



Association Emys Conservation
A3 Résidence La Voie du Sud
91160 LONGJUMEAU – France
01 69 09 27 24 – 06 16 98 52 04
emyso@aol.com
<http://emys.conservation.free.fr>

Lettre n°19

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EDITORIAL, Question de méthode... / It's a matter of method...

Chers collègues et amis,

Il est assez classique d'écrire nos articles scientifiques en exposant nos méthodes de travail...

Quand, il y a bien des années, je suis entré pour la première fois au Conseil d'Administration de la SHF, la grande discussion était de savoir quand faire notre congrès annuel... Le choix était clair : en automne, car au printemps "nous sommes tous sur le terrain !". Et j'étais bien ennuyé, car n'étant pas "professionnel de la nature" (gestionnaire, universitaire, scientifique CNRS...), je ne pouvais m'y rendre qu'en été, en prenant sur mes congés annuels...

Et je me suis posé la question de savoir pourquoi c'était mieux au printemps ? La nature est-elle plus belle ? La température plus clémente ? La sortie de l'hivernage, la période de reproduction offrent-elles plus d'occasions d'observations faciles ? En tout cas tout va bien pour la nature et pour celui qui l'étudie. On m'a d'ailleurs fait remarquer qu'au mois d'août, la pression humaine sur les milieux est telle qu'il est un peu fou d'espérer travailler pendant cette période.

Certes, mais Emys Conservation, c'est d'abord de la conservation et c'est pendant les périodes difficiles que les problèmes de conservation apparaissent, pas lorsque tout va bien. Comme si on envisageait d'étudier la mortalité chez les personnes âgées uniquement au printemps et en automne, pas en été (avec les canicules) et en hiver (avec les grands froids)... Pour envisager des mesures de protection, on ne peut commencer qu'en étudiant les causes des mortalités pour les limiter.

C'est ce que je m'emploie à faire à Minorque, dans des conditions difficiles, sauver une petite population de cistudes : 56 animaux marqués en 15 ans de suivi, et il n'en reste que 11 vivants. J'ai étudié les causes de ces mortalités, proposé des solutions, j'ai insisté, nous ne sommes pas loin de la totale disparition.

Les autorités insulaires, comme je ne coûte presque rien, me suivent, en traînant un peu des pieds, rien n'est gagné. C'est un excellent laboratoire des problèmes de conservation, si j'arrive un jour à rédiger un article rassemblant ces expériences...

Dans cette 19^{ème} lettre, hommage à Alain Dupré, à Tatiana Kotenko, "Un pont de nulle part...", dernières informations d'Alain, celles d'Herpdigest. Bonne lecture, joyeux Noël à tous et excellente année 2014 !



Photos 2013 : petite cage de capture pour petite Emys. Cendres de l'incendie 2006 retirées de la mare en août, pour la 4^{ème} année consécutive, avec l'aide de Sévé, bénévole, malgré une visite de scientifiques RENEIX au printemps 2011, qui, au vue de la mare pleine d'eau, avaient estimé ces travaux inutiles auprès des autorités...

Little trap for little Emys. Ash of the 2006 fire take off the pond last August for the 4th consecutive year with the help of Sévé, volunteer, despite a visit of the scientists of RENEIX, spring 2011. They had considered nearby the authorities, looking a pond full of water that these earthworks were useless.



Dear colleagues and friends,

Usually we write our scientific articles after explaining our working methods... When, a long time ago, I enter for the first time in the Administrative Board of the SHF (French Herpetological Society), the great debate was to know when will happened our next annual Congress? Choice was clear: in autumn because in spring "we are all doing fieldwork!". And I was very disappointed, I was not a "professional of the nature" (Administrative, Academic, Scientific CNRS, national centre of scientific research...), I was only able to do fieldwork in summer, taking on my summer vacations...

And I ask myself this question, why is it better in spring? Nature is nicer? Temperature milder? The end of wintering, the reproduction period, offer more opportunities of easy observations? In any case, all is fine for nature and the observer who study it. In addition, I had a remark than in August, human pressure is so heavy on the habitat that it's a bit foolish when hopping working during this period.

Admittedly, but Emys Conservation it's first Conservation! And it's during the worst period than conservation problems appear, never when all is right! As if we plan to study the mortality of the elderly only in spring or autumn, not in summer (with the heat waves) nor in winter (with the cold spell)... To plan protection measures, we first have to study the causes of the mortality to limit them.

It is what I try to do in Minorca in difficult conditions, the rescue of a little population of *Emys orbicularis*: 56 marked animals in 15 years of survey and only 11 still alive today. I studied the causes of the mortality, I proposed solutions, I insisted, we are not far of the total extinction. The island authorities, as I cost nothing and have a kind of respect for my durability, follow me but nothing is won. Minorca is an excellent laboratory of the conservation problems if I manage one day to write an article collecting these experiences...

In this 19th letter, respects to Alain Dupré, to Tatiana Kotenko, "A bridge of nowhere...", the last news of Alain and those of Herpdigest, enjoy reading, happy Christmas and a very good new year 2014 !

Alain Veysset, rédacteur, editor

ALAIN DUPRE

Ma première rencontre avec Alain remonte au 27 mars 1993 lors d'une conférence de presse à l'Institut Océanographique de Paris (lieu qu'il affectionnait particulièrement) qui relançait à une toute autre échelle (que celle des deux seuls mousquetaires Jean Servan et moi-même...), la campagne contre l'importation de la "tortue de Floride" en France (*Trachemys scripta elegans*). Il représentait la SOPTOM, comme vice-président, mais aussi la SHF comme secrétaire de la commission "protection". J'étais alors responsable du "Groupe Cistude" mandaté par la SHF au congrès d'Amiens de juillet 1990 pour limiter l'importation.

Nous ne sommes plus quittés depuis. Il a été de toutes les actions, réunions, pétitions, manifestations pour faire cesser l'importation. Cette campagne, il la raconte avec fougue (DUPRE, 1995) lors de sa communication au 1^{er} Congrès Mondial de Conservation de Gonfaron, en 1995. Il fait état du collectif des cinq organisations qui engagent désormais ensemble les démarches : la S.P.A. (Société Protectrice des Animaux) la SHF, la SOPTOM, FNE et enfin l'ASPAS-"La Cistude". Par contre, il fulmine contre le WWF, contacté à de nombreuses reprises, qui a toujours refusé d'entrer dans le collectif...

Au moins une fois tous les deux mois, nous nous retrouvions à Bry sur Marne, dans son appartement douillet, pour discuter "tortues" avec Judith son épouse autour d'un excellent repas, car Alain, savait très bien cuisiner ! En région parisienne, nous étions loin des lieux de vie de nos protégées, mais c'était toujours un régal de l'entendre raconter ses "missions tortues" : aux Galápagos, en Guyane, aux Antilles, au Costa Rica, dans l'Océan Indien, à Madagascar, à Aldabra, à Rodrigues (voyages commencés avec la SOPTOM, que poursuivent Bernard Devaux et Franck Bonin, il est coauteur avec eux de "Toutes les tortues du Monde"), photos, vidéos à l'appui, que de soirées émerveillées, que de lieux de vie, à portée de la main...

