# Our History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1949</strong></td>
<td>Park founder Eric Worrell opens his first tourist attraction, The Ocean Beach Aquarium, at Umina on the Central Coast</td>
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<td><strong>1958</strong></td>
<td>The Ocean Beach Aquarium moves to North Gosford and becomes the Australian Reptile Park. During the next few years Eric becomes a well-known identity Australia-wide as a naturalist and the Park grows rapidly.</td>
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<td><strong>1963</strong></td>
<td>Australia’s first ‘big’ icon and the Reptile Park’s mascot – 40 tonne, 30 metre, ‘Ploddy’ the Dinosaur – is built at the Park entrance overlooking the Pacific Highway.</td>
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<td><strong>1970</strong></td>
<td>The Reptile Park begins providing funnel-web spider venom to the CSL in the long process of developing an antivenom.</td>
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<td><strong>1980</strong></td>
<td>Finally, the long-awaited funnel-web spider antivenom is made available</td>
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<td><strong>1989</strong></td>
<td>4.7 metre long ‘Eric’ the salt water crocodile is imported from the Northern Territory on a special jet freighter – named in honour of Eric Worrell</td>
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<td><strong>1993</strong></td>
<td>A location for the new Australian Reptile Park is found: a beautiful bushland site is chosen at Somersby, near Gosford, adjacent to Old Sydney Town.</td>
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<td><strong>1996</strong></td>
<td>The new Reptile Park’s grand opening is held on 7 September, signalling the first relocation of a fauna park of its size in Australia. The event is preceded by a parade through Gosford celebrating the relocation of Ploddy the dinosaur to its new home.</td>
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<td><strong>1998 - 9</strong></td>
<td>The Reptile Park wins the regional, State, and National Tourism Award for Best Regional Attraction, two years in a row</td>
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<td><strong>2000</strong></td>
<td>A devastating fire wiped out Reptile Park’s main building, destroying Australia’s largest collection reptiles, amphibians and spiders on the night of 16 July. All the external facilities and animals, including Eric the crocodile, escaped the fire. A fault in an electrical lead was found to be the cause. The exciting and unique Lost World of Reptiles exhibit opens on Boxing Day, attracting record crowds.</td>
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<td><strong>2001</strong></td>
<td>Spider World, the final part of the rebuilding process opens to the general public at Easter.</td>
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<td><strong>2008</strong></td>
<td>Australian Reptile Park Director John Weigel receives one of the nation’s highest civilian awards – Member (AM) of the Order of Australia. The award was in recognition of John’s contributions to Australian tourism, herpetology, and snake venom production.</td>
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<td><strong>2015</strong></td>
<td>General Manager Tim Faulkner awarded the Australian Geographic Conservationist of the Year</td>
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<td><strong>2018</strong></td>
<td>Celebrated 60 years of operation as The Australian Reptile Park</td>
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<td><strong>October 2018</strong></td>
<td>Won several awards at the Central Coast Business awards including:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Central Coast Business of the Year</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Excellence in Business</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Outstanding Business Leader: Tim Faulkner (Director)</td>
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<td>• Outstanding Young Employee: Amanda Woodbine (Marketing Manager)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>November 2018</strong></td>
<td>Won several awards at the New South Wales Business Awards including NSW Business of the Year and Excellence in Business</td>
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<td><strong>December 2018</strong></td>
<td>A brand new Komodo Dragon exhibit and newly constructed Undercover Area is opened to the public.</td>
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<td><strong>2019</strong></td>
<td>A stellar year of awards. Standout awards in 2019 included Major Tourist Attraction at the Regional and State Tourism Awards, and Excellence in Business at the Central Coast Business Awards.</td>
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About Us

The Australian Reptile Park was established in 1948 by the late and great Eric Worrell – Australia’s first naturalist. It is now regarded as one of the country’s premier attractions. The Australian Reptile Park is the only zoo in Australia committed to saving lives with a venom milking program in place for the past 50+ years, saving over 300 lives each year being the sole supplier of a variety of venoms, which is used for all snake and funnel-web anti-venom in Australia.

The Australian Reptile Park is a world-renowned hands-on zoo and boasts loads of animal interaction and exciting wildlife shows.

Location

Located in the heart of Somersby on the NSW Central Coast, the Australian Reptile Park is the centrepiece of the region. Nestled in a lush Aussie bush landscape, the Park welcomes visitors from Australia and overseas every day as a great family fun day out.
Attractions

Lost World of Reptiles

Entry to The Lost World of Reptiles can only be gained through the gaping jaws of a 30-metre-long model crocodile. Just inside the croc-mouth, an animated Egyptian mummy urges visitors through to the exhibits. The Lost World of Reptiles is home to some of the park’s reptile collection including Australia’s most venomous snakes, the King cobra, a 6-metre-long Reticulated Python, Leonardo the Alligator Snapping Turtle as well as various snake, lizards, crocodilians, turtles and tortoises.

Spider World

One of the most exciting Australian zoo developments in a very long time is Spider World. Visitors to the Australian Reptile Park have the opportunity to find out everything they ever wanted to know about spiders – including a sneak peek into the life-saving spider milking venom room. Spider World puts the ‘fun’ back into ‘funny’ with lots of interaction for the kids, while at the same time providing visitors with a greatly improved understanding and education of the eight-legged world.

Komodo Dragons

Our newest exhibit is home to Kraken and Daenerys, our resident Komodo dragons. Fully immerse yourself within the ancient Indonesian temple and have a close encounter with the species, known as the world’s largest lizard. After experiencing the steamy temperatures of their enclosure, you may even get up close and personal with the pair on their daily walks around the Park!
Attractions

Eric’s Nature Walk

Eric’s Nature Walk is set in a beautiful bushland setting and features our Nocturnal House, an aviary filled with gorgeous native birds as well as an interactive display of a typical frog pond. The walk is named after the beloved saltwater crocodile, Eric, who was the Park’s main attraction between 1989 and 2007, a memorial is located within Eric’s Nature Walk. It also features some beautiful native plants, including the spectacular local species of waratah.

Elvis’ Croc Exhibit

Elvis the crocodile arrived at the park in September 2007 and has been dubbed Australia’s crankiest crocodile. Elvis was originally from Darwin in the Northern Territory, he was removed from the wild as he was attacking fishing boats in Darwin Harbour. In December 2011, Elvis lost two teeth during an attack on park staff and their lawnmowers. He is always wowing visitors to the Park at feeding time (weekends and holidays only) when he shows off his aggression towards the keepers and his food.

Alligator Lagoon

We have the largest population of American alligators in Australia. They are kept in our large naturalistic lagoon, with over 40 adult alligators living harmoniously together in a manner that isn’t possible with their more aggressive relatives, Australian crocodiles. The Reptile Park is the only facility in Australia to breed alligators successfully, which is due to their lagoon which is very similar to their natural environment and the climate we experience here on the Central Coast which mirrors the Everglades.
Attractions

Nocturnal House

The Nocturnal House is a recent addition to The Australian Reptile Park and within its walls we showcase some of Australia’s most unique and endangered nocturnal species. The first Noctarium in the Southern Hemisphere was actually built at the Wyoming Australian Reptile Park in the early 1970s by Eric Worrell. Our new Nocturnal House is a fitting tribute to this great naturalist and our founder.

Frog Hollow

Frog Hollow allows you to discover our fascinating frogs, each adapted ingeniously for survival in a wide variety of locations. Our displays include frog species native to Australia, as well as giving visitors the chance to see the infamous cane toad. Get ready to have a toadally ribbiting experience.

Platypus House

Our Platypus house is home to our resident Platypus “Yaro”, as well as an array of native birds and fish. Visitors enjoy an intimate encounter with the mysterious Platypus in its captivating nocturnal creek habitat complete with waterfall. A complicated set of burrowing tunnels connect Yaro’s nocturnal creek to an outdoor pond set up with nest boxes.
Animal Talent

**Elvis the Crocodile**
As Australia’s crankiest Saltwater Crocodile, Elvis is a superior hunter and predator who measures at 4.7 metres long. Witness his ferocious power during his feedings in school holidays and weekends!

**Hugo the Galapagos Tortoise**
Hugo has called the Australian Reptile Park home since 1963. He has now reached middle age and is expected to live well over 150 years. At 165kg, he is fully grown and one of our most popular animals.

**Fred & Adina the Dingoes**
Meet the Australian Reptile Park’s power couple! Fred; a rare black and tan dingo and Adina; a common tan dingo, are our ambassadors for this sometimes-misunderstood species. These proud parents have raised some beautiful puppies!

**Rosie the American Alligator**
Known as Ranger Mick’s special girl, Rosie measures in at around 2.2 meters and is much smaller than her male alligator friends. Rosie is a crowd favourite and one of the star attractions at our daily Reptile Show.

**Elsa the Koala**
After Elsa’s mother was unable to provide milk and nutrition for her, Keeper Hayley took on the task of giving Elsa a second chance at life. She is now healthy, thriving, and has just joined the rest of our koala population!

**Hope the Wombat**
Hope had a rough start to life when her mother was hit and killed by a car. Luckily, she was rescued and brought to the Australian Reptile Park for care. She has since turned into a beautiful, happy little wombat!

