



## E-news for members & friends of the

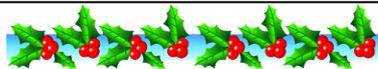
Our Network was formed in response to the turtle crisis caused by 2011's very hot summer, when many of Perth's metropolitan lakes dried up resulting in widespread turtle deaths and a mass rescue of debilitated turtles.

Although our official name is Turtle *Oblonga* Rescue & Rehabilitation Network Inc., or TORRN for short, we will also be using Turtle *Oblonga* Network as a trading name.



## AND SO THIS IS CHRISTMAS AND WHAT HAVE YOU DONE...

Due to the increased number of turtles coming into care our costs are growing along with our wish list!! So why not do something charitable this Christmas by making a donation to help our wonderful oblong turtles - in return we are able to provide you with a tax deductible receipt! Here are just some examples of how your donation to us might be used:



Dear Santa,

- Vet Bills (approx. month) = \$100
- 160L rehabilitation tub = \$70
- Vivarium (for dry docking) = \$350
- 200 insulin syringes = \$50
- Water Plants for enrichment = \$20
- Flamazine Cream 50g / 500g = \$15 / \$100
- Water Testing Kit = \$70
- Betadine (500ml) = \$20

With love from the turtles xx

## HOW YOU CAN DONATE

Tax deductible donations can be made through our public fund account. If you would like to help by donating our direct deposit details are -

<b>Name</b>	<b>Turtle Oblonga Public Fund</b>
<b>Bank</b>	<b>Bankwest</b>
<b>Branch</b>	<b>Booragoon</b>
<b>BSB</b>	<b>306 066</b>
<b>Account Number</b>	<b>273 2950</b>

## SECRETARY'S ANNUAL REPORT 2013

### Turtle Incidents 1 Jan 2013 - 16 Dec 2013

OUTCOME	No.	%
Relocated	84	41%
Released after care	43	21%
Died	31	15%
Euthanased	16	8%
In Care	8	4%
Unknown	18	9%
Eggs	2	1%
Other	2	1%
<b>TOTAL (Turtles)</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>100</b>

### Rescues

With 159 incidents involving 204 turtles answered across the Perth greater metro area, our Turtle Taxi drivers were kept very busy, some clocking up huge mileages over the course of the year. Many turtles were simply relocated but many were injured and admitted into care. The aim of rehabilitation is that animals too sick to recover should be relieved of pain and suffering through euthanasia. It is not considered humane to go to extraordinary lengths to save an animal as this can result in an extended period of suffering which cannot be justified on animal welfare grounds. With more knowledge and experience we continue to strive to reduce the number of deaths-in-care.

Continued...



Regional Turtle Taxis are now operating in Busselton, Albany, Margaret River and Mandurah.

## Training

Two Turtle Taxi training sessions were held this year in March and October. Where necessary we have also carried out individual training sessions.

The one day *Oblong Turtle Rehabilitation* workshop in April was well attended.

Many of our members attended the excellent talks on Turtle Care by the Perth Zoo Vet Department (at Parks and Wildlife), and Dr Lisa Winters' training session at Kanyana. Perth is becoming very turtle friendly.

## Rehabilitation

This is our core business: 43 out of 49 turtles admitted for home care have been released - an 88% success rate.

Equipment has been purchased, both new and second hand. The Network can now loan 160L tubs and vivariums to approved home carers. With an unprecedented number of admissions this year, the equipment has been a life saver for both turtles and carers. A reptile egg incubator was purchased at the beginning of the year thanks to a donation. A clutch of disturbed eggs were hatched in this incubator.

## Home carers

New home carers have resulted from the workshop and hands-on training. Pauline Hewitt, Ruth Haight, Karen Pye and Karen Cavanaugh have been responsible for all home care cases this year. Pauline has been very resourceful in acquiring several Intermediate Bulk Containers (IBCs). These IBCs can be cut down to make turtle tubs with hydroponic gardens above used to filter the water (the hydroponic plants feed on the nutrients excreted by the turtles which in turn filter the water containing the turtles. Many thanks to Pauline and her husband Max for this innovative idea.

## Veterinary care

Turtles have received excellent veterinary attention from the Vets and staff at Wattle Grove Veterinary Hospital. Their generosity and passion for wildlife health has been inspirational. X rays, blood tests, surgical repair and diagnosis are an essential part of wildlife rehabilitation.

Riseley Veterinary Clinic in Myaree, Balcatta Veterinary Hospital and Baldivis Veterinary Hospital have also supported TORRN as have Drs Shane Bessier and Richmond Loh from the Animal Health Laboratories.

## Hatchlings

Some hatchlings (and their egg-laying mothers) have not read the books on the timing of egg laying and egg hatching in Perth. Hatchlings first arrived in February but the busiest months for hatchlings were July & August. Karen Cavanaugh took to nurturing these tiny babies with gusto and has developed a great skill set. She imparted her knowledge to those attending the Oblong Turtle Rehabilitation Workshop in April - Turtle Mama!