Alain était quelqu'un qui s'engageait, il savait ce que s'associer voulait dire : secrétaire général de Chélonée pour les tortues marines, sa grande passion, avec son grand ami Jacques Frétey, il présidait Racine, efficace service d'informations herpétologiques de Thierry Frétey (neveu de Jacques), vice président de la SOPTOM donc, il en corrigeait (c'était un excellent correcteur) la revue "La Tortue", en pestant contre les "errements" de son principal rédacteur... Enfin, il est à l'origine d'Emys Conservation, il en a trouvé le nom et collaborait avec la lettre, en la corrigeant, en la pondérant, et en lui fournissant, chaque mois, des "infos cistudes" prises sur la toile...

Sa triste disparition le 4 juillet dernier nous affecte tous. Nous ne savons pas vraiment comment le remplacer. Il est dans notre cœur, il nous a fait rêver, Alain, nous ne t'oublierons pas. Bon voyage dans un ciel étoilé de milliards de tortues...



Alain, barbu, en manifestation avec 50 Tse à Bruxelles, 3 autos, 15 militants, 1 canon à eau, 150 CRS belges...

Alain bearded in demonstration with 50 Tse in Brussels, 3 cars, 15 militants, against 1 water gun lorry, 150 Belgian riot police...

My first meeting with Alain went back to the 27th March 1993 during a press conference at the Oceanic Institut of Paris (a place he was addict...). This conference relaunched at a higher grad the campaign (we started, only Jean Servan and me) against the massive importation of *Trachemys scripta elegans* in France and in Europe. He was the representative of the SOPTOM, as vice-president, but also the SHF as secretary of the "protection committee". I was then in charge of the "Groupe Cistude" with the mandate of the SHF at its congress of Amiens in July 1990 to reduce this importation.

Until this time, we were inseparable. He was in all the actions, meetings, petitions, demonstrations, to stop the importation. He tells this campaign with spirit (DUPRE, 1995) during his communication at the 1st International Congress of Conservation at Gonfaron (1995). He speaks about the joint group of five organisations which undertake together all the steps: S.P.A. (Société Protectrice des Animaux), SHF, SOPTOM, FNE (France-Nature-Environment) and at least ASPAS-"La Cistude". On the other end he fulminates against the WWF, contacted many times which always refused to enter in the group...

We met at least once every two months at Bry sur Marne, in his comfortable apartment, to discuss "turtles" with Judith his wife, round the table of an excellent dinner, Alain was a very good cook! In Paris region we were far from the life areas of our favourites but it was always a delight to ear him telling his "turtles missions": Galápagos, French Guyana, West Indies, Costa Rica, Indian Ocean, Madagascar, Aldabra, Rodrigues (trips begun with the SOPTOM they continue with Bernard Devaux and Franck Bonin co-author with them of an encyclopedia: "All the turtles of the World"), photos, videos, to help, how many wonderful evenings, how many life scenes being to hand...

Alain was someone who goes into action. He knows what association means : general secretary of "Chélonée" for sea turtles, his great passion with his great friend Jacques Fretey, he was president of Racine, efficient herpetological information service of Thierry Frétey (Jacques'nephiew), vice-president of the SOPTOM so, he corrected (he was an excellent examiner) the review "La Tortue", cursing the erring ways of its main redactor... At last he was at the beginning of Emys Conservation. He found its name and collaborated with the letter by his corrections, his levelheadedness and he supplies each month the letter with "emys infos" taken on the web...

We are all affected by his sad death this last 4th of July. We don't know really how to replace him. He is in our heart. He makes us dreaming. Alain, we will not forget you. Good travel in a starry sky of billion of turtles...



Dépôt de pétitions au Ministère de l'Environnement avec Jean Servan, Bernard Devaux et Marc Giraud.

Deposit of petitions at the French Ministry of Environment with Jean Servan, Bernard Devaux and Marc Giraud.

Alain Veysset

TATIANA KOTENKO

J'ai découvert Tatiana lors du 2^{ème} Symposium Emys, 25, 26, 27 juin 1999 au Blanc. Elle devait y faire une communication sur : "*E.orbicularis* in the steppe zone of Ukraine." (de fait l'article n'apparaît pas dans les Proceedings ?). Je l'ai ramenée ensuite à Paris avec Uwe Fritz. Nous avons eu le temps de bavarder, (elle avait une maîtrise remarquable de l'anglais), d'observer des paysages qu'elle découvrait pour sa toute première visite en France. Nous l'avons hébergée à Morangis plusieurs jours et malgré notre inquiétude, elle a été lâchée seule dans Paris, elle voulait tout voir...

Nous nous sommes retrouvés au 3^{ème} Symposium Emys de Košice en Slovaquie du 18 au 20 avril 2002. Elle y avait amené sa grande fille Katia (Katerina), qui étant en faculté de biologie, devait apprendre à faire des communications orales. Tatiana m'avait raconté comment, suite à l'accident de Tchernobyl, malgré la désinformation officielle, elle s'était rendue en bibliothèque, avait cherché des réponses aux rumeurs voilées et après avoir compris, avait mis Katia, sa fille unique de 4 ans, dans le premier train pour Moscou. Le lendemain, c'était la ruée vers la gare de toute la ville de Kiev.

En août 2003, j'ai répondu à son invitation en allant leur rendre visite en Ukraine. Un grand moment de bonheur... C'est avec Katia et l'aide de Pavel (grand ami de la famille), que nous sommes partis par le train, en expédition en Crimée. Je me sentais extrêmement dépaysé, retour aux congés payés de 1936... J'ai aidé Tatiana le plus que j'ai pu, comme porteur du matériel et en marquant ses cistudes sur l'île de Jarylgach, en Mer Noire. C'était elle la meneuse, avec une énergie et un professionnalisme impressionnants.

Elle soutenait ses proches, en l'absence total de financement du Muséum de Kiev, des chercheurs et de leurs travaux, elle trouvait par des organismes d'Europe de l'Ouest qui voulaient bien l'embaucher, les moyens de nourrir Anatoly son mari (biologiste spécialisé sur les micro- héméoptères...), Katia, le reste de sa famille et de découvrir le monde (elle a même visité mon site de recherche à Minorque)... Autre grande retrouvaille, le 4^{ème} Symposium à Valence les 8 au 10 juin 2005, nous y étions avec Alain, Judith, Jean, une photo historique suit. Tatiana est décédée en mars dernier des complications provoquées par un lamentable accident de circulation en Jordanie en 2011. C'était une grande scientifique, une grande spécialiste de la cistude, une grande amie. J'aimerais tant le dire à sa famille pour laquelle sa disparition est un vide immense, et, malgré les difficultés de communication, reprendre le contact.



