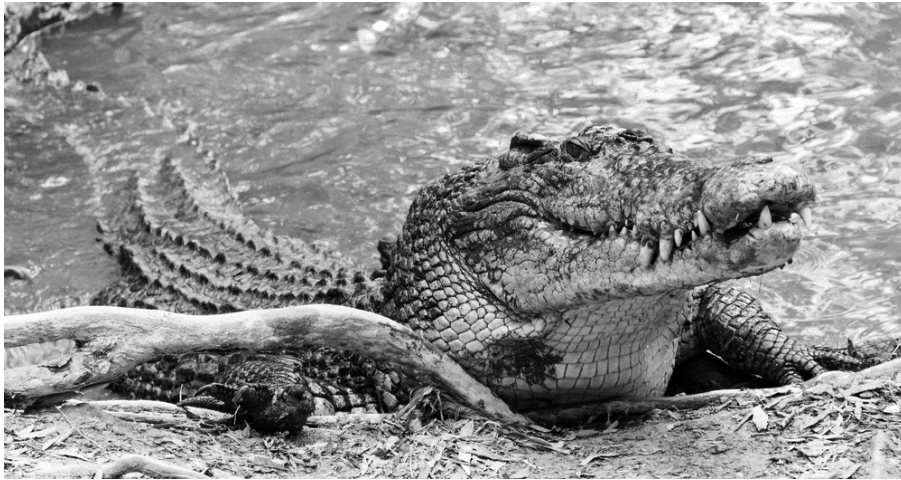


Saltwater crocodile



- 1 A former Crocodylus Park employee has escaped the jaws of a criminal conviction after he kept a saltwater croc as a pet to save it from death. Matthew Danvers, 27, yesterday admitted he had possessed a protected animal without a permit. The Darwin Magistrates Court heard the saltie – about 70cms long – was found at a Berry Springs property in January. Prosecutor Martin Fisher told the court the croc had been tagged “in very poor condition” when Danvers took it three years earlier. The court heard the reptile was found in good condition and had since been relocated to the Territory Wildlife Park. The judge said “so in a sense he sort of thought he was saving it?”, to which the defence lawyer said “yes”. She said Danvers did not benefit financially. She said her client was in his final year of an environmental management degree and wanted a future in the sector.
- 2 The judge said it was clear Danvers had a “passion for wildlife” but had made an “error of judgment” when he chose to keep the croc without a permit. Danvers did not receive a conviction and was put on a good behaviour bond for six months. Crocodylus Park owner Grahame Webb said although Danvers had good intentions, it was the principle of the matter. “Croc management is only going to work if people follow the rules,” he said. “People get tempted to break them but they risk the whole program by doing so.”

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