



COMMITTEE NEWS

YOUR NEW LOOK COMMITTEE

We were extremely happy to welcome two new members, Sandy and Deborah at our recent meeting; they are very welcome additions to the TORRN Committee. Find out more about Deborah in her profile starting on Page 6.

A full list of the current Committee Members is included along with our contact numbers on Page 11.

FAREWELL PERTH....



HELLO ALBANY ! ! ! !

Secretary Ruth and hubby Thom recently sold their lovely tree house in Kalamunda and have moved to the tranquillity of a heritage house on the King river in Albany..... aaaahhhh the serenity! We believe it even has it's own "ballroom" ☺

Ruth will visit Perth regularly to see family and friends and also attend our Committee and General meetings. Ruth still plans to present our Turtle Rehab Workshop early next year.

A big thank you to member Tanya who has taken over our Metro East Turtle Phone duties ☺☺☺

REPLACING RUTH..... IMPOSSIBLE!

We've estimated that we need at least five people to physically replace Ruth when we are at our busiest. Replacing Ruth's breadth of knowledge and experience, however, is impossible but thanks to technology she can still be on hand to give advice and direction.

First to step into the breach were Pauline, Alan, Deborah and Dianne.... Vet Nurse **Deborah**, who has recently

returned to WA, was the freshwater turtle coordinator for the North Queensland Wildlife Care Group based in Townsville. Deborah's biggest hurdle is going to be dealing with turtles in cold weather which wasn't an issue in Townsville. **Pauline's** background as a Wetlands Ecologist and Kanyana Wildlife rehabilitator means that she's well equipped to deal with turtles. **Alan** with his background as an Ambulance Paramedic should be more than able to cope with turtles after what we hear Ambulance staff have to put up with on Saturday nights.

However, **Dianne** has been thrown out of her sprung office chair and into the deep end with patient James. We know very little about James' background other than the fact that he was found in a northern suburbs beachside car park with abrasions to his front foot pads. James also has marks on his carapace which suggest a dog attack. We don't know how he ended up in the car park as there were no lakes or wetlands in the vicinity. James has had one of his front feet debrided and very neatly stitched by Dr Rita and been in dry-dock for two weeks. Thanks to Rita's handiwork, and a course of antibiotics, his foot has healed beautifully and he's now allowed to spend all day in water. However, as he wasn't eating, he was tube-fed which generated an unusual poo (we'll spare you the details) which member Lindy kindly analysed for us. The faecal sample revealed that James may have Tapeworms so he's now been dosed for worms and has been tube fed for a second time in an endeavour to get his digestive system working. What goes in must come out. That Dianne's been able to cope is due to the unstinting support from friend and member Cathy who has a wealth of experience as a nurse and a wildlife rehabilitator; you can't go wrong with that combination of skills.

Postscript. James has begun eating which is a start, the poo is yet to come but release is imminent.

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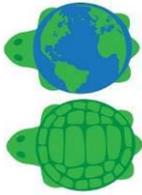
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EVENTS PAGE



WORLD TURTLE DAY - Friday 23 May -

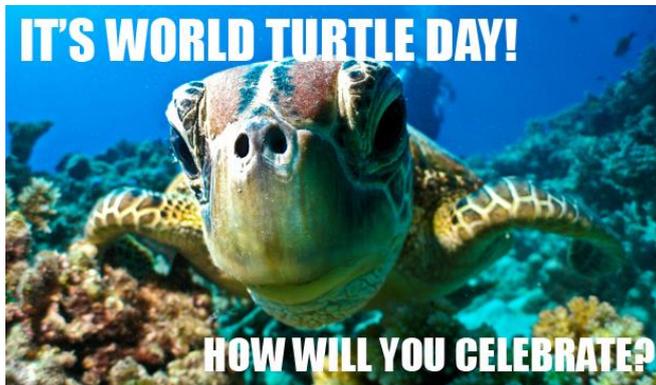


**WORLD
TURTLE DAY**
May 23rd

AMERICAN
TORTOISE
RESCUE
tortoise.com

Yes, turtles have their own day every year . . . and we think they deserve it!

Find out more online @
[Wikipedia](#) [Facebook](#)



FRIENDS OF MARY CARROL LAKE WORLD TURTLE DAY EVENT - Friday 23 May - 10am-12noon -

Meet at the car park on Eudoria Street in Gosnells. Sedge planting followed by a sausage sizzle - let's help our turtles survive. [Email](#) them so they'll have a sausage for you.