I discovered Tatiana during the second Emys Symposium at The Blanc city 25, 26, 27th of June 1999. She had a communication on "*Emys orbicularis* in the steppe zone of Ukraine" (in fact her article does not appeared in the Proceedings?). After the meeting I drove her back to Paris with Uwe Fritz. We had all the time to talk (she had a perfect command of the English language), to observe the landscape she discovered for her very first journey in France. We accommodate her at home in Morangis a few days and in spite of our anxiety she was drop alone in Paris, where she lost her all a night... She wanted to have a look on all ...

We join again at the third Emys Symposium in Kosice in Slovakia from the 18th to the 20th of April 2002. She brought her great girl Katia (Katerina) who was in Biological University and had to learn how to present scientific communication. Tatiana had told me how, after the Tchernobyl accident, in spite of the official disinformation, she went in the library of the University of Physics to have answers to the veiled rumours and after having understood put Katia her only child of 4 years old in the first train to Moscow. The day after, the entire town rushed at the railway station of Kiev ...

In August 2003 I answered to her invitation paying her a call in Ukraine. A great moment of happiness ... It's with Katia and the help of Pavel (a great friend of the family) that we went by train in expedition in Crimea... I felt like a fish out of water... A trip like the paid leave of year 1936... I help Tatiana the more I could as material porter and when leaving marks on the *Emys* of Jarylgach Island in the Black Sea. She were the leader with an impressive energy and professionalism.

She supports her close relatives because of the situation: not a single financing from the Ukrainian State to the researchers and their works. She found through European organizations which hired her, the means to feed Anatoly her husband (specialized biologist on micro-hymenoptera...), the other members of her family and to discover the world (she had even visited in Minorca my research site)... An other great reunion was the 4th Emys Symposium in Valencia the 8th to 10th of June 2005. We were with Alain, Judith, Jean, an historical photo follows.

Tatiana died the 2nd of March 2013 from the complications caused by a pitiful traffic accident in Jordan in 2011. She was a great scientist, a great specialist of the pond water turtle, a great friend. I would like to tell it to her family. For her close relatives this death is an immense emptiness. In spite of the difficult communications, I would like to get in touch with them again.

Lors de la visite de la réserve lagunaire au Nord de Valencia, en 2005, cette photo de groupe.

During the visit of the lagoon reserve in the North of Valencia, in 2005, this group picture.

Alain Veysset

UN PONT DE NULLE PART / A BRIDGE FROM NOWHERE



Minorque, Ets Alocs, la découverte 2013 : 1 Million d'Euros, le joli pont qui ne sert à rien !



Minorca, Ets Alocs, the discovery of 2013 : One Million of Euros the nice bridge completely useless !

Beaucoup d'argent dont nombre de protecteurs, gestionnaires, naturalistes auraient pu avoir bien besoin, de l'Union Européenne, puisque cela vient d'un financement LIFE, jeté par la fenêtre. Vous pouvez trouver sur internet ce programme LIFE-RENEIX, pont et murets de pierres sèches sont indiqués pour les travaux 2013. Les murets servent à canaliser les touristes et les résidents, en réduisant de moitié les places de parking (ce qui en région touristique, n'est pas très commercial). Le pont lui n'a strictement aucune utilité, si ce n'est remplir les poches de ceux qui l'ont construit, puisque le rio à sec, qui arrive de droite (sur la photo), doit être franchi un peu plus loin par la gauche (et là, sans pont), pour se rendre à la dernière habitation du site ou vers la plage de Cala Pilar, principale destination... La piste pour véhicules, qui longeait la rive gauche et rendait inutile ce pont a été sciemment détruite pour que l'on soit obligé de faire un détour en passant par ce pont... UBU en a rêvé, LIFE-RENEIX l'a réalisé...

A lot of money, which should be so useful to protectors, naturalists, administrative, from the European Union it's a LIFE financing project, thrown down the drain.. You can find on the web the program LIFE-RENEIX, bridge and low walls of dry stones are indicated for the 2013 works. The low walls are using to canalize the tourists and the residents reducing half the parking places (In a tourist area it is not very commercial...). This bridge is strictly useless except to line the pockets of the constructors. Seeing that the dry rio which arrive by the right on the photo has to be get over again a little further by the left (and with no bridge) to join the last house of the site or the beach of Cala Pilar, the main destination... The car track which followed the left side of the rio and makes this bridge useless has been knowingly destroyed to oblige people to have a detour when crossing this bridge... UBU dreams it, LIFE-RENEIX builds it...



Assises en béton : 4m de large, au moins 1,5m de profondeur, très beau parement, l'ancienne piste détruite est interdite d'accès ...



Concrete foundations : 4m wide, 1m deep, very nice facing, ancient track destroyed and access forbidden even for the pedestrians...



Murets interdisant l'accès d'un ancien parking ou réduisant les places. Ce manque de places de stationnement oblige les conducteurs à abandonner leur véhicule sur la piste en amont, ce qui les contraint à parcourir beaucoup plus de chemin jusqu'à la plage, avec la famille et l'équipement qui va avec. C'est, par la canicule estivale, une source d'exaspération (que les résidents supportent au quotidien) pouvant être bien préjudiciable pour le milieu... Les ouvertures à la base sont pour la circulation des chéloniens... Ce programme LIFE-RENEIX, présenté sur Internet ne concerne que 7 plantes endémiques, pas de faune, alors que le panneau présenté aux touristes à l'entrée du pont qu'ils doivent obligatoirement emprunter, introduit la cistude !

Low walls which forbid the access to an ancient parking or reduce the places. This lack of parking places oblige the car drivers to leave their vehicle on the track uphill and oblige them to walk half an hour and more until the beach with their family and their heavy equipment... Under the summer scorching heat it is a source of exasperation (that the residents have to support daily) which could be harmful to the environment. The small openings at the base of the walls are for the chelonians... This program LIFE-RENEIX shown on the web concerns only 7 endemic plants, not the fauna, but on the panel for the tourists at the entry of the bridge, they are obliged to use, there is an Emys !



*Tout en bas, à droite...
At the very low, on the right*

Pour la restauration de l'habitat de la cistude, donc, pas un sou n'a été dépensé et chaque année, je viens de France avec ma pelle et ma brouette, pour retirer les cendres de l'incendie 2006, de la seule mare où vit *Emys orbicularis*, aidé par mes amis, des volontaires et un camion des employés du Gouvernement insulaire qui se servent de cet engrais naturel. Excellentes vacances, c'est sûr, mais avec le sentiment que quelque part, ma présence gêne et qu'on aurait préféré que ces bestioles n'interfèrent pas dans ce beau projet de bétonnage...

In fact, for the restoration of the habitat of the Emys, not a single penny (cent) was used. Each year I'm coming from France with my shovel and my wheelbarrow to take off the only pond where live *Emys orbicularis*, the ash of the 2006 fire. I receive the help of my friends, some volunteers and the employees of the Insular Government with their lorry, they use ash as natural manure...Excellent vacations for sure but with the feeling that somewhere, my presence disturbs and one should prefer that these bugs do not interfere in this so nice concrete project...

