

current kids conservation



words
Mahira
Kakajiwal

pictures
Prabha
Mallya

Excerpt from
'Little Red Home and Other Stories'.
An upcoming series of childrens' books
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dakshinfoundation.india@gmail.com

LITTLE RED HOME

*I was crawling around
the mangroves, very proud
of my new shell.*

strut strut

*You see, my older one was
now a little too small. I did
love it. It was perfect when I
found it, but I had outgrown
this shell I called home. It
was time to abandon it for
one that was larger and would
give me some space to grow.*

too
weird

too
small

too
meh

too
big

too
alive

*Finding this new shell
was much harder. I had to
compete with a whole group
of other hermit crabs that
were about the same size as me.
This meant that we were all
looking for similar sized shells.*

*When we find a shell
that fits us right, the
ends of our soft bodies
can curl into the spiral
of the abandoned shell.*

*We use the end of our
body to hold tight to
the inside of our new
home — a home that
keeps us safe from
deadly predators.*

One day, not so long ago,
while on a quest for
my new home, I came
across a shell that I
had never seen before.

It was red, a great
bright red! Such a
pretty colour it was.

And it
was just the
right size!

It did fit a little strangely, and no one else
seemed to want it, but I was so enamoured
by the colour that I decided to ignore the fit.

such
envy

so
fetch

many
bling

STYLE OVER COMFORT
IS WHAT I SAY.

much
weirdo

Soon after I started strutting
around and showing off my
new shell, I spotted a mud crab,
stealthily walking towards me.
Mud crabs, I knew, eat my kind.

Now ordinarily I would have
crawled back into my shell so
that only my hard legs would
be exposed and my own
soft body protected. But this
strange, new, but very pretty
home wouldn't let me do so!

Oh, gosh! How foolish
was I! I got so entranced
by the beautiful red
colour that I didn't stop
to think about my safety.

MAHIRA KAKAJIWALA in her past lives, has been a marine biologist and a baker. She is now an educator, looking for ways to communicate the amazingness of the oceans and its critters to anyone who will stop and pay attention.

PRABHA MALLYA is an editorial illustrator and comics creator. She is known for drawing insects in the margins, pressing flowers into endpapers, and populating spines with kittens.

The tale of the turtle and the plastic jelly fish

Author Sarah Nelms
Illustrator Kate Nelms

Nerin—
whose name means
'someone from the sea' -
was a turtle who lived
in the open ocean.

Her big flippers and smooth shell
meant she could glide effortlessly
through the water.

This was a very good thing because
she sometimes had to travel
thousands of miles in search of her
favourite food, jellyfish.

One day she came across a whole
swarm of jellyfish, bobbing about
in the water.

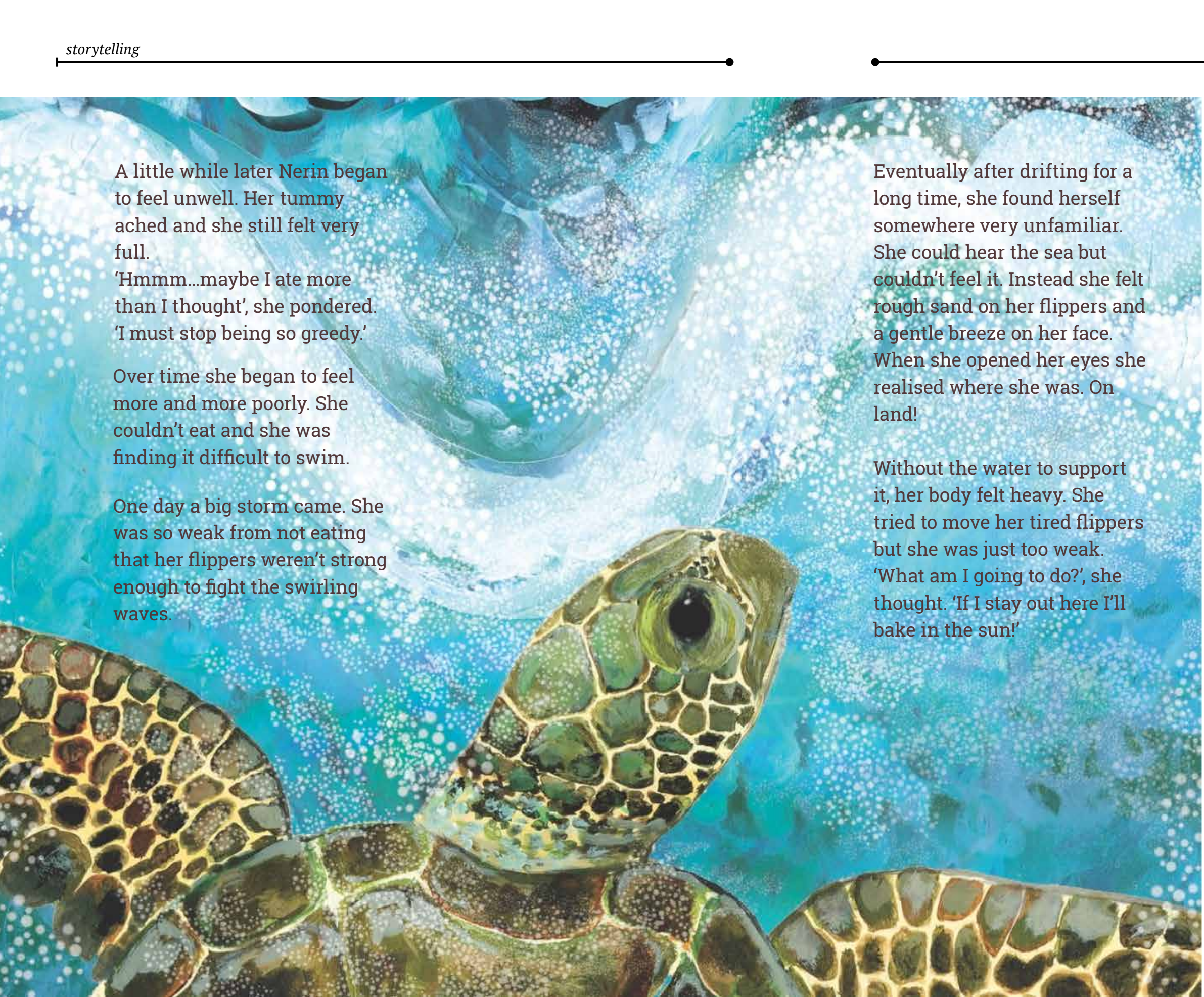
'Yippee!' She cried.
'I'm so hungry I could eat them all!'.
Nerin rushed towards them and
started hoovering them up like

jelly off a plate.
In her haste, Nerin didn't notice
that one of the floating white
blobs wasn't a jellyfish at all but a
plastic shopping bag, the kind you
see at the supermarket. Someone
must have dropped it in the sea by
mistake.

But it was too late;
Nerin had already slurped it up
with the rest of the jellies.

'Oh dear',
she groaned, 'that last one didn't
taste very nice.' Perhaps I've had
enough for one day'.

So off she swam to take a nap at
the surface of the water where she
knew the warmth of the sunshine
would help her dinner go down.



A little while later Nerin began to feel unwell. Her tummy ached and she still felt very full.

'Hmmm...maybe I ate more than I thought', she pondered. 'I must stop being so greedy.'

Over time she began to feel more and more poorly. She couldn't eat and she was finding it difficult to swim.


One day a big storm came. She was so weak from not eating that her flippers weren't strong enough to fight the swirling waves.

Eventually after drifting for a long time, she found herself somewhere very unfamiliar. She could hear the sea but couldn't feel it. Instead she felt rough sand on her flippers and a gentle breeze on her face. When she opened her eyes she realised where she was. On land!

Without the water to support it, her body felt heavy. She tried to move her tired flippers but she was just too weak. 'What am I going to do?', she thought. 'If I stay out here I'll bake in the sun!'

All of a sudden she heard a noise. It was a sort of snuffling that got louder, as if whatever was making it was moving closer. Then she heard,

**'BARK!
'BARK!
'BARK!'**



To read the rest of Nerin's tale, head to
<https://issuu.com/universityofexeter/docs/turtleplasticjellyfish>

Catch up with Dr. Phil!

Author **Phil Doherty** • Illustrator **Shreya Sen**



My name is Dr Phil Doherty and you may remember back in 2016 (issue 10.2) I introduced you to my fieldwork studying the movements of basking sharks in UK waters. Since then I have moved onto some new research, applying similar techniques to a new species.

In the summer of 2014, I completed my final field season working with the basking sharks, waving goodbye as they swam away carrying the latest in designer satellite tag accessories. Since then, the tags have detached themselves, and once collected, they revealed some amazing things about these mysterious creatures, and the journeys they make.



Some sharks decided not to go very far from where we tagged them, remaining within 200 nautical miles from the UK coastline. In contrast, others decided to head off on an adventure, with some sharks travelling as far as North Africa and reaching depths over of 1 km along the way! This type of information is critical in trying to decide on ways of protecting species of conservation concern and can help inform where to put protected areas.



Even though I would love to have worked on basking sharks forever, all projects must come to an end. As a researcher at the start of my career, I will need to change between projects several times, to get the broad range of experience required to become the best scientist I can. So for my next adventure, I'm working with a UK charity called the Marine Conservation Society, analysing satellite tracking data for green turtles in the Caribbean. You may see a trend here – this is similar to my work with the sharks. I am now using what I learnt in my early work to provide new information on a completely different species, again in the hope of identifying effective conservation measures. This work is similar to the basking shark project in various ways.

We are hoping to find out where these animals go, when this happens and the reasons behind why they are going there. For example, perhaps they are looking for new areas to find food. This work will again look at current legal protection and try to foster multi-national cooperation in conserving this species, which unfortunately often gets caught by mistake in fishing gear. Even though we are using similar technology and techniques, the turtles have a very different range of behaviours and ecological requirements to basking sharks. For example, turtles need to breathe air and so frequently have to surface, whereas basking sharks have no need to surface to breathe, but are often seen at the surface, where they feed on summer plankton blooms.



It is these differences that are so interesting, and so important to understand, if we are to find the most appropriate conservation strategies.

DR. PHIL DOHERTY is a marine ecologist focusing on the movement ecology and spatial patterns of marine vertebrates. His research integrates the use of spatial ecological tools, including satellite tracking, and remote sensing to inform conservation strategies

SHREYA is an Illustrator based out of Kolkata. Analyzing narratives, procrastination, comics, humour, imitating people, making chai are some of her interests.



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