2014 TORRN MEETINGS SOME DATES FOR YOUR DIARY...

- Sunday, 8 June:** General Meeting 1pm @ Canning River Eco Education Centre - see next column...
- Sunday, 10 August:** Annual General Meeting 1pm @ Canning River Eco Education Centre.
- Sunday, 14 December:** General Meeting 11am Followed by Xmas Lunch. Full details closer to the time.

BAIGUP WETLANDS, BAYSWATER WEEDING DAY - Sunday 25 May -

This is a great opportunity to meet and work alongside other environmentally active locals. For more information, or to register your interest, please contact baigup@inet.net.au

Meet at 9:15 am for a 9:30 am start at Hinds Reserve car park - Access from Milne Street, drive past the rowing clubs towards Garratt Rd Bridge. Bring your gardening gloves, sturdy foot wear, digging tools, weather protection, water bottle and a sense of humour ☺

10th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS - Sunday 24 August -

Our friends and colleagues at **Friends of the Western Swamp Turtle** will be celebrating their 10th Anniversary with a lunch. Full details closer to the time.



Events continue...



GENERAL MEETING
- Sunday 8 June at 1pm -



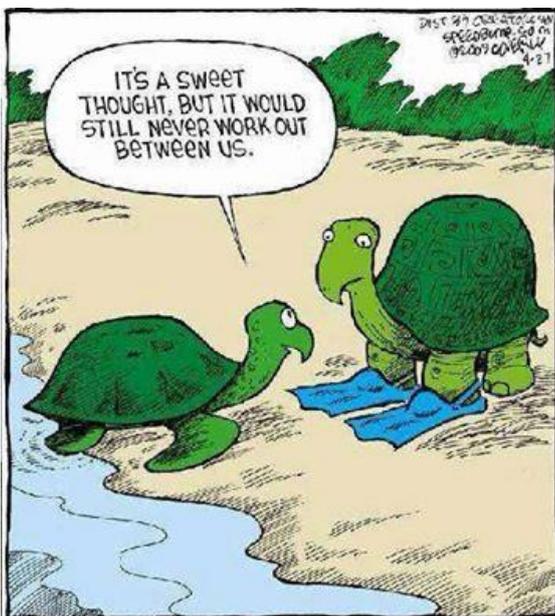
The next General Meeting and "sneak preview" will be held at the Canning River Eco Education Centre (CREEC) at the corner of Kent St and Queens Park Rd in Wilson on Sunday 8 June at 1pm.

Allow extra time for parking as this is a very popular spot at the weekend. Please use your GPS or a map as the Centre's not easy to find even with a map.

Come along and catch up on the turtle-y news and hear guest speaker Ian Hakanson, a fellow volunteer and film maker who is collaborating with TORRN to create training footage including turtle feeding habits, tube feeding a turtle, a turtle necropsy and hatchlings feeding. Be the first to see a "sneak preview" of Ian's work.

If you'd like to come earlier, the Canning River Cafe which adjoins CREEC is open throughout the day for snacks, lunches and coffee. Look out for our red flags.

RSVP For planning purposes, please let us know if you're planning to attend. Apologies, are also appreciated. Please email Dianne.



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 recently updated our [Documents and Publications](#) page.
- WEBSITE: We welcome your suggestions and comments about our website see: www.turtleoblonganetwork.org.au
- FACEBOOK: We are currently sitting on **366** 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 : 119
- 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.



COMMUNITY PROJECTS

FERAL FISH TRAPPING DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES

TORRN has recently been involved with the Department of Fisheries during some of their trapping exercises for feral fish. Thanks to SERCUL we've been able to microchip the by-catch of turtles. Although this is a short-term project we have been able to monitor the health status of the re-trapped turtles which is giving us some valuable information on their weights as the weather cools.

We are also gaining experience in assessing/monitoring large numbers of turtles in a short time frame which has been useful. During this process we've seen turtles which have recovered from extensive shell and leg fractures without intervention. Again thanks to SERCUL we will now be able to microchip our releases.



PHOTO CREDIT : PAULINE HEWITT

The reason the Department of Fisheries monitors lakes and wetlands for feral fish is because it's common practice for people who no longer want their fish to dump them into the wild. I asked Annique from the Department of Fisheries' Freshwater Biodiversity and Biosecurity unit, about the most unusual feral fish they'd found - a Murray Cod, she said.