LA RECUPERATION DES TORTUES DE FLORIDE A COMMENCE AUTOUR DU LAC DU BOURGET

Les tortues rouges de Floride ne sont plus vendues mais des dizaines de ces reptiles sont encore abandonnées. Le Conservatoire des Espaces Naturels de Savoie (CEN) récupère animaux pour les envoyer passer une retraite au parc de la Tête d'Or, à Lyon, sans troubler les habitats de la tortue d'Europe, la cistude.



Une cistude d'Europe relâchée dans le cadre d'une action du Conservatoire des Espaces Naturels de Savoie

Les tortues de Floride ou tortues à tempes rouges ont été achetées en grand nombre dans les animaleries jusqu'à il y a une quinzaine d'années. Mais ces reptiles silencieux ont une grande longévité, grossissent et leurs propriétaires, à la longue, souhaitent se séparer de leur achat...

Or ces tortues, rappelle le **Conservatoire des Espaces Naturels de Savoie**, représentent une forte menace pour les écosystèmes locaux. Elles menacent la survie de la tortue cistude autochtone au bassin du Rhône, qui fait l'objet d'un programme de réintroduction au lac du Bourget.

Les secteurs les plus envahis, du moins les plus connus pour l'être, sont la rive sud du lac, près de l'embouchure de la Laysse, où les roselières sont nombreuses, et les rives nord, qui présentent les mêmes milieux. Mais les tortues de Floride sont probablement aussi présentes dans d'autres roselières, y compris celles de la cote sauvage, entre **Bourdeau** et **Hautecombe**.

Les populations des tortues exotiques ne cessent d'augmenter car les lâchers ont été importants. Mais surtout l'animal s'adapte très bien, se reproduit sans difficultés. Le fait de relâcher une tortue exotique dans le milieu naturel est puni par l'article L.411-3 du Code de l'environnement du 3 décembre 2009 (mis à jour le 2 juillet 2012). L'article prévoit de fortes sanctions : six mois d'emprisonnement et 9 000 euros d'amende.

Il est donc nécessaire de contrôler les populations pour que la tortue américaine ne domine pas la tortue indigène qu'on tente de réintroduire sur plusieurs secteurs du lac.

Piégeage et tir : la première technique utilisée pour la récupération est le piégeage. Pour compléter la récupération, le **Conservatoire des espaces naturels de Savoie** a été autorisé à procéder à des tirs réalisés par des personnes habilitées (lieutenant de louveterie) sous couvert d'un arrêté préfectoral. Un bilan sera communiqué au début du mois de juillet.

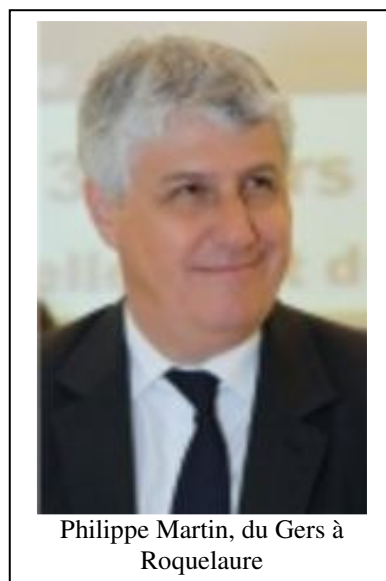
Le Conservatoire assure aussi une large communication auprès du grand public visant à empêcher tout relâcher dans la nature et augmenter leurs récupérations. Les animaux collectés sont conduits au Parc de la Tête d'Or à Lyon où ils poursuivront tranquillement leur vie dans un bassin adapté à leurs besoins.

Le Conservatoire d'espaces naturels de Savoie vous accueille afin de récupérer les tortues exotiques aquatiques du lundi au vendredi de 9h à 17h dans ses locaux au Bourget-du-lac. Une plaquette d'information est diffusée par le Conservatoire d'espaces naturels de Savoie au 04 79 25 20 32, ainsi que vous rendre sur son site internet : www.cen-savoie.org

PHILIPPE MARTIN, UN SOCIALISTE EN ECOLOGIE

Quelles sont les convictions du nouveau ministre de l'écologie? Un rapide tour d'horizon de ses prises de positions en tant que président du conseil général du Gers a de quoi surprendre, tant les grands écarts semblent nombreux. Pro-corrída et anti OGM. Défenseur du foie gras et promoteur de la bio dans les cantines. Opposé au gaz de schiste et conciliant face aux exigences d'irrigation des agriculteurs. Comment l'élú d'une région très rurale va t-il opérer sa mue gouvernementale et concilier ses convictions écologistes avec un aréopage socialiste peu sensible à l'environnement, et ce dans un contexte économique tendu? *Le Journal de l'environnement* fait le tour de la question.

Depuis mai 2012, Philippe Martin avait des vues sur l'hôtel de Roquelaure, persuadé que ses convictions écologistes le destinaient plus qu'un autre à endosser le costume de ministre de l'écologie. Lors de la primaire socialiste, ne soufflait-il pas à l'oreille de Martine Aubry, l'enjoignant à se positionner sur la sortie progressive de la France du nucléaire? Mais à l'heure du partage de maroquins, le clan fabiusien -dont il est- est peu récompensé et il n'est pas de la première fournée ministérielle. L'environnement tombe alors entre des mains pour le moins novices. A l'époque, des socialistes se demandent d'ailleurs à voix basse si Nicole Bricq n'est pas nommée à ce ministère pour laisser le champ libre au Sénat à Jean-François Rebsamen, maire de Dijon. Elle quittera l'écologie pour le Commerce extérieur dès le 21 juin 2012, pour avoir tenté d'imposer une remise à plat de tous les permis d'exploration de pétrole délivrés au large de la Guyane [JDLE]. Quant à Delphine Batho, elle qui visait le ministère de l'Intérieur, l'écologie ne fait absolument pas partie de ses thèmes de prédilection. Philippe Martin, lui, s'est colleté avec la thématique depuis pas mal d'années déjà. Au risques de quelques grands écarts...



Philippe Martin, du Gers à Roquelaure

Il le reconnaît bien volontiers: il n'a pas de «vrai» métier. Toute sa carrière, Philippe Martin l'a réalisée au service de l'Etat. Avec Paul Quilès, puis Michel Charasse comme mentors, il arpentera les couloirs de plusieurs ministères à partir de 1979 avant d'être nommé en 1992 préfet du Gers, puis préfet des Landes. Il gagne ses premiers galons d'élú en 1998, en prenant la présidence du Conseil général du Gers. En 2002, il est élu député de la 1^{ère} circonscription du Gers. En 2012, il est renvoyé à l'Assemblée nationale dès le premier tour.

