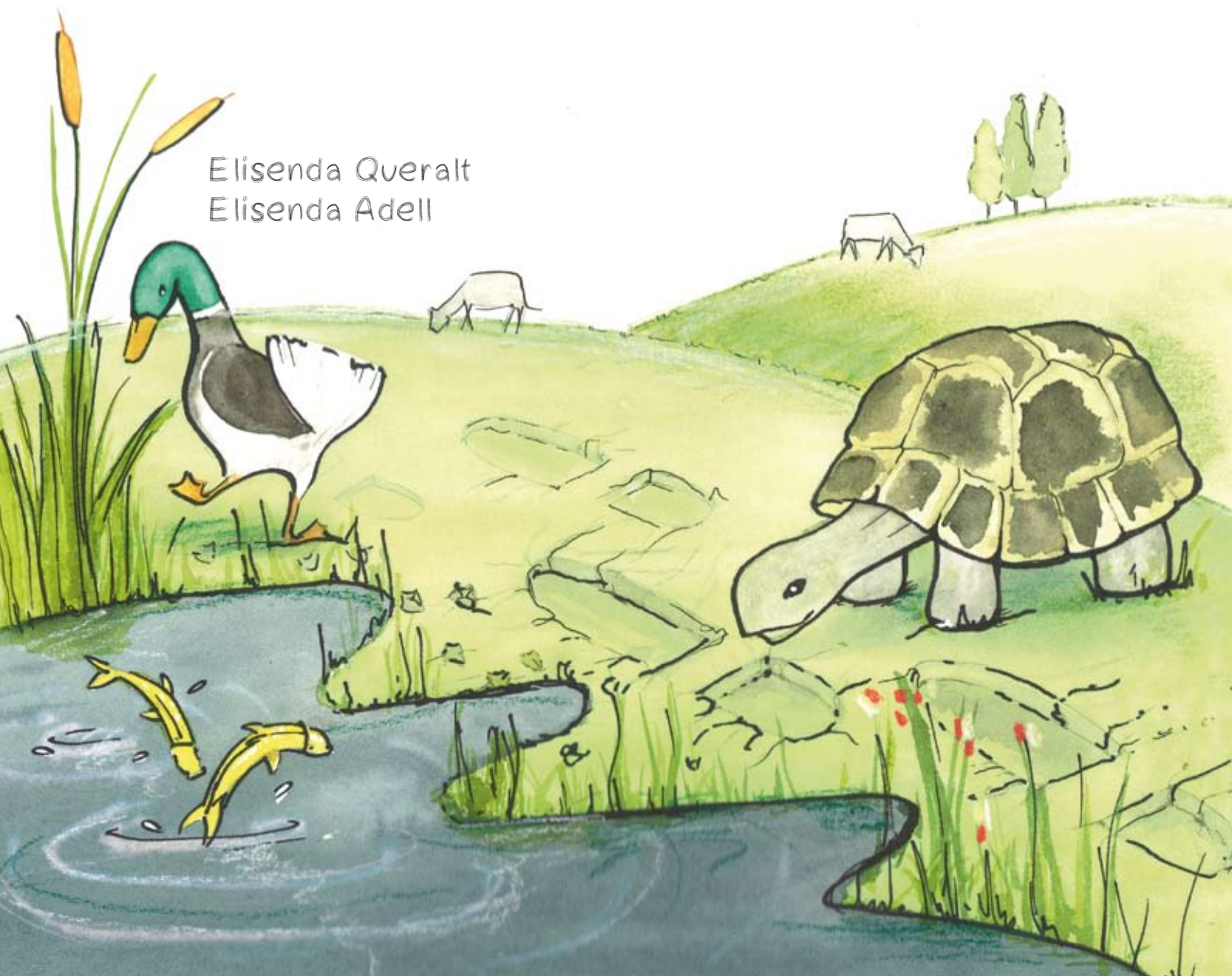


What's going on at the pond?

Elisenda Queralt
Elisenda Adell



What's going on at the pond?

What's going on at the pond?

Edition:

Xarxa de Custòdia del Territori
Sagrada Família, 7 (Universitat de Vic)
08500 Vic
Tel. 938 866 135
www.xct.cat

First edition: November 2012

Coordination: Xarxa de Custòdia del Territori

Author: Elisenda Queralt

Illustration: Elisenda Adell

Design: l'Apòstrof SCCL – www.apostrof.coop

Print: Cevagraf – www.cevagraf.coop

Legal deposit: B. 33349-2012

Printed on recycled paper and ecological dye made from vegetable oils



This story is provided under the terms of a Creative Commons license. To read a copy of this license visit:

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>

This story is part of the [project Boosting land stewardship as a conservation tool in the western Mediterranean arc: a communication and training scheme \(LIFE 10/INF/ES/540\)](#) and co-financed by the European Commission and the Government of Catalonia

For further information visit www.landstewardship.eu



Spring has arrived and colours, smells and music are decorating the forest. Today everyone is busy! Cricket is rubbing his wings, still out of tune, and Blue Tit is choosing the best twigs to build her nest. Many animals are waking up from their winter sleep. What a lot of yawning!