The introduction of non-native, exotic fish species into waterways is a major cause of native fish extinction and global species decline. Invasive species, including those from other parts of Australia, are now identified as the greatest threat to Australia's biodiversity after habitat loss. Once established in our waterways, feral populations of introduced fish are notoriously difficult to eradicate.

What's an invasive, or feral, species? Feral animals are animals which are not indigenous to an area, or country eg Yabbies which are indigenous to some of the eastern states are "feral" in WA, with Marron which are indigenous to WA regarded as "feral" in some of the eastern states.

Most aquarium fish are hardy and have wide environmental tolerances which allow them to flourish in a wide variety of habitats.



A 2kg Goldfish



Salvinia

As well as dumping fish, people also dump water plants many of which are invasive non-natives. Salvinia (*Salvinia molesta*) is one such floating weed which grows extremely quickly; infestations can double in size every two or three days eventually choking waterways with a thick mat of vegetation which shades out any submerged plant life and impedes oxygen exchange, making the water unsuitable for fish and other animals. Salvinia is native to Brazil and has become a serious problem in many countries. To eradicate Salvinia is a time-consuming and costly process as the Melville City Council has discovered.



TURTLE PHONE

"TALLULAH"

In October last year we received a call on the turtle phone from Colin - *"There's a turtle digging a hole in my lawn"...* "Yes, that'll be a female turtle digging a nest to lay eggs. Are you able to watch over her and return her to the lake when she's finished?"

Not only did Colin, and his wife Helen, watch over the turtle but they filmed the event and presented us with a DVD *"Tallulah's Visit"*. A two camera production with editing, background music and credits. We were over the moon as although one of our number has been lucky enough to see not one, but two, turtles laying the rest of us haven't. To see this on video was priceless. *"Tallulah's Visit"* is referred to within the Committee as *"Eggs: The Movie"*.

Moving on 220 days (6 months) . . .

Dianne who took the original call from Colin looked at the calendar and realised that Tallulah's eggs were due to hatch any day. The incubation time for oblong turtle eggs is 220-230 days which is six months plus a few days . . . or more, depending on the weather . . .

Dianne arranged to take a protective nest-enclosure to Colin and Helen. Helen had marked the spot in lawn with a stick and had almost worn a track in the lawn with her frequent daily checks of the nest site. It was decided to clear the 2-3 centimetres of dirt over the nest site of the couch roots to make it easier for the hatchlings to emerge during which three hatchlings were found in a state of torpor (the eggs are laid at a depth of about 15cm which is the length of a turtle's back leg plus a bit extra). The intention was not to dig into the nest but the hatchlings had clearly emerged from the eggs and made their way upwards to within a few centimetres the surface which wasn't something we expected to find. We continue to learn. We gently rinsed the dirt-covered hatchlings and suddenly there was movement - the twitch of a leg, movement of the neck, an open eye - after which they were placed in a container of very shallow water which they took to "like ducks to water". We then checked carefully to see whether there were any more hatchlings and found another five which like their siblings came to life with the addition of a little water. All hatchlings were fully developed and had

absorbed their yolk sacs. Interestingly most of the egg shells remained where they were laid at a lower depth. Two smaller hatchlings were also found - one dead and one very small animal which was alive but died shortly after. The nest-enclosure is now in place in case there are still more hatchlings to come.

We're now hoping for another DVD *"Tallulah's legacy"*



RING ! RING ! RING ! RING ! Turtle rescue, good morning !

"I don't know whether I've got the right number but my husband's been working alone in the bush and has been attacked by a Puma".

We often get calls on the turtle phones for other animals but this is the first time we've been asked to rescue a husband. The caller was referred to DPaW. We think that the husband was more likely "pounced at" rather than "attacked".

Big cat sightings are frequently recorded in rural Victoria, New South Wales and Western Australia.





MEMBERS PROFILE

DEBORAH LAVIGNE

Deborah, please tell us a bit about yourself . . .

Your Childhood...

I grew up in rural Midland, Perth, which is what it was back in the 70's, but it's definitely is not rural now. I remember when we arrived in Australia and looking out the window of the plane I could see Kangaroos in mobs bouncing along the side of the runway, what a sight indeed. That was my first encounter of seeing wildlife and an image that is embedded in my mind forever. I may have not known it then but I know now that this first encounter was the start of my passion for wildlife. I was always caring for some kind of animal/reptile when I was growing up.