## Releases

Finding suitable release sites for our turtles poses many challenges. Access is often a nightmare and considering we have to carry our transport tubs with the turtles inside, steep slopes and slippery grass have resulted in one broken arm (human). The water quality, fringing vegetation, food supplies etc must be evaluated before a turtle can be released. Karen Pye is compiling a criteria list and hopes to compile a comprehensive data base for the wetlands around Perth. Many are polluted, or lack a long term future, so it is a huge but necessary job. Given that Oblong Turtles live for around 80 years we want to utilise relocation sites which will allow the animals to live out the remainder of their lives in the one location.

## Wetland projects

After attending the annual WA Wetland Management Conference in February at the Cockburn Wetland Centre in Bibra Lake, our eyes were opened up to a whole new world. The Turtle Oblonga Network has grown another arm with the help of Karen Pye and Pauline Hewitt who both have expertise in this specialist area. The Turtle Oblonga Network is now involved in three major wetland projects involving turtle relocations.

## Public Relations

Community information sessions are a lot of fun for all ages, especially children. Turtles are very popular creatures with the result that the Turtle Oblonga Network has been invited into classrooms, community groups and environmental centres. TAFE students and Murdoch vet students have also participated in information sessions on turtles.

Continued...



Dianne has written several brochures to complement the original WHAT TO DO IF YOU FIND A TURTLE community handout.

CAPTIVE CARE OF TURTLES has been written for people with Category 3 reptile licences who are keeping turtles in captivity.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ADMIT A TURTLE TO YOUR CLINIC which is specifically for Veterinary practices in WA.

## Membership

Even though membership is free, all applications are subject to committee approval. Membership Secretary Karen has worked successfully throughout the year to increase TORRN's membership base via our Webpage, Facebook and Turtle Tales, our electronic newsletter. As we go to print we have 114 Members and 342 Facebook likes.

## Finance

Thanks to the efforts of the committee, members, and donors the bank balance currently stands at \$5220.61.

A healthy bank balance relieves us of the need to fundraise which allows us to concentrate on our core business of rescuing and rehabilitating oblong turtles.

However, whilst we receive very generous support from our partner Vets who only bill us for consumables, veterinary costs are an ongoing expense which we must be able to meet in order to continue our work. Now that the Turtle Oblonga Network can accept Tax Deductible

donations, we believe this will encourage donations at the end of the financial year, for end-of-year giving and special events such as birthdays.

The most productive (both financially and time-wise) form of income is generated by our community information sessions (given that we can, and will, talk under-water about turtles). If you know of a group within your community which may be interested in a community information session please put in a word for us.

## Goals for 2014

As always, to ensure turtles receive professional and compassionate care by learning about their biology, ecology and their natural life in the wild.

To grow our public relations arm and provide additional information sessions to all levels of government, community groups and students of all ages.

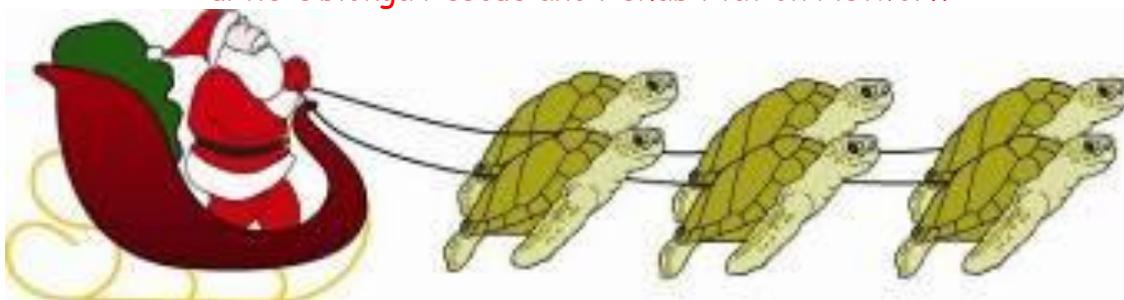
Establish a wetland data base which includes all wetlands and lakes in the Perth metropolitan area and their drainage systems with Nearmaps monitoring of wetlands at pertinent times of the year for turtle nesting, hatching and aestivation.

The Turtle Oblonga Network is more than the sum of its parts; it is a catalyst for a better future for our native turtles, something which has previously been lacking.

Thank you all for your support in 2013; dare to dream of what we might achieve in 2014.

**Merry Christmas and Happy New Year**  
and enjoy our bumper Xmas E-News over the break

**Ruth Haight, Chair-Secretary**  
**Turtle Oblonga Rescue and Rehabilitation Network**





## NOTICEBOARD

### SUPPLIES STILL NEEDED!!

Do you have access to surplus hospital supplies that you could donate to the Network? Please email [Ruth](#) if you can help out. Items we are currently in need of include:

- Cohesive bandage
- Betadine wipes
- Mediswabs
- 10ml Ampoules of Irrigation Saline

### HELP STILL NEEDED!!

Do you have a sewing machine and basic sewing skills? Maybe you'd be willing to help out in a different way by making us some Turtle Rescue vests? Please email [Dianne](#) if you can help.



Do you know of someone who might also like to receive a copy of our E-News? ☺

Please send an email to [Karen](#) with the word "SUBSCRIBE" in the subject line and tell us their NAME, ORGANISATION and EMAIL ADDRESS.

Should you no longer wish to receive our E-News ☹

Please send an email to [Karen](#) with the word "UNSUBSCRIBE" in the subject line.