Scratch! Scratch! Scratch!

Who's scratching? It's Peggy! With sleepy eyes, Peggy smiles at the sun. "Another year to enjoy this place," she thinks, "and I will be 50 soon!" she sighs.



The pond water is cloudy so Butterfly gazes at herself in a dewdrop. Suddenly, a noise makes her jump.

Splish! Splash!

"Come on everyone!" Duck calls. "The carps are courting!"

The animals rush to watch the show. Peggy doesn't want to miss them jumping and slowly moves towards the pond.

"Cow and Ewe are already there," she thinks smiling as she looks at their tracks. "Hey! This one is not animal-made! Where have I seen it before? This smells fishy," Peggy thinks, a little bit worried. She decides to investigate.



Meanwhile, Hedgehog has an idea.

"Listen everybody! It's Peggy's 50th soon. How about giving her a special present?"

"I'd be happy to help out, but I have new places to go!" says Beetle, making up an excuse.

"It seems to me that no one in their 50s wants a present," says Duck.

Blue Tit speaks out: "Well, I think it's a wonderful idea!"

"No one gave *me* a birthday gift!" interrupts Cricket.

They can't agree at all!

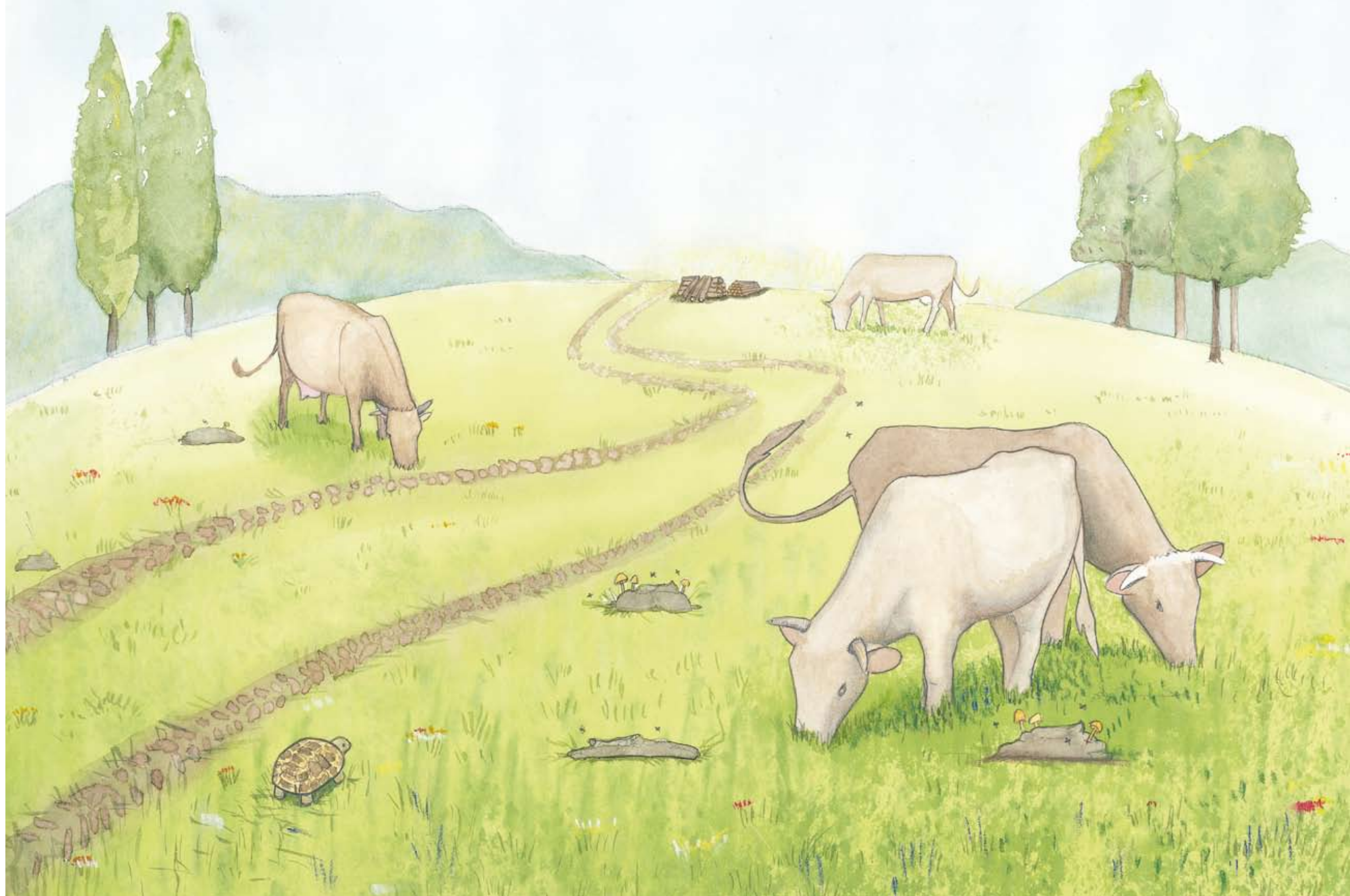


When Peggy gets to the meadow, she sees something strange in the distance.

"I'll get closer and find out what it is," she thinks. "I'd better watch where I tread!" she laughs.

When she gets nearer to the object, she sees it is a bundle of sticks. "Who brought these here? And why?" Peggy wonders.

Then something on the path catches her eye. "Mmmm? When have I seen this before? Of course! The day Bob disappeared!" she recalls. And a shiver runs down her spine.





The discussion goes on at the pond.

"If it was *my* 50th, I would love to visit a faraway pond!" states Beatle.

"Well, I believe we should treat her to a mud massage. They do miracles with wrinkles, you know? And Peggy's scales would shine like the sun!" suggests Butterfly.