Your Education...

After finishing school, I wasn't really sure what I wanted to do, so I went onto TAFE and completed a year of Commercial Studies. Somehow I thought I would be like my sisters and try and get an office job, ummm I really was kidding myself. I always found myself working with animals from trotting stables to farms and eventually in Vet Clinics.

Your Professional life...

Professional life gosh where do I start? Well, at 15yrs old I began my journey as a vet nurse at Bellevue Vet Clinic and this was the start of my passion to be a Vet. At 18 I applied for a job as a Jillaroo on a North West cattle/sheep Station, my Mum's first words were, 'what is a station?' ☺ I packed my bags and travelled to Cue, W.A on the Greyhound bus, where I then hopped on the mail/supply truck early in the morning to travel to the station. It took us all day to eventually get to Erong Springs Station where I was to spend 6 months working as a Jillaroo. My most enjoyable time as a Vet Nurse was when I travelled up to Kununurra, and found myself working at the Kimberley Vet Clinic, which is owned by my dear friend and Vet, Dr Sarah Brett. I spent 5 years there as the head Vet Nurse and this is where I had the privilege of becoming a wildlife carer. I cared for Agile Wallabies, Wallaroos, Antelopines, turtles, birds of all sorts and we even encountered a few reptiles.

In August 1997, "Michael Edgleys All New International Moscow Circus" came to town. I was in awe of the show and fell in love with the miniature ponies, doggies and elephants. To my surprise I was asked if I would like to come along and work with the animals. Oh what an offer I couldn't refuse, so I packed up and literally 'Ran away with the Circus', yes it is true these things do happen.

We travelled again after the kids got bigger and toured with Circus Royale in 2011 and I cared for the circus animals. I certainly have some gypsy blood in me as I was always on the move ☺. We decided to stop travelling and found ourselves in Townsville, North Queensland. I was accepted into James Cook University to start studying a Bachelor of Science in 2012 to eventually transfer over to Veterinary Science.



Deborah releasing an oblong turtle

Your volunteering experiences...

Being a wildlife carer would have to be the best experience ever. Caring for injured and orphaned wildlife, rearing them to the stage of release and giving them a second chance of life; how rewarding indeed that feeling is, sad for me to see them go but rewarding. In my two and half years in Townsville I joined the North Queensland Wildlife Care group and cared for possums from 100gm to release and turtles of course and eventually became the turtle coordinator for the group, a position I felt so privileged to do. I cared for two species of turtles there, the Krefft's turtle and the Common long neck turtle. I had one turtle in care for 16 months 'Belinda', a Krefft's turtle who was hit by a car. I learnt so much from her and she was such good patient. She laid eggs whilst in care but also had one stuck in her passage that had to be removed. Poor darling she had the works that turtle. Her release was just the most enjoyable moment with a few tears shed by me, but she was so ready and happy to be going back home after such a long time in care.



So leaving Townville was hard and sad as I left all the turtles, possums and especially my wildlife friends behind.

Your turtle experiences...

There are quite a few actually, some were in care for months and some were only in care for a couple of days, depending on their injuries. I had a Common long neck turtle come into my care, 'Connie' she was a special case; she wouldn't eat and was just a freaked out little girl. The Vet ended up tube feeding her so she wouldn't starve. On her release she took off into the river, popped her head out of the water and looked back at me, maybe to double check I wasn't coming in to grab her again and she then disappeared.

My craziest experience caring for turtles was trying to not get munched by two very large dogs when I had to rescue 'Belinda'. She decided to do a Houdini one day and got out of her enclosure. OMG where do I look for a lost turtle, I was beside myself. I started calling out for her hmmm that wasn't going to work. I was getting really frantic, I even started knocking on people's doors to let them know there was a turtle lost in our street, well did I get some strange looks and could only imagine what their thoughts were after I left their place. The things you do as a wildlife carer ☺ I eventually found her cruising along in the neighbour's front yard looking very impressed with herself. OMG how was I going to be able to jump the fence rescue her and not get munched by the two dogs at that property. I was freaking out but without any hesitation I scaled the fence and managed to grab her and get back to the fence without alerting the hungry dogs, Phew! Well you should have heard me giving Belinda a lecture like a little kid, yes the neighbour's would have thought at that point there goes that crazy turtle lady ☺ After that terrifying ordeal it was certainly time to release her back into the wild.



with Kreffts turtle 'Belinda' on her release day

Why you joined TORRN...