Un tel plébiscite, dans un département rural -97 % des communes ont moins de 2.000 habitants et près de 80% de la population vit hors des villes- ne peut pas aller sans quelques concessions. Notamment à l'endroit des chasseurs et des agriculteurs. Côté pile, Philippe Martin est l'un des treize secrétaires du groupe d'études «chasse et territoires» (dont l'un des vice-présidents est l'élú EELV François-Michel Lambert). Il n'hésite pas à demander un prolongement des périodes de chasse par ici, à flatter les chasseurs lors d'une assemblée générale -«moins de chasseurs c'est aussi le risque d'une perte d'influence du monde rural pour les décisions qui le concernent», comme le rapporte le journal *Plaisirs de la chasse*. Mais rien de tonitruant, toutefois. Elu d'une région gaveuse de gallinacés, il en appelle au boycott des vins de la côte ouest des états-unis quand, l'an passé, la Californie interdit la vente et la production du foie gras, le gavage étant considéré là-bas comme de la torture. Autre concession impardonnable aux yeux des défenseurs du bien-être animal: son soutien à la corrída, grande tradition locale. Enfin, l'emprise du maïs, à la culture très intensive, n'a cessé de croître dans le département. Philippe Martin a récemment remis à Jean-Marc Ayrault un rapport sur la gestion quantitative de l'eau d'irrigation [JDLE] salué par la FNSEA. Bref, depuis près de 15 ans, Philippe Martin a donné des gages clairs de non-agression à une partie de son électorat.

Côté face, Philippe Martin a lancé quantité de projets que ne renierait aucun écologiste dûment estampillé. Il impose en 2009 les repas «bio» dans les cantines du département, soutient l'extension de l'agriculture biologique (près de 600 exploitations dans le département) et les circuits courts -quitte à croiser le fer avec l'Etat pour avoir privilégié des filières locales- et organise un recyclage des déchets plastique assez poussé. Il crée également un service local d'intervention contre la précarité énergétique des ménages les plus modestes et s'oppose aux épandages aériens. Mais son plus haut fait d'armes reste le référendum organisé en 2004 pour interdire les essais OGM et le maïs Monsanto 810 dans son département. Un vote sans valeur juridique, mais qui le (dé)marque désormais politiquement et le propulse rédacteur des contributions du PS consacrées à l'environnement. En 2010, il dépose un recours au nom du département du Gers devant la Cour de justice européenne pour faire annuler 6 autorisations de maïs transgénique accordées par la Commission européenne. La Cour le débouterait. «*Je condamne les actions de fauchage volontaire, mais je ne veux pas que les OGM se développent dans l'anonymat le plus total: il faut un vrai débat pour le respect de la démocratie et des consommateurs*», confiait-il à l'époque à *Sud-Ouest*.

Au printemps 2011, il co-préside une mission d'information sur les gaz de schiste avec l'ancien député François-Michel Gonnot. Leurs conclusions divergeront du tout au tout, puisque l'élú UMP préconisera d'«*investir dans des projets de recherche*», quand le socialiste estimera qu'«*on ne peut pas (...) vouloir réduire notre dépendance aux énergies fossiles et accroître [notre] dépendance en se lançant dans l'exploitation...d'une nouvelle énergie fossile!*».

Dernier épisode moins connu, mais très instructif... Le Conseil général du Gers avait acquis il y a un an un étang de 37 hectares classé en Zone naturelle d'intérêt écologique, floristique et faunistique (ZNIEFF) –l'étang de Moura, à Avéron-Bergelle- où alevins, carpes, anguilles et tortues cistudes s'égayaient en toute quiétude. Objectif: mettre en place un programme de valorisation pédagogique et de sensibilisation à l'environnement. Un projet qui n'a pas été du goût de certains, puisqu'en août dernier, une partie de l'étang a été vidangée et une barque de pêcheur du 18ème siècle incendiée. Après plusieurs mois d'enquête, il s'avère que ce sont 8 céréaliers et éleveurs, encartés au syndicat «Jeunes agriculteurs», qui auraient joué du briquet et de la bombe (des tags aimables avaient été retrouvés, comme «*Martin, pas d'eau pour les tortues*» ou «*Martin tu peux en acheter un autre*», sans compter le traditionnel et si romantique «*Martin = PD*»...).

Ministre, Philippe Martin saura t-il rompre avec le foie gras, la tauromachie et la chasse à la palombe? Il avait prévenu qu'en 2017, quand sonnerait l'heure de la fin (relative) du cumul des mandats, c'est le Gers qui aurait sa préférence. Va t-il bichonner sa terre d'élection ou endosser des décisions qui pourront déplaire à sa base électorale? Lors de sa prise de fonctions, il a déclaré que «*l'écologie est une exigence absolue.*»

Marine Jobert



Mais qui est donc ce jeune chercheur de cistudes en Brenne, juin 1989 ?
Who's that boy ?

300 PET TURTLES TAKE REFUGE IN ATOCHA RAILWAY STATION, MADRID

Madrid - Anyone traveling through Madrid's main Atocha railway station in the last twenty years will remember the beautiful, tropical garden in the station's main concourse. What they might not know is that around 300 turtles have happily taken refuge there. Basically the tropical garden has now become a welcoming refuge to homeless turtles.

There are many reasons for them being there. Some were brought there because children lost interest in them. Others because for some reason or another they could no longer keep them as pets. Another major reason is that people might not have been prepared, or able, to pay the 40% ticket price to take the turtle on a train and found a quick solution to the problem.

Whatever the reason for them being there, the station's indoor wetlands have been populated with approximately 300 turtles, giving a little glimpse of nature to passengers passing through the station.

The state railway company, Renfe, has employed Aurora Peña to look after the turtles. She told El País: "We give them animal feed, to make sure they are properly nourished."

Indicating the turtles, grouped on rocks and other platforms in the water, surrounded by fine white sand, she said: "This is the area we have set aside for them to lay their eggs."

Explaining that normally turtles living in a tropical sea would head to a remote and protected beach to lay their eggs, and then incubate them, she said that the little expanse of sand in the tropical garden is the closest they will get to a beach in the Spanish capital.

At the last count of the turtles in 2012, when there were 275 animals. "We take them out one by one, we count them and we tidy them up a bit," says Peña.

According to Peña, the population has stayed relatively stable over the years. Those that have died have been replaced by people's former pets.

Not a bad place for a turtle to end up these days, and as we can see from the video above, definitely a distraction from the boredom of waiting for your train.

The gardens alone are worth the visit. With over 7,000 plants in neatly manicured garden beds, with some reaching the station's domed ceiling, its like another world in the center of the busy city.

There are reportedly around 260 different tropical species among the plants, and they even include towering palm trees.

Normally a railway station is somewhere you just pass through when on vacation, but Atocha railway station has actually received reviews on Tripadvisor, mainly for its tropical garden and inhabitants.

By Anne Sewell, Digital Journal, 7/29/13 in Travel

CALLS FOR PROPOSALS, FFEPT GRANTS FOR TURTLES CONSERVATION

The FFEPT, "Federation Francophone pour l'élevage et la preservation des tortues", is a French based NGO created in 2001 that includes 130 members mostly French speaking Europeans. The FFEPT encourages preservation of turtles and tortoises in situ and ex situ, discourages illegal trades and promotes responsible and sustainable captive breeding techniques to sustain chelonian pet trade. It also promotes education on chelonians and their protection through its actions and the publication of its herpetological journal "Cheloniens".

