

YOSHI

finds home

by Kendall O'Connor

In the spring 2020 edition of *LANDSCOPE* magazine we brought you the story of Yoshi the loggerhead turtle who was released from the Two Oceans Aquarium in Cape Town, South Africa after twenty years, and swam more than 40,000 kilometres to Western Australian waters off the Pilbara coast (see 'Yoshi's journey', *LANDSCOPE* Spring 2020).

As we went to print, CEO of the Two Oceans Aquarium Foundation and guest columnist for the magazine, Maryke Musson, updated Yoshi followers to let them know that the determined loggerhead turtle has indeed found home in WA.

With lockdown restrictions slowly being lifted and people having more freedom to leave their homes and travel, Yoshi the loggerhead sea turtle seems to have found her home range off the coast of Eighty Mile Beach in Western Australia's north.

It was initially speculated that Yoshi originated from the Northwest or Southwest Indian Ocean loggerhead populations, Oman or KwaZulu-Natal respectively, but it now seems that it is more likely that she is from the Southeast Indian Ocean population from Western Australia. Her tracks, once she reached the Indian Ocean, showed a very similar route to that of post-hatchling loggerhead turtles from Western Australia, but just in reverse. As a juvenile, she might have followed the currents from Shark Bay or Ningaloo rookeries in Western Australia towards Madagascar.

"It has been such a privilege to be part of this remarkable adventure, part of it with Yoshi, and part of it cheering her along from Cape Town", said Maryke. "I am thrilled that she has found a safe area to call home (for now). The Aussies have been superb hosts to Yoshi, and now I believe they are family. I am hoping her tag will last for a few more months so we can finally see whether she is going to contribute to the region's loggerhead population. She has proven to be a superior athlete, and her 40,011 kilometre



swim is the longest recorded sea turtle journey ever tracked, in both distance and in time. It is also the longest distance tracked for any marine animal. Only one bird, the little arctic tern, with its up to 77,000 kilometre migration, can give Yoshi a run for her money, and holds the record of longest animal migration tracked."

Above A loggerhead turtle.
Photo – Gary Bell/Oceanwide Images

Right Yoshi being released.
Photo – Two Oceans Aquarium Foundation