I was fortunate to be in Townsville when the Wildlife Conference was to be held in town and I had the opportunity to talk at the conference on behalf of Dr. Sarah Brett on two special snake cases she had at the Kimberley Vet Clinic. This is where I first heard about TORRN and listened to Ruth talk about her experiences with the Oblong Turtles. At that point I thought to myself if I were to go back to Perth then TORRN would be my first contact to do wildlife. I emailed TORRN and received a welcoming email from Dianne welcoming me with open arms. So leaving Townsville was made a little easier knowing that I was going to be working with turtles again.

Your current/future involvement...

I have just joined the TORRN Committee and am full of enthusiasm and ready to help as much as I can. I want to give all I can for the turtles and to help rehabilitate and release them all back to a safe environment.

Your favourite animal (apart from turtles)...

Now that is a hard question for me to answer as I love all of the critters in our world but my most favourite would have to be the boobook owl how can you resist those big round eyes.

Your favourite holiday destination...

Having travelled extensively around Australia and parts of the world there is one place that I haven't been to and it is the birth place of my parents, the Seychelles' Islands, I am definitely going there one day, whether it is to help with wildlife like the turtles or for a holiday it is somewhere I must go.

What you plan to do in your retirement?

Well I would like to be on my paradise wildlife sanctuary sitting on the porch sipping a small glass of port and watching all the critters freely wandering on my safe land away from any danger and yes there will definitely be a massive lake for all the turtles to go.

Something we might not know about you?

Currently I am now at Murdoch University doing 'Animal Science' and being positive that I will be able to transfer into Vet Science next year. I want to be a wildlife vet and help all the critters in need.

And I have become a Nana this year; we have a gorgeous handsome grandson.



Turtle Oblonga
Rescue & Rehabilitation
Network

Turtle Talk

May-June 2014



MISCELLANEOUS STUFF

MICROCHIPPING



South East Regional Centre for Urban Landcare



Thanks to SERCUL, we'll now be able to microchip our turtle releases. This is something we've wanted to do but could not afford as microchips and the required microchip reader are expensive. The microchips are about the size of a small grain of rice and are, by convention, inserted under the skin of the upper, left leg.

<http://www.sercul.org.au/whoweare.html>

TORRN now has an embroidered logo available for use by members. For \$8 this logo can be embroidered onto your own item (red or white) of clothing. It can also be embroidered in red onto a white garment.

It's a simple process of going into our embroiderer (several branches in the metropolitan area) with your item of clothing, or they can supply fleece vests like the one pictured for an additional cost of \$20.

Note: Big-W are currently advertising plain red fleece vests for \$10.

The embroidery process usually takes about a week. Please email Dianne for full details.



A screen printing version of the logo is in the pipeline.

To keep costs down we'll have be having a DIY screen print-your-own-shirt event. The advantage of having our own screen is that we can print as many, or as few items as we like, when we like. Commercial screen printing can be expensive if you want to supply your own clothing and you only want a few prints. More on this later...

THERMOMETERS & HYGROMETERS



Winter's coming. Perth Fauna Supplies whose profits benefit TORRN, now has in stock single-probe thermometers, and combined thermometer/hygrometers (also with a single probe) as pictured below.



For more information about Perth Fauna Supplies' merchandise and prices, please email perthfaunasupplies@inet.net.au

ART EXHIBITION

Check out this website:

<http://thewildstate.org.au/gallery/detail-pages/snaketurtle/>

The artist will be exhibiting at the Australian Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference in Hobart. The organisation - The Wild State - raises money to buy land for wildlife. The little bronze casts are \$1250 each.

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.



BOOK CLUB

THE CONTINUING SAGA OF OUR FORGETFUL FRIEND THEODORE THE TURTLE...