### SERVICES WE OFFER

We are not just about the rescue and rehabilitation of turtles. Please see our [website](#) for information about the services we provide to the community.

### CONTACTING US

Perth today, tomorrow the State . . .

A reminder that we have expanded the turtle taxi network to include members in Albany, Margaret River and Busselton - so if you need urgent assistance for a turtle rescue or relocation, please call one of our emergency mobiles below - add them in your phone now!

#### PERTH METROPOLITAN

0424 727 411 -East Metro\*  
0424 727 624 -South Metro\*  
0414 476 867 -North Metro\*

#### REGIONAL AREAS

0428 984 445 -Albany  
0438 813 919 -Margaret River  
0437 910 054 -Busselton

## CONTENTS

## PAGE

➤ XMAS MESSAGE/ANNUAL REPORT	1-3
➤ NOTICEBOARD	4
➤ WILDCARE HELPLINE	5
➤ TURTLE ART: MARGIE OLDFIELD	5
➤ SPREADING THE WORD	6
➤ EVENTS PAGE	6
➤ TRAVEL PAGE: KAREN CAVANOUGH	7
➤ MEMBER PROFILE: LISA WATSON	8
➤ TURTLE RESCUES/RELOCATIONS	9-10
➤ TURTLE REHABILITATION	10-11
➤ RESEARCHER PROFILE: MEGAN OGRADY	12
➤ BOOK CLUB	13
➤ MISCELLANEOUS STUFF	14
➤ JUST FOR LAUGHS	15
➤ XMAS LUNCH ACCOMPANIMENTS	16
➤ OUR CONTACTS	16

### TURTLE SHOP

With Christmas just around the corner - why not support us by purchasing something from our [Turtle Shop](#). We will provide a complimentary red organza bag with every purchase. But you'd better be quick!!!





## Wildcare Helpline

The Turtle Oblonga Network receives a lot of support from many different individuals and organisations, one of which is the **Statewide 7-day Wildcare Helpline** which is staffed by volunteers. If you find injured wildlife or wildlife needing help, the *Wildcare Helpline* volunteers will put you in touch with the nearest wildlife rehabilitator, wherever you are in the State. This number **9474 9055** is worth adding to your mobile as you never know when you'll need it.



The *Wildcare Helpline* volunteers render an invaluable service which has benefitted both rescuers, and the animals they have rescued; they have improved the outcomes for rescued animals.

In appreciation of the *Wildcare Helpline* volunteers' work we gave each of them one of our turtle pendants which they received at the annual volunteers' party put on by the Department of Parks and Wildlife.



## TURTLE ART

### GYOTAKU PRINT BY MARGIE OLDFIELD

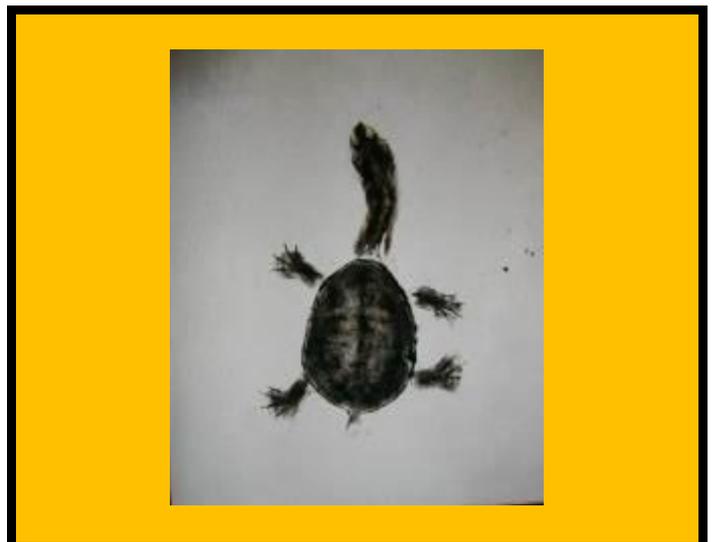
#### Gyotaku ? What's that ?

Gyotaku which translates as "fish-rubbing" is the Japanese art of making fish prints on delicate handmade papers. This artform, also known as fish-printing reproduces the exact features and characteristics of an individual fish.

One process involves brushing a thin coating of ink on the surface of a fish, and making an impression of the inked fish on a thin sheet of paper. The oldest known Gyotaku prints date to the 1860s and were made to record the catch of a Japanese fisherman. Although Gyotaku prints may have originally served to record the sizes and species of memorable fishing catches, it has since evolved into an art form in its own right.

Ruth was delighted to receive the beautiful Gyotaku turtle print shown below as a gift. The artist studied this technique in Japan and is able to make several rubbings from a single specimen.

Turtle cadavers are not only useful in teaching/training sessions, they can be transformed into a thing of beauty that captures the pure individuality of the animal for all time.





## SPREADING THE WORD

### E-NEWS, ONLINE & SOCIAL MEDIA

- **PICS:** If you have any pictures of Oblong turtles (and/or stories about them) for inclusion into the next Turtle Talk OR the website/Facebook page, then **Karen** would love to hear from you.
- **OLD STUFF:** Have you been out of the loop or want to re-read something? Find previous editions of the TURTLE TALK E-News [here](#).
- **UPDATES/NEW STUFF:** We are about to publish a "Captive Turtle Care Document" to our [Documents and Publications](#) link of our Resources page.
- **WESITE:** We welcome your suggestions and comments about our website see: [www.turtleoblonganetwork.org.au](http://www.turtleoblonganetwork.org.au)
- **FACEBOOK:** We are currently sitting on **342** likes and counting! Please **LIKE US** and share things of interest with your friends, as this may also assist us in gaining more likes and subsequent members.