The FFEPT is proud to announce the creation of 2 grants of 800 euros that will be given in spring 2014. These 2 grants target significant programs involved in 'in situ' preservation, study, education and captive breeding techniques of tortoises or freshwater turtles. The first grant will reward a project improving husbandry, reproduction and research among captive turtles or tortoises, or enhance education on chelonians. The second grant will reward a project that studies chelonians in the wild in order to better understand management and preservation of wild populations. The comity evaluating the proposals includes Dr Ghislaine Guyot Jackson (comity chair), Dr Roger Bour and Dr Antoine Cadi, Dr Alain Bertrand (FFEPT president) and 2 members of the FFEPT board.

A PDF or word file should include a detailed project written in French, a detailed budget explaining how the grant will be used, a biography of the authors, a list of publications and full address of the authors. The file should be submitted by December 31, 2013 as a PDF or word document to ffept@ffept.org

For detailed guidelines or more information please contact ffept@ffept.org or GGUYOT13@aol.com



Emys de Minorque

GERMANS HUNT TURTLE AFTER ATTACK ON BOY

How such a turtle got into a Bavarian lake remains a mystery - Supposedly an Alligator Snapping Turtle

Residents of a German town have joined a determined search for a turtle blamed for an attack on a young swimmer.

A lake was drained at the weekend in the hunt for what is suspected to be an alligator snapping turtle.

Firefighters and local helpers at the Oggenrieder Weiher, in Bavaria, are wading through mud hoping to find the reptile, which is not a native species.

The turtle, nicknamed Lotti, is likely to be some 40cm (16 inches) long and weigh at least 14kg (30 pounds).

An eight-year-old German boy on holiday was bitten while bathing in the lake a week ago. His Achilles tendon was severed in two places, and zoologists in Munich later concluded that an alligator turtle had probably attacked him.

Such turtles are native to North America, so German authorities believe the reptile must have been released into the lake by its owner. Since 1999 there has been a ban on keeping the turtles in Germany, the daily Sueddeutsche Zeitung reports on its website.

The local mayor, Andreas Lieb, has offered a 1,000-euro (£859; \$1,330) reward for whoever finds Lotti, while warning against any attempt to trap the turtle without expert help.

Lotti may be lying low in the thick mud, so it could be a long and perhaps fruitless search. Volunteers are reported to be beating the mud with the brooms more often used to put out small woodland fires.

About 500 fish were transferred to a nearby pond when the lake - which is about the size of a football pitch - was drained. But Mr Lieb has described the whole incident as a "disaster", coming at the height of the holiday season.

BBC Europe, 8/12/13



It's often difficult to spot the animal in its habitat...
(Snapping turtle from Carapax, photo Alain Veysset)

THREATENED GOPHER TORTOISES RESCUED FROM FLA. CONSTRUCTION SITE

The Humane Society of the United States and developers collaborate to give gopher tortoises a new home in protected wilderness

After 47 days in the field, 227 threatened gopher tortoises have been spared an inhumane death and 28 gopher tortoise eggs have been saved from a development site in Apopka, Fla. The Humane Society of the United States, Nokuse Plantation, D.R. Horton and Bio-Tech Consulting teamed up to rescue the tortoises and eggs from the Rock Springs Ridge subdivision before relocating them to a permanent home at Nokuse Plantation, a nature preserve in Walton County. The eggs started hatching on Sept. 6.

Dave Pauli, senior director of The HSUS' Wildlife Innovations and Response Team said: "We applaud D.R. Horton and Bio-Tech Consulting for acting to save the tortoises who were living on this site, and we hope other developers will follow their positive lead. The gopher tortoise is a threatened species, and this is a victory for the species and for the humane treatment of all wild animals threatened by urban development."

Florida did not require relocation or removal of gopher tortoises prior to construction until 2007 when the state listed the gopher tortoise as a threatened species. Since 1991, the state's Incidental Take permit program allowed the destruction of an estimated 100,000 imperiled gopher tortoises. The tortoises were often buried alive, causing slow and inhumane deaths for the animals.

Although developers with grandfathered Incidental Take permits are not required to relocate tortoises by law, D.R Horton and Orlando-based Bio-Tech Consulting took steps to ensure the safe removal of tortoises from the Rock Springs Ridge site. D.R. Horton further demonstrated their commitment to rescuing the tortoises by donating the cost of the backhoe operations.

Since 2006, The HSUS has worked with developers and Nokuse Plantation to rescue and relocate more than 4,000 threatened gopher tortoises from construction sites with grandfathered Incidental Take permits. These rescues have been made possible through private donations and grants from The Folke H. Peterson Foundation. The HSUS helped fund the Rock Springs Ridge project and transported the tortoises more than 400 miles to Nokuse Plantation. Nokuse Plantation waived its normal management fees to help save the tortoises and will provide monitoring and permanent habitat protection for the animals.

Facts:

- The western gopher tortoise population, from the Tombigbee and Mobile Rivers in Alabama to southeastern Louisiana, has been listed as a federally threatened species since 1987. The state of Florida listed the gopher tortoise as a threatened species in November 2007.
- In June 2007, The Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission adopted a proposal to end the controversial gopher tortoise Incidental Take permit program, resulting in gopher tortoises being buried alive routinely on development sites. Existing permit holders were grandfathered in and may be transferred with property sales.
- Many development projects were put on hold due to the slump in the housing market. As a result, thousands of gopher tortoises are still living on construction sites that hold grandfathered permits allowing the tortoises to be killed.

Developers who wish to collaborate with The HSUS to relocate tortoises are encouraged to contact The HSUS' Eastern Regional Office at 850-386-3435 or The HSUS' Wildlife Innovations and Response Team at 202-452-1100.