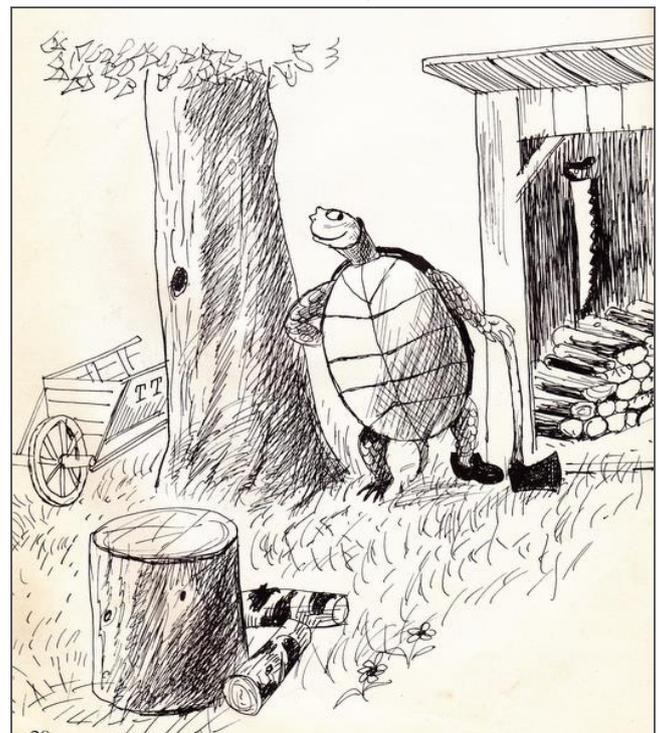
[LINK TO OUR PREVIOUS TURTLE TALK EDITION TO
RECAP ON HIS STORY \(PAGES 1-3\)](#)



Page 5: The kettle is at the boil but no teapot in evidence. Clearly it has been lost. Botheration! To make matters worse, the fire is going out. Woodchopping might clear his mind and jog his memory.



Page 4: Now where could that plaguing clock be? Perhaps a cup of tea would refresh his memory. Of course, he remembers just as he is taking down the teapot and off he goes to the attic, teapot in hand, to "find" his alarm clock.

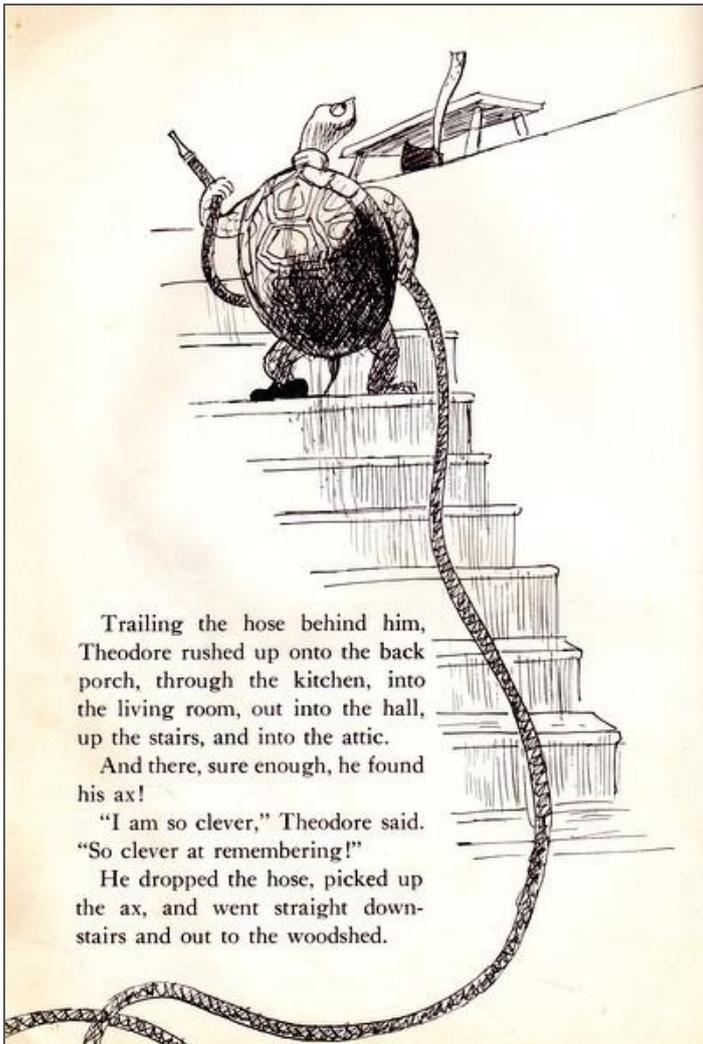


Page 6: Aha! Theo remembers that the teapot is in the attic. Off he goes with the axe....
"Isn't it wonderful that I remembered that!" said Theodore. "I really am very clever!"
He put down his axe and picked up his teapot.



