



Dr Adam Britton | Erin Britton
<http://crocodilian.com/big-gecko>

PO Box 925
Sanderson
Northern Territory 0813
Australia

Tel. 08 8988 4607
Fax. 08 8988 4607
Mob. 0407 185 182
Email: gecko@crocodilian.com

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Crocodile Attack Victim Faces His Demons **Policeman “thought he was going to die”**

ATTACHED PHOTO: Dr Adam Britton (left) and Dave Salmoni (right) re-introduce Jeff Tanswell (centre) to a saltwater crocodile in Big Gecko’s swimming pool.

In Darwin this week, crocodile expert Adam Britton together with Animal Planet host Dave Salmoni re-introduced crocodile attack victim Jeff Tanswell to a captive saltwater crocodile in the safety of a swimming pool for the first time since his attack earlier this year.

In January 2007 Jeff Tanswell thought he was going to die. A police sergeant with Thursday Island Police Station, he was enjoying the morning snorkelling on the reef near Adolphus Island.

Without any warning, Jeff was attacked from behind by a saltwater crocodile, bitten on the back of the neck and head. “I thought I’d been run over by a boat” he said, “and then I surfaced and found myself looking straight into a crocodile’s eye.”

”I thought he was going to come over and finish me off.”

But his wife intervened, driving their boat directly between Jeff and the crocodile, then pulling him out of the water.

Jeff may have been lucky, but the experience has haunted him ever since.

Now Big Gecko’s Adam Britton has made it possible for Jeff to come face-to-face with a saltwater crocodile once more, but this time in absolute safety. Jeff was in Darwin this week filming a segment for the television show *After the Attack* with host Dave Salmoni. The show explores the reasons behind animal attacks, and the reactions of attack victims towards the animals that nearly killed them.

Dr Britton explains “Crocodiles are not malicious creatures, but they can be dangerous. The one that bit Jeff was clearly out of its element, looking for a new home, and was either surprised that Jeff surfaced near its head and bit him out of shock, or was curious and mistook him for something a little smaller.”

Jeff says he was “very nervous” about coming face-to-face with a crocodile again, and said he felt “nothing but hatred” towards it at first. But after Adam explained the crocodile’s behaviour Jeff’s confidence returned. He explained “I realise that the crocodile didn’t bite out of malice. I can begin to respect them a little more.”

Dr Britton can be contacted for further information or comments by phone on either 0407 185182 or 08 89884607 or by email at gecko@crocodilian.com