Some meters away, Peggy is still looking round. She notices something suspicious under the leaves. She smells it and then she bites it. "This is all very strange," she thinks. Peggy starts to get really worried.



It is night. Toad comes out of her hole and heads to the water to take a look at her babies. Surely they have four legs already!

Rrrrrrrrr! Eeeeeeeekk!

A braking sound and two powerful headlights paralyze her.

Peggy has seen it all. Her heart beats so fast she can hardly breathe.

"Strange footprints? Sticks? Noises and lights at night? The pond is in danger!" Peggy thinks and starts to shake.



Peggy calls the animals together.

"Dear friends, some creatures are haunting the pond. We must stop them! Our lives are in danger!"

"I have a date today. Can't we go tomorrow?" asks Butterfly.

"You are probably imagining things," says Beetle.

"Don't worry about it, Peggy, and bring more muuusic into your life!" chills Cricket.

"I would join you, Peggy," says Frog, "but in my state..."

Suddenly, the sky darkens and the wind begins to blow. A storm is coming!



In next to no time, it's pouring down. Peggy has decided to follow the tracks all on her own. Just as her legs start to weaken from tiredness and cold, she sees two noisy creatures shaking hands. She has found them at last! Peggy hurries up but, oh no! She trips over a root and lands on her back. What will she do now? She has bumped her head hard and feels too weak to turn around. Peggy passes out!

Two strong hands pick
Peggy up and take her
away from the path.



A few days have passed.
Sadness reigns in the forest
as Peggy is still unconscious.

"I should have gone with her
instead of meeting my date,"
sobs Butterfly.

"You know you can't fly
in the rain," replies Hedgehog.
"If only I had gone with her.
I would have defended Peggy
with my spines!"

"It is too late to weep
now," says Cricket. "Let's be
optimistic and..." Just at that
moment, Peggy opens one eye.