Oct. 1, 2013

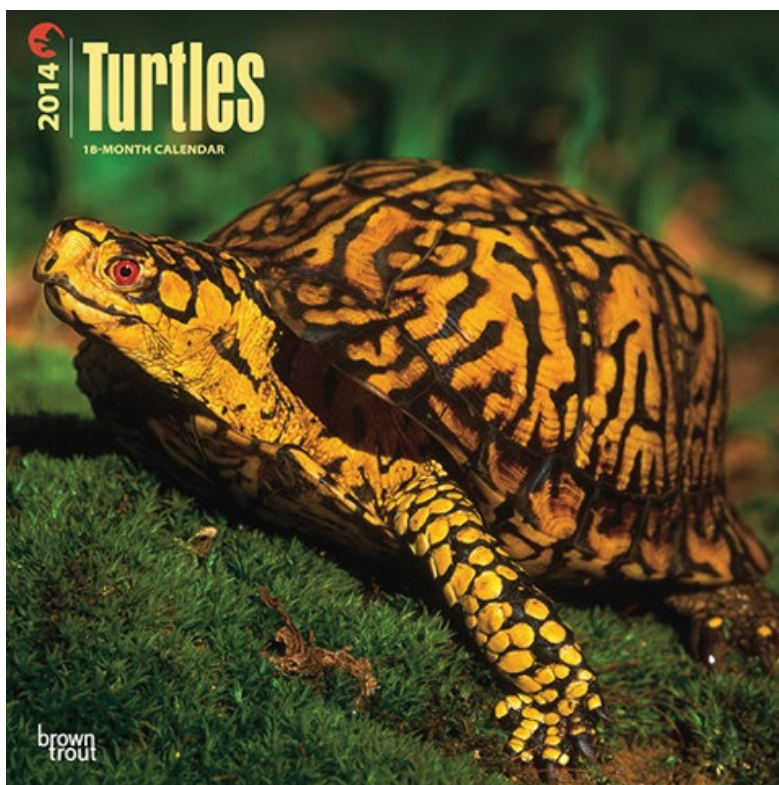
HIBERNATING TURTLES ARE STILL AWARE OF WHAT'S GOING ON AROUND THEM

Smithsonian.com 10/11/13 -When temperatures dip below about 50 degrees, aquatic turtles like red-eared sliders take to the pond, where they will spend the next two or three months submerged and hibernating. They partially embed themselves in the pond mud, then wait as their body temperature drops. As they become colder, their heart rate slows to as little as one beat every couple of minutes. In this state, they don't need to breathe. They turn off energy-taxing brain functions and seem completely out of it. Researchers assumed they entered a coma-like condition of complete disfunction and lack of awareness.

Now, however, new findings challenge that notion. Turtles turn out to be pretty in tune to what's going on around them. As ScienceNOW reports, researchers performed two experiments on the turtles to test their awareness. First, the researchers anesthetized the turtles and inserted electrodes into their heads. When they deprived those turtles of oxygen or made conditions extremely cold, they found that the animals still registered neuronal responses to light.

In a second experiment, they locked turtles in a cold, dark watery chamber for two weeks, tricking the animals into thinking it was winter. When the turtles began to hibernate, however, the researchers began to mess with them, flipping on the lights, adding more oxygen to the tank, vibrating the water or warming things up. The light and warmth, they found, provoked immediate responses, whereas the vibration and oxygen did not, ScienceNOW reports.

"Hibernating turtles are not comatose, but remain vigilant during overwintering," the scientists concluded in their paper. This way, as soon as the first signs of spring arrive, they can shake off those winter chills and paddle back into reptilian action.



UNBORN TURTLES ACTIVELY REGULATE THEIR OWN TEMPERATURE

Smithsonian.org 6/12/13 Visit a sunny pond in a meadow, park or zoo and you'll likely see turtles basking on logs and small lizards hanging out on warm rocks. If you're in the south, you may even spot an alligator lazing on a bright patch of shore.

Ectotherms (better known as cold-blooded animals) such as these reptiles have to shuttle back and forth between shade and sun in order to manually regulate their body temperature. Insects, fish, amphibians and reptiles all do it. Now, new research suggests that these animals begin their temperature-regulating tasks much earlier than previously thought—while they are embryos encased in their eggs.

Previously, researchers thought of developing embryos as cut off from the outside world. But back in 2011, researchers found that Chinese soft-shelled turtle embryos could move between warmer or cooler patches in their eggs, though they lacked any feet at such an early stage of development. Some of the same Chinese and Australian researchers who published that original finding decided to investigate further to see just how deliberate these movements are.

“Do reptile embryos move away from dangerously high temperatures as well as towards warm temperatures?” the team, writing in the journal *Biology Letters*, wondered. “And is such embryonic movement due to active thermoregulation, or (more simply) to passive embryonic repositioning caused by local heat-induced changes in viscosity of fluids within the egg?”

In other words, are unborn reptiles purposefully moving from one spot to another within their eggs, much like an adult animal does? The team decided to investigate these questions by experimenting on turtle embryos. They incubated 125 eggs from Chinese three-keeled pond turtles. They randomly assigned each of the eggs to one of five temperature groups: constant temperature, hot on top/cool on the bottom, or at a range of heats directed towards one end of the egg.

When they began the experiment, most embryos sat in the middle of their eggs. A week after exposing them to the different temperature groups, the team again measured the baby turtles' positioning within the eggs. At the 10-day mark, the researchers again measured the turtles' positions, and then injected half of the eggs with a poison that euthanized those developing embryos. Finally, after another week, they took one last measurement of the developing turtles and euthanized turtles.

The turtles within the eggs held at constant temperature or those that were in the “warm on the top/cool on the bottom” group tended not to shift around in their eggs, the researchers found. Those belonging to the groups that experienced warm temperatures only on one end of their egg, however, did move around. They gravitated towards warm conditions (84-86°F), but if things heated up too extremely (91°F), they edged towards the cooler side of their egg. Crucially, the embryos that the researchers euthanized stopped moving after receiving the dose of poison. This shows that the embryos themselves, not some passive physical process, are doing the shifting.

The turtle embryos, the researchers note, behave much like adult reptiles do when thermoregulating their bodies. They warm up and cool down by moving toward or away from heat sources. For species like turtles, temperature during development plays an important part of determining the embryo's sex. Turtle nests, which are buried in the sand, often experience a range of different temperatures, so embryos could be playing a role in determining their own gender, edging towards the cooler side of the egg if they feel like becoming a male, or the warmer side if they're more female-inclined, the authors write.

TURTLES TALK TO EACH OTHER ? COMMUNICATION IN AQUATIC TURTLES

Q. You are involved in some innovative research; can you describe what you are working on?

A. We're studying acoustic communication in aquatic turtles. Using hydrophones, we've demonstrated that late term embryos of *Podocnemis expansa* are communicating to stimulate simultaneous hatching and communal digging out of the nest. Furthermore, we've found that females are communicating underwater to hatchlings, presumably to aid in long distance migration. So far, we've documented acoustic communication in ten aquatic turtle species. Most likely, all turtle species emit sounds to some extent to communicate with conspecifics. This phenomenon has been overlooked because the sounds are at the low end of the frequency of human hearing, short in duration, and low in volume. It's very exciting to know that turtles have been exchanging information in our presence all along; only now are we documenting what they're saying.

Q. These findings are transforming the way we look at turtles; can you elaborate on the possibilities here?

A. Acoustic social behavior in turtles is the most exciting development in turtle biology since the discovery of temperature controlled sex determination in the 1970s, which changed the way people thought about turtle population biology and conservation programs. The fact that turtles are now shown to be far more social than anyone dreamed, will change the way people study turtles and the way conservation and management programs are developed. Sound pollution is an obvious example of a most important new factor that must be considered in future turtle conservation programs. We don't know how motorboat or dredging operation sound interference may affect turtles' abilities to communicate. Is it possible that sounds produced by ATVs driven across nesting beaches may cause premature hatching? Or perhaps even loud Cumbia music played on the beach may effect a hatching.