### AND SPEAKING OF MEMBERSHIP.....

- INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS : 114
- PENDING APPROVAL : 3
- GROUP MEMBERSHIPS : 2

To those of you who are receiving/reading this newsletter, but have not yet officially joined us as a member - please do so! Numbers count. Just by becoming a member you are helping. The more members we have, the more supporters our turtles have which will be of benefit when we are lobbying on their behalf. Membership is FREE but you'll still need to complete a membership form. [Download our Membership Form](#).

### CHANGED ADDRESS, EMAIL OR PHONE?

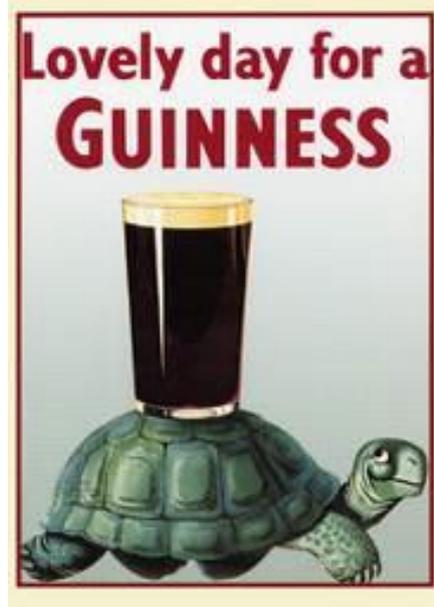
Remembering that we might need to mobilise our forces in the event of emergency, it would be great if our lists of members and friends were always up to date. Please email **Karen** any changes to your contact details.

## EVENTS PAGE

### TENTATIVE 2014 DATES FOR YOUR DIARY...

- Thursday, 9 January : TORRN Birthday Lunch
- Sunday, 16 March : General Meeting 11AM
- Sunday, 6 April : Turtle Rehabilitation Workshop
- Friday, 23 May : World Turtle Day Lunch
- Sunday, 8 June : General Meeting 11AM
- Sunday, 10 August : Annual General Meeting 11AM
- Sunday, 14 December : General Meeting 11AM

*Please note - We have decided to postpone our "Turtles Unmasked" Seminar until 2015.*



### 2014 WA WETLAND MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

World Wetlands Day,  
Friday 31 January 2014, 9am-4pm

The Cockburn Wetlands Education Centre is calling for registrations for the 10th WA Wetland Management Conference. Please see their website or contact their Wetlands Officer, Denise Crosbie for further details...

Phone: (08) 9417 8460

Email: [denise@cockburnwetlands.org.au](mailto:denise@cockburnwetlands.org.au)

Website: [www.cockburnwetlands.org.au](http://www.cockburnwetlands.org.au)



## TURTLE TRAVELS

MEMBER TRAVEL STORIES...

**KAREN CAVANOUGH**

**FLATBACK TURTLE TAGGING ON BARROW ISLAND**

Pendoley Environmental (Marine Conservation Environmental Services) have conducted the Gorgon Project Turtle Tagging Program since 2005. The object of the study is to assess and monitor any impacts on nesting flatback turtle populations on the east coast of Barrow Island during the construction phase of Chevron Australia's Gorgon Project. See the [Pendoley website](#) for more information about the program and the selection process.

Karen recently spent a few weeks on Barrow Island along with 11 other volunteers as part of the Turtle Tagging Program. It is a requirement that everyone attends a two day Chevron induction prior to departure as well as participating in daily meetings and additional training in order to adhere to strict work safety and environmental conditions whilst on the island. Some regulations include strict quarantine and recycling practices, limiting light impacts and no ocean swimming.

Barrow Island is an "A" Class Reserve that boasts a variety of native fauna including the Barrow Island Possum, Spectacled Hare Wallaby and Golden Bandicoot. The island accommodates up to 6,000 people at a number of different camps - the turtle volunteers stayed at Butler Park (formerly the Construction Village). Volunteers were treated to an LNG Tour, a Marine Tour and a West Coast tour - something most people on the island never get to experience.



*Photo credits: K Cavanaugh*

Did you know.... that there are seven species of sea turtles worldwide; that the Flatback Turtle is the only marine turtle that nests exclusively in Australian waters; that adult females can measure up to 90cm

(curved carapace length) and their hatchlings are the largest of any marine turtle?



Volunteers worked at different times each day to accommodate their tidal patterns. Teams of two were rotated and allocated different beaches on each occasion so that everyone worked with each other. Each team conducted beach patrols identifying tracks and processing as many turtles that came to nest as possible, often walking over 10kms per night.



Turtles were scanned for identification, and if not previously tagged, they were micro-chipped with passive integrated transponders or PIT tags, had titanium flipper tags attached and their carapace measured. This data was captured onto data sheets along with the beach, date, time and GPS location. Any injuries (old or new) were also noted and photographed.

Barrow Island Group 1/2013 ended with a remarkable total of 1080 flatback turtle observations which included 685 recaptured turtles, 77 totally new turtles and 13 new with scars. Plus two new Green & one Hawksbill turtle.



*All Photo credits -this column: Pendoley Environmental*

Email [Karen](#) your travel stories particularly about turtles to be featured in future E-News editions.



## MEMBERS PROFILE

### LISA WATSON

I was bought up in Narrogin around cats, dogs and sheep so I really didn't know anything about reptiles, I only knew what I had read in books. I was never exposed to turtles, I'm not even sure they were around because it was always so dry. When I was 14 my Dad got a job in Mandurah, so my relaxing country lifestyle had to end.

Since childhood I have always idolized animals and wanted to work with them. After I finished school I started a Manager in Hospitality course, but dropped out after 6 months and signed up for Cert IV in Veterinary Nursing. I did this full time and completed it in one year. I worked as a vet nurse for a year until my husband Shane and I decided to pack up and travel around Australia. We took two years to get around but still have so much more to see. It was travelling around the country that opened our eyes to turtles. We saw so many turtles in the wild, we were both fascinated. We would be swimming in the river in North Queensland and would see a family of turtles sunning themselves on the logs!

Returning home I went back to vet nursing as I missed it so much. A friend of mine who is a Vet bought us two hatchlings that were very weak and dehydrated. We decided to hand raise them. That honestly was the most amazing experience watching them grow. We were amazed every time they ate, their hunting skills are unbelievable.

Recently I was having a hard time giving our turtles what they needed and started to look into what I could do or who I could contact for advice. This is when I came across TORRN. Since getting in contact with Ruth and Dianne our turtles have been re-wilded and released! What a fantastic moment it was watching them both swim off happily into the new home.



This experience is what has bought me to be a turtle taxi volunteer. Until I did the research and found TORRN I had no idea it existed. Working at a Vet Hospital in Mandurah I can pass on this information to people who need it if they come across a turtle. Even though I've yet to be called out for a turtle rescue, my kit is packed and ready to go and I'm very much looking forward to the day!



Email [Karen](#) if you are interested in becoming the next featured member in this column.

**If you don't start volunteering, we will start targeting individuals or might even start making stuff up about you!!!**



## TURTLE RESCUES/ RELOCATIONS

### EVERY TURTLE RESCUE IS DIFFERENT... AS DIFFERENT AS THE RESCUERS ARE

Not only are turtle rescuers the nicest of people but they're usually very interesting as well. Rescuer Megan was no exception. Megan has a *Land for Wildlife* property and rescues any creature which needs rescuing.

Megan found a large female turtle on the side of a straight, fast semi-rural road where it was being harassed by Ravens. The turtle was taken home and popped into her large hydroponics tank.

After being greeted by the two rescued dogs (one was toothless but had needle like claws as if to make up for the lack of teeth), Dianne was introduced to two rescued pigs - black, gorgeous and hairy - before being taken to the get the turtle. Megan was keen to show off the three motorbike frogs in the turtle's tank but they could not be found . . . Oh dear! All the while, Dianne was wondering whether the turtle had repaid Megan's kindness by helping herself to her frogs.

As so often is the case we couldn't work out where this turtle had come from. As she was unharmed and was in excellent condition, she was relocated to suitable habitat that same day.

### TURTLE EGG RELOCATIONS

During the recent turtle nesting season we were asked to relocate several batches of turtle eggs which were thought to be in a dangerous location.

These requests led to us establish a policy on the relocation of turtle eggs which is based on our belief that turtles know better than we do about where they should lay their eggs; afterall they've been doing it successfully for millions of years. However, in the last 100 or so years of their 200 million year existence their traditional nesting sites have been transformed into children's playgrounds, playing fields, gardens etc - all of which are usually only reached by risking their lives on the roads.

Freshwater turtle eggs and other reptile eggs, unlike marine turtle eggs and birds' eggs, should not be moved once laid as any rolling of the eggs can dislodge and kill the developing embryo inside the egg which makes any relocation of eggs a risky business.

However, we will in extenuating circumstances relocate turtle egg but only as a last resort.

Two such relocations involved eggs at the base of childrens' playground equipment, and in a trailer turn-around site in an area which is rapidly developing from horse properties with acreage to suburban housing. Both nests contained large clutches of eggs at 13 and 15 respectively.



PHOTO CREDIT: M. MCCAFFERY

**Our rescue stories continue...**



## INCIDENT REPORTS

For every turtle rescue, sighting, verbal report we receive, we complete a detailed Incident Report which collects as much information as possible including weather data for the day of rescue. It's said that turtles migrate at times of low barometric pressure but there are undoubtedly other factors, such as humidity, involved as well. We also record stages of the moon as we don't know yet which factors may influence their movement.

All of this information, except for the rescuers' personal information, is made available to researchers.

This year we have recorded 159 Incident Reports (to date).



THANKS TO KAREN'S PARTNER ERIK WHO DID A GREAT JOB TAKING OVER THE NORTH METRO TURTLE PHONE & RESCUES WHILE SHE WAS AWAY RECENTLY 😊

## ERICA THE BEACH BABE

Erik took a call from a rescuer who found an oblong struggling in the surf at Brighton Beach. She was taken into care to ensure she has not suffered any ill effects as a result of her salt water immersion. X-rays revealed no lung damage and Erica was subsequently released 😊

## YOU CALL THAT AN INVITATION !

Dianne recently received a report of several dead turtles at one of the lakes in the southern suburbs. As prospective member Carly lived nearby, she was invited to join the search for the bodies. No, Carly wasn't put off by the nature of the invitation; she didn't get the message in time. Although Dianne didn't find the dead bodies she did find a young female laying eggs and watched over her until she had finished and returned to the safety of the nearby lake.

## TURTLE REHAB

### HOW CRUEL - BELLA'S STORY

Bella was found by a river, tethered to a stake by a piece of fishing line threaded through two cuts deep into her neck. All her nails had been clipped so this was no accidental snag. It was a malicious act.

Luckily Bella was spotted by 2 women taking a morning walk by the river. One of the women was visiting from interstate; she is a wildlife carer. She knew once the sun moved higher in the sky this turtle would be overheated. Turtles are cool creatures, if left exposed with no chance of diving into the water, results are fatal. Bella was taken home and kept cool until a TORRN rescuer arrived.

Understandably, Bella was very traumatised. Wild turtles usually struggle when handled in rehabilitation but quickly learn that they are not being harmed and settle down to tolerating minimal handling. Not Bella, every time she was taken out of her tub for medication or feeding, she dramatically over-reacted. Providing shelters for hiding and covering the turtle in a dark towel when handling, was absolutely necessary and usually reduces stress. However, it is hard to reverse such traumatic stress.

Six weeks later, Bella is well on the way to recovering. Her wounds have almost healed and she is now able to swallow food and her better body condition has helped her nervous system cope with stress. We all get a bit twitchy when we are starving.

The frustrating fact is that perpetrators of acts of cruelty are rarely brought to justice. However if reported to DPaW, other incidents may fit a pattern that can lead to a prosecution. It is important to gather as much photographic evidence as possible. The rescuers did take photos which have been passed on to DPaw's Wildlife Branch.

Bella will be released in the New Year but not at the same site. Her new habitat will be secure with surveillance cameras and daily monitoring so Bella will have a long and peaceful life.

**Rehab stories continue...**



## WHEN TARDIS MET CONNIE

Our rescuers find turtles in all sorts of places and often not near any obvious water bodies. This was the case for aptly named Tardis who just happened to turn up in the middle of nowhere with no rational explanation. Rescuer Connie was walking her inquisitive Alsatian dog close to the intersection of two major roadways when she was stopped in her tracks by the dog sniffing at something. It turned out to be a very large and worse-for-wear female turtle. While managing a large dog on one hand, Connie managed to place the rear end of Tardis in a doggy-waste bag and carry her with the other hand, some 1.5km home where she placed her in a small pond in the back-garden before calling us for help.

Upon rescue and examination it was noticed that Tardis was sleepy and lethargic so she was placed in a dark quiet place in a tub of water to rest and recover. She also showed evidence of a having faced more than her fair share of bumps and scrapes along the way including a healed carapace fracture, a damaged eye and a split lip. Tardis' most noticeable feature was her voracious appetite and she ate over a dozen river prawns and some sardines in just three days.

She received veterinary assessment and was found to have low iron and signs of infection as well as being gravid with one egg. Her eye wound was also not healing well so she received antibiotics and high-iron foods in the TORRN Turtle Hospital.

After a few weeks she was transferred for Stage Three Rehabilitation to a carer. Her appetite increased and she continued to gain weight but her past caught up with her and she developed a fungal infection of her carapace. It is thought that she may not have recovered fully from the initial carapace fracture and may have been immuno-compromised for some time.

Tardis spent another three weeks in Turtle Hospital receiving treatment including betadine baths, dry-docking and pain relief. She is now back in Stage Three care enjoying lots of food and is able to sunbake from an outdoor pond while she continues to recover. She is adjusting well to having one eye and her future looks much more promising thanks to the efforts of Connie and her dog.



*Tardis managed to snatch this rather large sardine from her carer while the carer was trying to lure her back into the pond for feeding time (turtles can only eat in water).*



*Tardis dives back in the pond and takes off with her dinner! Greedy girl swallowed it whole!*



*And finally Tardis doing what she does best... sunbaking at Club Chelodina*

**All Photos Copyright TORRN**



## RESEARCHER PROFILE

### MEGAN O'GRADY

Hi, I'm Megan O'Grady and I am completing my honours research on turtles and foxes in wetlands on the outskirts of Perth. A previous honours study observed foxes as the only predator of turtle eggs, and are having a significant impact on the turtle population in these lakes. The options for lethal fox control (baiting or shooting), are not possible due to the proximity of private property. My study will be trialling various non-lethal methods of protecting the turtle nests to give the hatchlings a better chance of surviving.

One of these methods is to guard the nests with nest cages. We have placed five nest cages with an enticing soil bank inside. The turtles will be able to get in to lay their eggs, but foxes can't. This method has been commonly used to protect sea turtle nests from predators but has not been trialled for this species

Another method of protecting eggs we are trialling, is using a deterrent to prevent the foxes eating the eggs. 40 artificial nests will be installed around the lakes. These nests are made up of two chicken eggs which are buried, some nests will contain an emetic, and the rest will be unchanged. An emetic is a drug which is commonly used by Vets to induce vomiting in dogs. The theory is that the foxes will eat the eggs containing the emetic, feel sick and not want to eat any more eggs again. This has been shown to be effective in other species, but this will be the first time it is used for foxes.