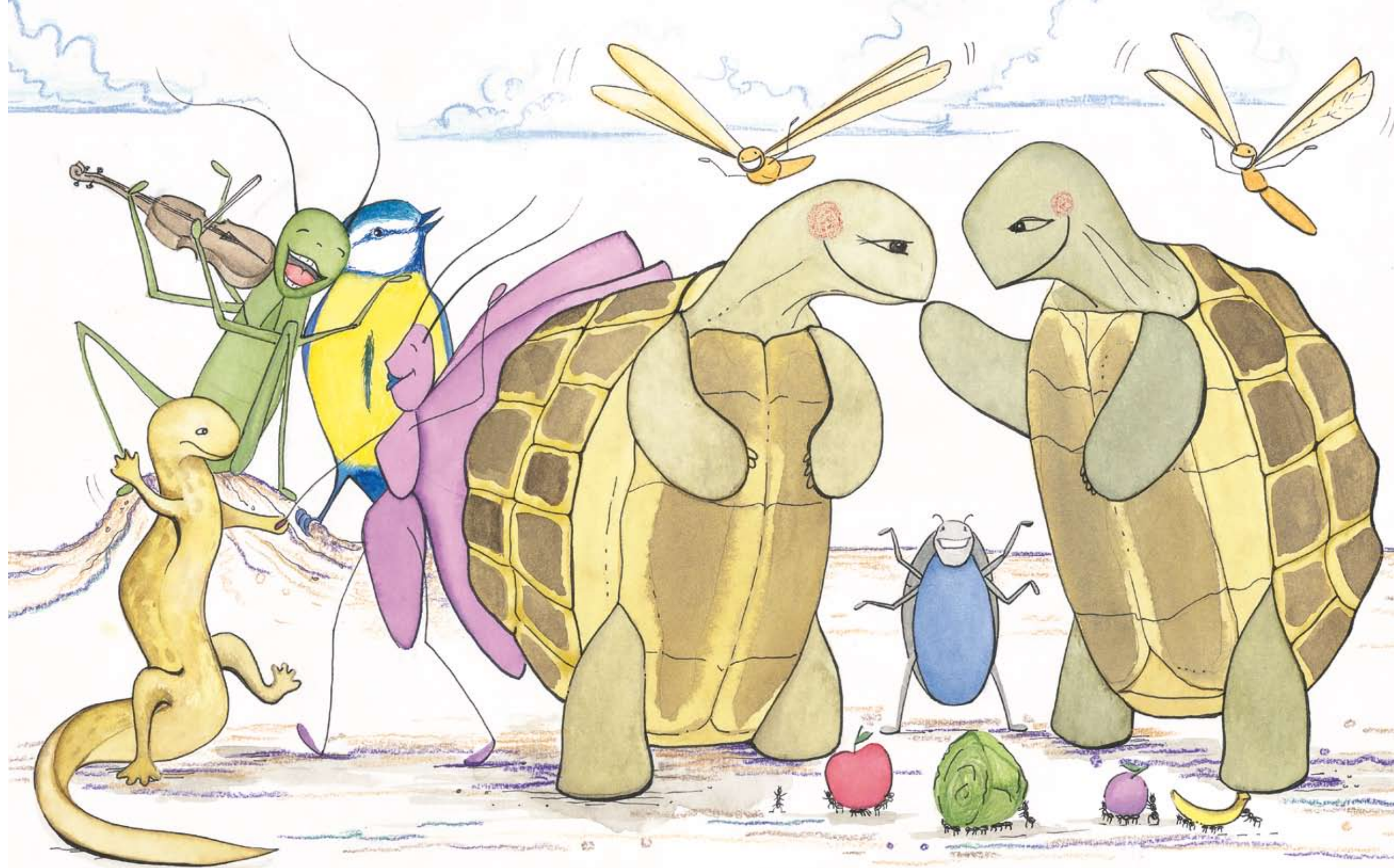


The forest is happy again!
"Peggy is awake! Happy birthday, Peggy!" say her friends.

Just then the ants arrive with Peggy's favourite foods while Cricket and Blue Tit do a concert.

"Peggy, the dragonflies and Newt are here too," says Beatle. "And look who I found by the vegetable garden?" he adds winking.

"Oh! Bob!" Peggy exclaims, blushing. "Thank you! What a feast! But my friends, how about the shadows, the noises, and the tracks?"





The animals lead Peggy to the pond.

"While you were sleeping, there was a lot going on around here. The noisy creatures came and, look what they've done to our home!" says Duck.

"We'll have more privacy behind these bulrushes!" smile the carps.

"I'll build beautiful webs in this fence," laughs Spider.

"And they gave me a new nest!" adds Blue Tit.

"There is no need to worry, Peggy," reassures Hedgehog. "The noisy creatures just wanted to take our photo!"



We do not inherit the Earth from our
Ancestors, we borrow it from our Children.

Ancient Indian Proverb

LAND STEWARDSHIP

Land stewardship is a strategy for the conservation and proper use of the Earth's natural, cultural and landscape resources based on the direct, active and voluntary participation of people from a wide range of organisations (organised civil society, owners and users of land, public administrations, general public, enterprises, etc.) working toward a common goal: to preserve biodiversity, the particular and unique landscapes of our country, and the associated cultural and social heritage.

People and land are the key elements of this innovative philosophy based on volunteerism, dialogue and shared responsibility on the part of its actors.

Land stewardship materializes in voluntary arrangements between land stewardship entities (public or private nonprofit organisations) landowners of land with unique values to be preserved. These pacts, which are reflected in documents called land stewardship agreements, establish commitments for both parties intended to maintain or restore the natural environment and landscape.

For further information:
www.landstewardship.eu





With the support of:



Generalitat de Catalunya
Government
of Catalonia

(LIFE 10/INF/ES/540)

Partner organisations:

