

# World's largest crocodile dies in Philippines

February 11 2013

---



Lolong, a one-tonne, 6.17 metres crocodile believed to be the biggest to have ever been caught, is seen in a caged pen in the southern Philippine town of Bunawan, on September 21, 2011. Lolong has died, 17 months after the suspected man-eater was hunted down and put on display for tourists, according to his caretakers.

The world's largest saltwater crocodile in captivity has died in the Philippines, 17 months after the suspected man-eater was hunted down and put on display for tourists, according to his caretakers.

"Lolong", who measured 6.17 metres (20.24 feet), died on Sunday night from a mystery illness inside his small enclosure in Bunawan, a backwater town in the country's remote south.

"This is a very, very sad day for us. He had brought fame to our town. We are now thinking of having his remains preserved," town spokeswoman Welinda Elorde told AFP on Monday.

A government-sanctioned hunting party caught Lolong in a sprawling marsh close to Bunawan in September 2011 after it was suspected of biting the head off a young school girl and of eating a fisherman.

Its capture made the town famous and Lolong, named after a local crocodile hunter, became a big tourist attraction.

But it also put the spotlight on the plight of the [crocodiles](#) in the Philippines' remote marshes and rivers, as human habitation increasingly put them in conflict with the animals.



A worker puts ice blocks on the remains of the 6.17 metre long saltwater crocodile named 'Lolong,' on February 11, 2013, in the town of Bunawan, Agusan del Sur province on the southern Philippine island of Mindanao. Lolong, world's largest saltwater crocodile in captivity, has died, 17 months after it was captured and displayed in a small pond.

Animal rights groups also demanded Lolong be released back into the wild, arguing that the pen that held him was too small and stressful for an animal used to roaming great distances.

But Elorde said caretakers tried to give Lolong everything he needed in captivity, and that releasing him would have left him in the mercy of villagers who would hunt and kill him.

"We tried to give him the best place we could," she said.

The Philippine Star newspaper reported Monday that Lolong had been ailing since swallowing a cord three weeks ago, a claim Elorde denied.

"We have been alternately feeding him with meat and poultry, and there was no way he could have eaten anything other than that," she said.

The [Guinness Book of World Records](#) last year officially declared Lolong the largest crocodile of its kind in captivity.

It dislodged Cassius, a 5.48-metre crocodile kept in a park on an island off Australia's Queensland as the previous record holder.

Lolong belonged to the species *Crocodylus Porosus*, or the Indo-Pacific crocodile, the world's largest reptile, which experts say can live up to a century.

While not on the brink of extinction globally, it is critically endangered in the Philippines, where it is hunted for its hide.

(c) 2013 AFP

Citation: World's largest crocodile dies in Philippines (2013, February 11) retrieved 18 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2013-02-world-largest-crocodile-dies-philippines.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.