Turtles must find mates; until now we thought they merely bumped into each other, or maybe that pheromones played a role, as evidenced by a tortoise attempting to copulate with a head of lettuce walked over by a female. Clearly, acoustic and olfactory senses develop differently amongst turtle species. We know that *P. expansa* are very social, emitting sounds to group together for migration, to come out of the water and bask communally, and to leave the water and nest in groups. They might also be emitting sounds continually as they migrate to maintain pod structure, as ducks do when they fly in V formation or as red-winged blackbirds do in their massive spring and fall migrations. Do turtles give warning calls? Are there group leaders? Is there vigilance on beaches while their sisters nest? Turtles must no longer be considered animated rocks with legs; they have an intricate social life that we are just beginning to unravel.

Q. This field is ripe for further research. What are some areas you would like to see investigated?

A. It's unlikely that individual females identify their young or vice versa, but it is rather a genetic group bonding effort. We need to know the genetic nature of these pods, are these family groups? Are the females that migrate with hatchlings from the nesting beaches' sisters? Are these relationships maintained through the year? Do turtles go in and out of groups? What happens when you release a turtle of the same species from a different river system near the group? Does it join the group or try to find its way home? We need to conduct underwater playback experiments to understand the function of emitted sounds. Can we call turtles in to nest on the nesting beach of our choice? Can we use surrogate mothers when releasing headstarted turtles so that these naïve turtles can get to foraging grounds? What do the structures of these sounds look like in mixed species assemblages of turtles, where we may have 10 or more species in the same river? Can we use hydrophones to census turtles in streams, rivers, and lakes? On the Mississippi River in Wisconsin, three species of *Graptemys* hibernate together behind specific wing dams; why these wing dams and not others? These same species migrate 8-12 km to nest on the same beaches together year after year; is there interspecies communication? We need to collect data over a broad taxonomic scale to understand the level of communication among diverse taxonomic groups and the diversity of the acoustic repertoire. Are there universal sounds of similar wavelength and structure used by all turtles?

Q. The fact that female and hatchling South American Giant River Turtles are vocalizing, and that there is strong evidence that female turtles wait offshore for hatchlings to enter the water, has enormous implications for how we plan and execute headstart and release programs. Can you elaborate on the potential impact of your research on these conservation strategies?

A. There is more than strong evidence. We have over 20 years of research demonstrating that female *Podocnemis expansa* do indeed wait for hatchlings. To date, we know hatchlings migrate with the females in the deep channel of the river for up to 62 km. This year, we predict we'll be able to document hatchling turtles reaching the flooded forest feeding grounds with the females. The practice of holding hatchling *Podocnemis expansa* in captivity for weeks or months before release, and the practice of releasing hatchlings at beaches different than their natal ones, may actually be harmful to the natural process of migration. There is recent documentation of young mature *P. expansa* nesting alone in inadequate beaches in shallow, fine sand in the lower Amazon River. These turtles may have lost their pod, or never were members of one; this could be the result of released or escaped turtles. It would be interesting to see if we could induce these turtles to follow the sounds of migrating turtles played from underwater speakers, bringing them to a migrating pod or up to the nesting beaches in the Trombetas River. Remembering that pre TSD conservation efforts by some sea turtle biologists produced all male turtles because of nest manipulations, it may be best to revisit the conservation strategies for *P. expansa* and consider a more hands off approach.

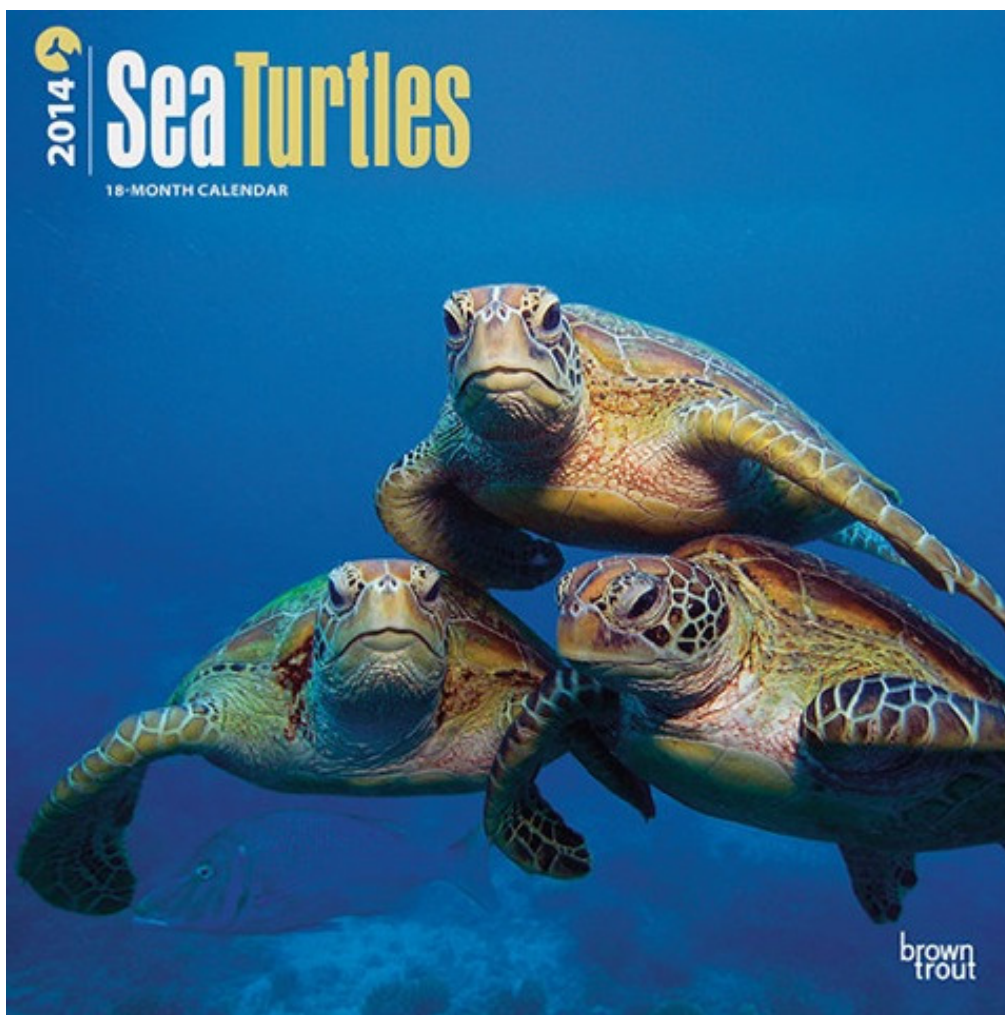
An Interview with Dick Vogt and Camila Ferrara
From Turtle Survival Alliance 2013 Annual Magazine. Full magazine with photos can be found at
http://www.turtlesurvival.org/storage/documents/magazines/TSA_Magazine_2013.pdf

Further Reading

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L'équipe de rédaction :

Editeur : Alain Veysset
Corrections : Thierry Fretey, Elodie Veysset

Les membres du bureau :

Alain Veysset : Président
Jean Servan : Vice-Président
Maryse Servan : Trésorière

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