We will be studying the behaviour of the foxes during the study and it is important that we can identify individual foxes to record their responses. To do this we are hoping to trap a few foxes, sedate them, fit radio collars and release them.

I completed one trapping session this year, with another one planned for next year. Over two weeks I captured 157 turtles, but with only one recapture and only a handful of juveniles.

Let's hope that these trials are a success!



If you know of someone who might like to be the next featured Resarcher in this column, please email [Karen](#).

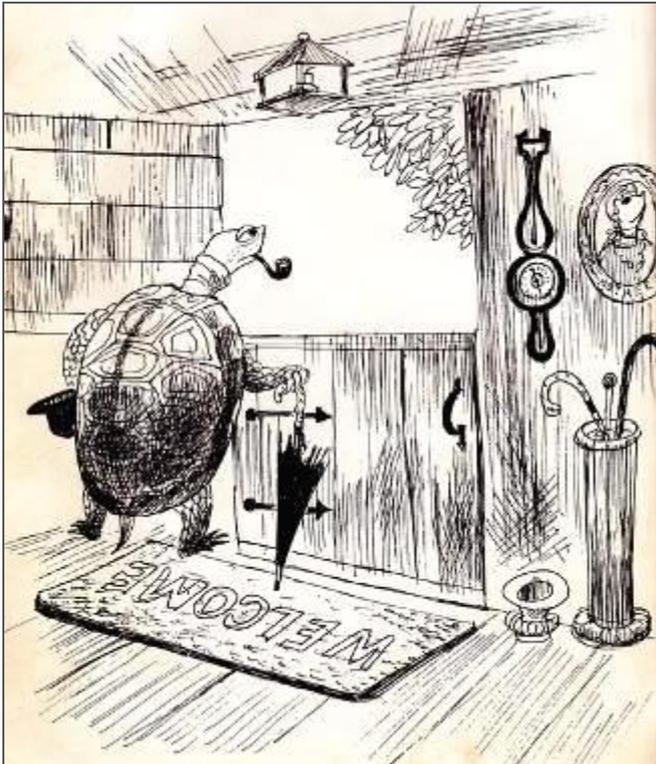


PHOTO CREDIT : M O'GRADY



## BOOK CLUB

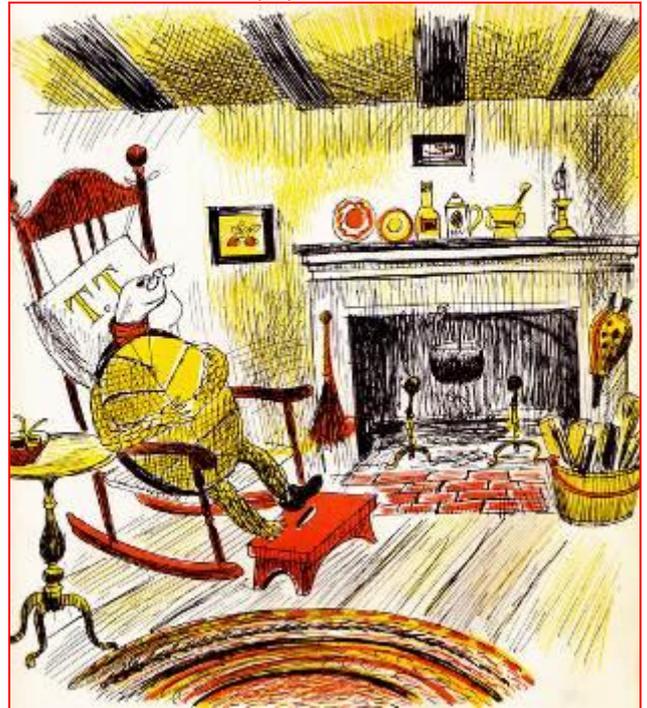
Here is "Theodore the Turtle" as promised for your reading pleasure and amusement! Further instalments will follow in subsequent Turtle Talk editions....



Page 1: Theodore Turtle wants to go shopping but is afraid it might rain. Galoshes are in order, so off he trots to the attic to get his and put them on. He accidentally leaves one of the four behind and realizes he only has three to wear once downstairs and putting them on.



Page 2: He very wisely parks the three galoshes downstairs and goes upstairs to retrieve the missing galosh. Note the newspaper under his arm.



Page 3: Back with his "found" single overshoe, he cannot remember where he put the other three. No matter, he can always sit and read the paper. That is, if he can find the paper. I wonder where it might be. The bedroom? Nope, not there, but the alarm clock does need winding. While winding it he realizes he left the paper in the attic while getting his lost galosh and off he goes to get the newspaper. Carrying the alarm clock. You know where this is going....

Check out our website for other turtley books..

Kids Books:

<http://www.turtleoblonganetwork.org.au/childrens-books.html>

Reference Books:

<http://www.turtleoblonganetwork.org.au/reference-books.html>



## MISCELLANEOUS STUFF

### CAPTIVE TURTLE DOCUMENT

Oblong turtles are one of several species of reptiles for which a "pet herpetofauna keeper's license" may be obtained for from the Department of Parks and Wildlife.

