA.
- Attempt to guide hatchlings to the water.

✓ Do

- Keep lights off and reduce movement.
- Call for advice immediately.

Learn More

Department of Biodiversity, Conservation & Attractions (WA)
<https://flatbacks.dbca.wa.gov.au/what-we-do/research/threats/light>
Sea Turtle Alliance
<https://seaturtlealliance.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Cut-the-glow-brochure.pdf>

Report Injured or Disoriented Wildlife

DBCA Exmouth Office (08) 9947 8000
Wildcare Helpline (08) 9474 9055



EXMOUTH
SALES AGENT



OWNER &
DEVELOPER

Fowler CELSIUS
GROUP LAND

PROJECT
MANAGER

sundriftexmouth.com.au

