

Notes from the TPG moderator who provided a temporary home for an abandoned Red-Eared Slider (*trachemys scripta elegans*) which was later rehomed.

The Tortoise Protection Group was contacted by a member of the public after finding what looked to be “a moving stone”. Initially the caller was going to return it into the ditch but because the ditch was notorious for children ‘bombing’ anything that moved he decided to remove it and contact the TPG. The “moving stone” turned out to be an adult Red-Eared Slider (RES). The RES was quickly transported back to the home of one of the moderators and placed in a large pond of fresh water. A quick ‘once over’ during the handling revealed that to the naked eye the RES looking in remarkably good condition.



An urgent request for an experienced keeper went out on list. There were a few responses but none suitable. The TPG re-homing administrator then revisited our re-homing applications and found one member that already kept RES and so she was approached to see whether she would be willing to re-home this abandoned terrapin. In the mean time, Mary Datson, the re-homing officer from the British Chelonian Group had offered to help as she also has experience with handling this species. Telephone calls were exchanged and with Mary’s expert knowledge the RES was provided with all care required to meet its needs during what we hoped would be a short stay until a new home could be found.

Pat, who keeps RES, responded to the TPG’s request and was very generous in offering the RES a new home with her and her own two long term RES. The main concerns now were ‘would they mix’? Again, Mary Datson provided much-needed knowledge and we all agreed that this RES was female and made the chances of interacting with Pat’s group stronger. It was agreed that the pick-up would be best suited for early Saturday morning, thus allowing Pat to spend the complete weekend settling the terrapin in.

Pat and her husband arrived as planned to pick the terrapin up. I was very impressed with the way Pat conducted herself with the RES: hands on and confident, and it was evident that a mutual appreciation had instantly formed. After quarantine this terrapin was going to be gradually introduced to Pat's male and female RES.

Notes from the new keeper, Pat.

We picked the RES up on the 12th July 2008 from Elaine's. Elaine had done a marvellous job looking after her until we could get down to collect her. We travelled back with her in a box on my knee and she was very quiet, which I found unusual for terrapins as my other two would have been climbing the side of the box trying to get out, they are so nosey! We got home and put her in a large container within the greenhouse and gave her some food, but I think it was all a bit too traumatic for her, so we left her on her own to settle in for the night.



The next day we were busy cleaning out the pond where she would begin her new life, making sure all the area was clean and tidy for her, with lots of areas where she could come out to bask in the sun and hide away should she want to. She said hello to my two (Cosimoto and Mac) through the window of the greenhouse, I think they were impressed!

When she first went in the pond she went straight to the bottom, but it didn't take her long to realise that she could swim around, get in and out of the pond when she liked, and have a wander around. At night a cover is placed over a third of the pond so she could keep under cover should she wish to, and in the winter it will be heated so she should be very comfortable. She is enjoying her food: prawns, pellets, lettuces and the vegetation that is around her pond.



I think she looks a lot happier now and hopefully she will continue to be so when all three are together.

She is a big beautiful terrapin; hence we have decided to call her Big Doll.

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