

RED CRAB MIGRATION BULLETIN NO. 5 - 2009

- Issued 30 November 2009
- Male crabs have commenced their return migration. The first crabs began crossing plateau roads on Saturday afternoon and have continued since. Roads have had to be closed again while high numbers of crabs are crossing.
- Mating has been completed and the females will now hunker down in the burrows on the shore terraces to brood their eggs. The eggs are exuded from their body in a mass which is held between the extended broad abdomen and the body by small arm like appendages called pleopods.
- It will take about 12-13 days for the eggs to mature. They start out a bright orange colour and gradually turn a dark grey/black as the crab embryo develops in the egg. A single female can hold up to 100,000 eggs.
- The females will begin to emerge from the burrows laden with eggs a few days before spawning, which is expected around 11 December. They will dip in the sea but not drop their eggs after emerging. They will retreat to shade and cover and then move down to the water the following morning to drop the eggs into the sea (spawn).
- Drive slowly and carefully in areas where you encounter high crab numbers.
- Roads will continue to be closed at selected areas while high numbers of crabs are crossing. Check the red and white road closure signs for the latest or contact Christmas Island National Park 91648700.
- thanks for your continued cooperation during this amazing time.....
enjoy and appreciate one of the worlds natural wonders!!!!!!

