



Tortoises, Terrapins & Turtles of Africa

Bill Branch

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Tortoises, terrapins and turtles belong to the oldest surviving reptile lineage. They have been around for 220 million years, and witnessed the rise and fall of the dinosaurs.

Africa has a rich diversity of these reptiles, known collectively as chelonians. Tortoises are found in forests and deserts, savannah and fynbos; terrapins inhabit marshes, rivers, lakes and ponds; and sea turtles swim in the oceans of Africa, coming ashore to nest on certain beaches.

This authoritative field guide to the tortoises, terrapins and turtles of Africa is richly illustrated with color photographs that make for easy identification of 46 chelonian species (some only recently described); it provides accessible, up-to-date information and distribution maps; and it examines how chelonians have adapted to their environments. The book provides an overview of chelonian origins, anatomy and biology, their conservation status and the threats to their survival posed by the destruction of their habitats by man.

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