As we are in the business of rescuing, rehabilitating and conserving wild oblong turtles, we don't support the licensing of wildlife as pets, or wildlife being kept as pets. We do not believe that *Chelodina colliei* (formerly *Chelodina oblonga*) is a suitable species for licensing due to their temperament and the high level of care required to keep them healthy and happy. There is a misconception that turtles are easy-care animals but nothing could be further from the truth; they are physiologically complicated animals which require expensive equipment and housing to replicate the conditions they need. Turtles don't need much but what they do need, they must have.

In the short time the Network has been operating we have already seen the effects of captive conditions on turtles - deformed shells, retained scutes, skin and shell problems, problems due to an inappropriate diet, suppressed immune systems and poor social skills. Added to the physical problems is the sad fact that many of these animals live a solitary life so have never seen another turtle, don't have the ability to bask, don't have a normal daylight/night cycle, have no form of environmental enrichment, have never seen the stars or moon, never felt the earth under their feet and have never felt the sun on their back . . . it's about as bad as it can get . . .

As an animal welfare issue we feel that, as we have the knowledge, we should provide accurate and reliable information on oblong turtle care for the benefit of the captive animals being kept by license holders. To this end, we have produced a document on captive care which soon be freely available on our website Resources under [Documents and Publications](#).

### THE UNUSUAL PET VETS

Peter Ricci and James Haberfield, the Unusual Pet Vets, are now practising in two locations north and south of the river. Peter and James provide veterinary services for reptiles, birds and small mammals.

The Unusual Pet Vets operate from facilities at Murdoch Pet Emergency Centre and Balcatta Veterinary Hospital.

**\*Mon-Wed-Fri\***  
**8am-6pm**  
**@Murdoch**  
**Phone 9360 6454**

**\*Tue-Thu-Sat\***  
**8am-6pm**  
**@Balcatta**  
**Phone 9345 4644**



### OPERA HOUSE TRAPS

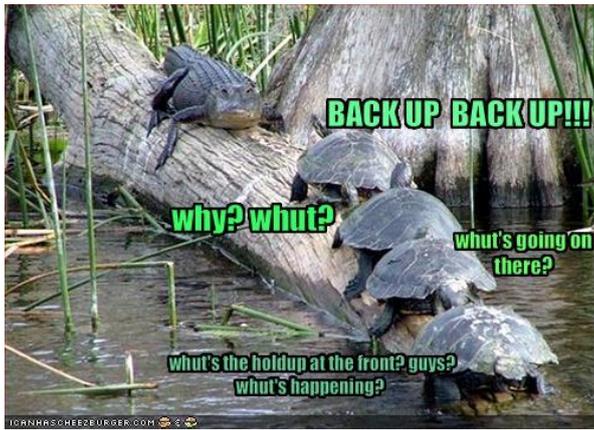
From the Department of Fisheries *Recreational Fishing Guide 2013*... "Note: Fishing tackle stores may carry gear that does not meet WA's legal requirements. In particular, the use of crab traps, 'opera house' traps and bait jigs with more than three hooks are illegal in WA waters. Check before you make a purchase."

The use of Opera House traps (so called because they resemble the Sydney Opera House) is illegal in many states of Australia because there is the potential to drown air-breathing native fauna such as Platypus, native water rats and turtles. However, the selling of these nets is not illegal as they may be used in private dams . . . Is it us, or is there something wrong here ???





☺☺☺ AND JUST FOR LAUGHS ☺☺☺



Cartoon by Eric Decetis  
NobleWorks P.O. Box 1275 Hoboken N.J. 07030



Money comes like a turtle and goes like a rabbit





## XMAS LUNCH ACCOMPANIMENTS...?



**Rockmelon turtle** .... If you'd like to make one - these lovely Americans will show you how!

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lb8QkcMG6bE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lb8QkcMG6bE)



**How to make the Watermelon Turtle**

<http://www.winonakent.com/crafts-sunday.html>

(Image Source: [National Watermelon Promotion Board](#))



## WE NEED YOU!!

If you have some spare time and would like to get more involved - please get in touch with one of us ...

### TORRN COMMITTEE MEMBERS & CONTACTS



Our Committee has a variety of experience and include administrators, veterinarians, vet nurses, wildlife volunteers & rehabilitators affiliated with many wildlife centres across Perth.

<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Ruth Haight</b>	<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Michelle Hazelwood</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Dianne Hunter</b>	<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Dr Amy Northover</b>
<b>Membership</b>	<b>Karen Cavanough</b>	<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Karen Pye</b>
<b>Merchandise</b>	<b>Barbara Wright</b>	<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Carla Tassone</b>

### OUR EMERGENCY MOBILES

#### PERTH METROPOLITAN

0424 727 411 - East Metro\*  
0424 727 624 - South Metro\*  
0414 476 867 - North Metro\*

#### REGIONAL AREAS

0428 984 445 - Albany  
0438 813 919 - Margaret River  
0437 910 054 - Busselton

*\*If, for any reason, the number in your area doesn't answer, please call one of the other numbers.*

[www.turtleoblonganetwork.org.au](http://www.turtleoblonganetwork.org.au)



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