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**The Best Family FUN Day OUT!**
www.reptilepark.com.au
## Human Talent

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<tr>
<th>Human Talent</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tim Faulkner – Park Director</strong></td>
<td>Wrestling a saltwater crocodile, wrangling a deadly Taipan and milking a funnel-web spider is all in a day’s work for Tim Faulkner and that still leaves time in this passionate conservationist’s day to release a blue-tongued lizard, tag a wild platypus and save the Tasmanian Devil from extinction. Tim made regular appearances on the hit series Bondi Vet and both his series, <em>Outback Adventures with Tim Faulkner</em> and <em>The Wild Life of Tim Faulkner</em>, chronicle his daily interactions with the world’s most dangerous and delightful animals.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dan Rumsey – Reptiles &amp; Spiders</strong></td>
<td>Dan is Head of Reptiles at the Park and his enthusiasm about reptiles is infectious! Whether you want to know about our spiders, alligators, turtles, lizards or snakes, Dan is your man!</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hayley Shute – Mammals</strong></td>
<td>As our resident koala whisperer, Hayley has hand-raised countless little joeys in need. She is a passionate advocate for caring for and protecting Australian wildlife.</td>
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<td><strong>Ranger Mick – Wildlife Educator</strong></td>
<td>Having worked at the Park for close to 27 years, Ranger Mick is proud of the impact we have on children and visitors and educating them about conversation and wildlife. With nearly 46,000 lives shows under his belt, it’s estimated that Mick has performed in front of 5 million people!</td>
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<td><strong>Brandon Gifford – Reptiles</strong></td>
<td>Since joining us as a Reptile &amp; Spider Keeper in 2018, Brandon has been loving every minute! This lovable larrikin could talk underwater and can be seen at our daily Reptile Shows, educating our visitors about spiders, snakes, lizards and crocs!</td>
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The Australian Reptile Park offers on and off-site filming of our animals and facilities, including experienced zoo keeping staff.

We are your one stop shop for animals! Here are a just a few of the animals we have available for filming:

- Australian mammals including koalas, kangaroos, dingos, Tasmanian devils, possums and cassowaries and more!
- Australian reptiles including a five-metre saltwater crocodile, venomous snakes, goannas, lizards, funnel-web spiders, red back spiders and tarantulas
- Exotic reptiles including giant pythons, a Galapagos tortoise, iguana, chameleon, Komodo dragons and an Asian king cobra.

To discuss your needs for filming with the Australian Reptile Park, contact our Marketing Team today for a quote at marketing@reptilepark.com.au or 02 43426 6181.
Media Appearances

Both our human and animal talent is available for media appearances for news stories, television programs, radio interviews/segments and media events. Our friendly Keepers are always happy to have a chat about our superstar animals and can even bring them on set!

Here’s a snippet of just a few of our recent media appearances:

![Media Appearances Image]

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Events & Experiences

We also offer special animal experiences for corporate events, entertainment and education. For your next special event, we can offer your guests a once-in-a-lifetime, hands-on experience with both furry and scaly friends.

Reptiles on the Road
If you’re holding an event and are looking for some entertainment of the reptilian kind, the Australian Reptile Park is here to help!

We can provide reptiles for events ranging from corporate dinners to school fundraisers which may include:

- 5 different reptiles including snakes, lizards, turtles and alligators!
- A 30-minute Reptile Show
- Roving through the crowd with reptiles

For pricing and bookings, call (02) 4340 1022 or email admin@reptilepark.com.au for more information.

Koalas to Your Room
Whether it’s an intimate gathering or major function, our friendly Keepers will come to you with a koala or other native species to let you experience an up close and personal encounter with unique Australian wildlife.

We cater to VIP experiences in the comfort of your hotel room or home and events of up to 1000 people.

This hands-on experience with a cuddly koala is one that your guest will never forget!

For pricing and bookings, call (02) 4340 1022 or email admin@reptilepark.com.au for more information.
The Australian Reptile Park is dedicated to ensuring that our unique Australian wildlife survives and thrives for generations to come. In addition to our on-site breeding programs for an array of endangered species, our wildlife sanctuary Aussie Ark, works to create a long-term future for our threatened Australian species. Located high above the beautiful heritage-listed Barrington Tops of NSW, Aussie Ark is working on projects including a conservation breeding program for the Tasmanian devil, rewilding Eastern quolls and rock wallabies, natural ecosystem protection through wildlife sanctuaries and research surveys.

Find out more at aussieark.org.au
The Australian Reptile Park is extremely proud of its reputation as a source of wildlife education for school teachers and students alike. We welcome school groups in to the Park every week to experience hand-on learning with our school shows that are interactive, educational and structured around key curriculum learnings.

**Click here to learn more about our wildlife education program**
Contact Us

For media enquiries, filming and interview requests, please get in touch today.

Our friendly team will do their best to accommodate your request. We can’t wait to work with you!

The Australian Reptile Park Marketing Team

Phone: 02 4326 6181
Email: marketing@reptilepark.com.au

Follow us on social media!

www.reptilepark.com.au