"Now at last I can have my nice cup of tea," he said, as he went back to the kitchen.

Not so fast there, bud. You never chopped the wood, remember? But to chop wood, you need an axe. And the axe is, where, exactly? Foiled again. Maybe if he uses the hose to water the lawn for a bit he'll remember.



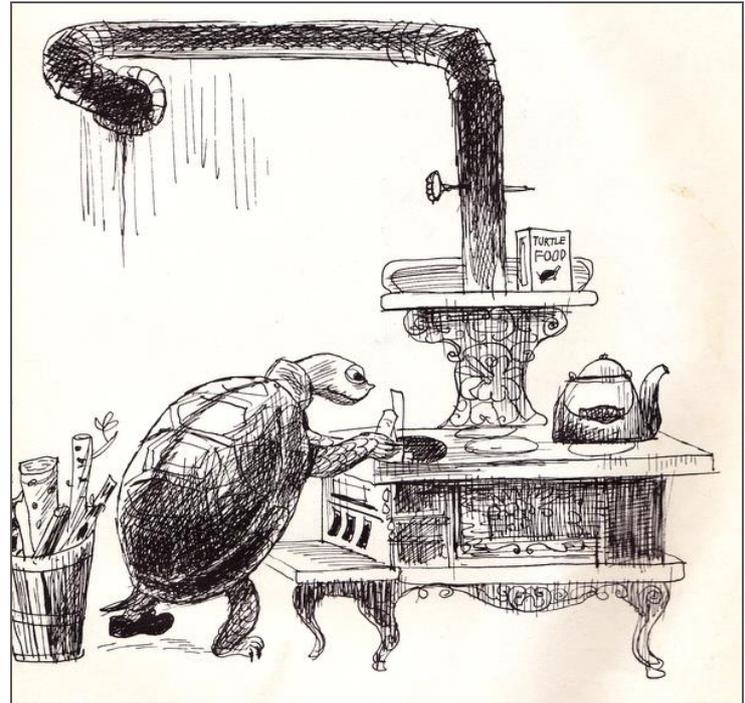
Trailing the hose behind him, Theodore rushed up onto the back porch, through the kitchen, into the living room, out into the hall, up the stairs, and into the attic.

And there, sure enough, he found his ax!

"I am so clever," Theodore said. "So clever at remembering!"

He dropped the hose, picked up the ax, and went straight downstairs and out to the woodshed.

Page 7 Yep. Worked like a charm.
To the attic, Theodore!



Page 8 There! At last! The axe is found, the wood is chopped and Theodore can have his nice cup of tea once the fire heats up again. In the meantime he'll just take a little nap...

**THEODORE'S STORY
WILL CONCLUDE IN
OUR NEXT E-NEWS...**

**Check out our website
for other turtley books..**

Kids Books:

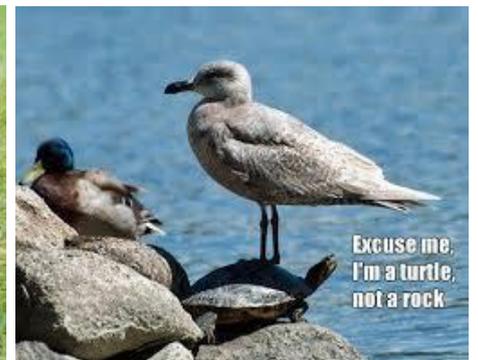
<http://www.turtleoblonganetwork.org.au/childrens-books.html>

Reference Books:

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



AND JUST FOR LAUGHS...



WE NEED YOU!!

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

TORRN COMMITTEE MEMBERS & CONTACTS



TORRN COMMITTEE

Secretary Ruth Haight
Treasurer Dianne Hunter
Membership Karen Cavanough

Committee Members

Michelle Hazelwood
Deborah Lavigne
Dr Amy Northover
Karen Pye
Sandy Shailes
Carla Tassone

EMERGENCY MOBILES

PERTH METROPOLITAN:
0424 727 411 - East Metro*
0424 727 624 - South Metro*
0414 476 867 - North Metro*

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

REGIONAL AREAS:

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