



Little RES Q's Spring Newsletter

Happy Audrey Day 2023

Welcome back for another edition of the Little RES Q Newsletter!

After taking a break, we're back to update you about the happenings of your local turtle rescue. If you have any comments about the content of this newsletter, we'd love to hear from you. Please send an email to celeste@littleresq.net with all your comments and suggestions.

Things that you'll find in this newsletter:

- Updates on Audrey's Legacy
- Challenges for Little RES Q
- Goals for 2023
- Little RES Q's 2022 Stats
- Adoption Highlight: Walter the Blind Chameleon
- Volunteer Highlight: Brian
- Volunteer Opportunities

Happy *Audrey* Day

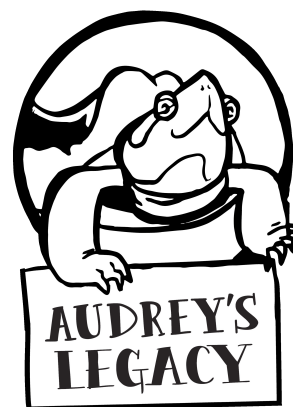
THE TURTLE WHO CHANGED EVERYTHING
APRIL 30TH



Every April 30th, we take some time to remember Audrey the turtle and her story. Audrey went from surviving in a bucket to thriving with us at Little RES Q. If you'd like to read more about Audrey, you can [read the bored panda article](#).

Updates on Audrey's Legacy

As you may know, Audrey's Legacy Sanctuary started as an idea inspired by Audrey. It was her plight that motivated one man and then one family to dedicate their lives to making sure that no turtle will ever have to live in a bucket. Their plan was to provide a home for red eared sliders across Ontario and beyond.



Audrey's Legacy is both a solution and an opportunity:

1. It is a way to ensure that red eared slider turtles have a space to live their best lives
2. We can minimize animal abuse and dumping by giving surrenders more options
3. It helps to lessen the impact of invasive species on native turtle populations

4. We are strengthening the network between similar organizations by taking in turtles that cannot be cared for by other rescues
5. By taking invasive populations out of the Ontario wetlands, we're supporting organizations that are instrumental to the re-population of endemic species
6. We are allowing resources to free up for more reptiles in need at the rescue
7. The legacy has potential to be a self-insulated research study for various companies and herpetologists
8. We can acquire new information on how red eared sliders interact in closed populations
- 9. A way to ensure that no turtle will ever have to live in a bucket again**

We are about half way to Audrey's Legacy's completion.

Last year was the introduction of female sliders to their fully-stocked and aerated pond.

Over the next couple of years, it's going to be the boys' turn.

The Legacy has been designed to minimize the re-population of red eared sliders within the ranks of turtles living their best lives at the sanctuary, so we use turtle-proof and climb-proof fencing to keep the two genders of turtles separated.

Challenges for Little RES Q in 2022

We have run into a couple of challenges throughout the last year that we'd like to share with you.

One is that we have some rambunctious beavers who enjoy hanging out at Audrey's Legacy.

Please excuse the low quality of the photo provided, it's from our cameras at the Legacy.



We have no problem with this except that they managed to create a path through the outer fence that could lead to more wildlife visitors at the Sanctuary.

Fortunately, we have cameras all over the property and it was in a section far from the occupied pond; it has been patched and re-enforced and there was no turtle activity anywhere near that area.



The turtles are not at risk of leaving the sanctuary if this fence is compromised.



Another issue we have run into through the past year has been the increasing number of non-turtle surrenders.

It has allowed us to build and expand our storage area of the rescue for snakes, bearded dragons, geckos, and more.

We are so fortunate to have many skilled people involved with the rescue, so it wasn't difficult to get things built to our standards.

For many years now, we've been *chronically at capacity*.

While Audrey's Legacy allows us reduce the amount of female turtles that we have at Little RES Q, the need is so great for reptiles all over Ontario that we're finding ourselves with an increasingly populated wait list.

Goals for Little RES Q in 2023-2024

Little RESQ has been around since 2008. That's 15 years since Marc started taking turtles in at his Scarborough apartment. The Ouellette family has grown since then and so has the rescue.

That being said, we have big plans in the coming years for both Little RES Q and Audrey's Legacy Sanctuary.

Audrey's Legacy Sanctuary is currently only accepting female turtles. To get to where we are able to accept both genders into the sanctuary, we have many steps to get through:

1. Set up the windmill to aerate the pond
2. Stock the new pond with various fish and edibles for the turtles
3. Create a road to access the ponds

All of these things lead to the overall goal of moving male turtles into the sanctuary.

Everything is done with great consideration for the turtles and their happiness and overall health.

Most of the construction of Audrey's Legacy is thanks to Marc himself.

He's the one spending the time to dig the ponds, make the roads, build the windmills, and act as the caretaker for the Legacy's day-to-day needs.



Other goals for the rescue:

1. Maximize our fundraising goal to \$100,000 in a single year

This is such a huge goal for us to undertake. We're at the point where we are still a 'Mom & Pop' type of operation but we're on the cusp of finishing the sanctuary. We're diversifying our fundraising to get more people involved and really boost the awareness about red eared sliders and reptiles across Ontario.

2. Continue expanding our offerings to other reptiles of Ontario

We specialize in red eared sliders but the other reptiles of Ontario also need our help. Some of these include snakes, axolotyls, iguanas, tortoises, and bearded dragons. We've expanded our facilities to include many of these animals that need care and rehoming.

3. Mobilize our volunteers to access greater opportunities within the RES Q and their communities

This year is the year of the volunteer. We're organizing and mobilizing our volunteers by helping them to get creative. If you have a fundraising idea, we want to hear it! We have such a wide range of events kicking off in 2023 and beyond that we're excited to get started!

We have a new Volunteer Facebook group so that you can see what opportunities are available and might like to sign up for without formally becoming a volunteer. [Click here to join the group on Facebook.](#)



Little RES Q Stats 2022

Adoptions: 137

Surrenders: 372

Surrendered from other shelters: 86

Animals boarded: 36

Releases to Audrey's Legacy: 235

Currently in shelter 2023: 438

Wait list: 88 as of 2023-04-05

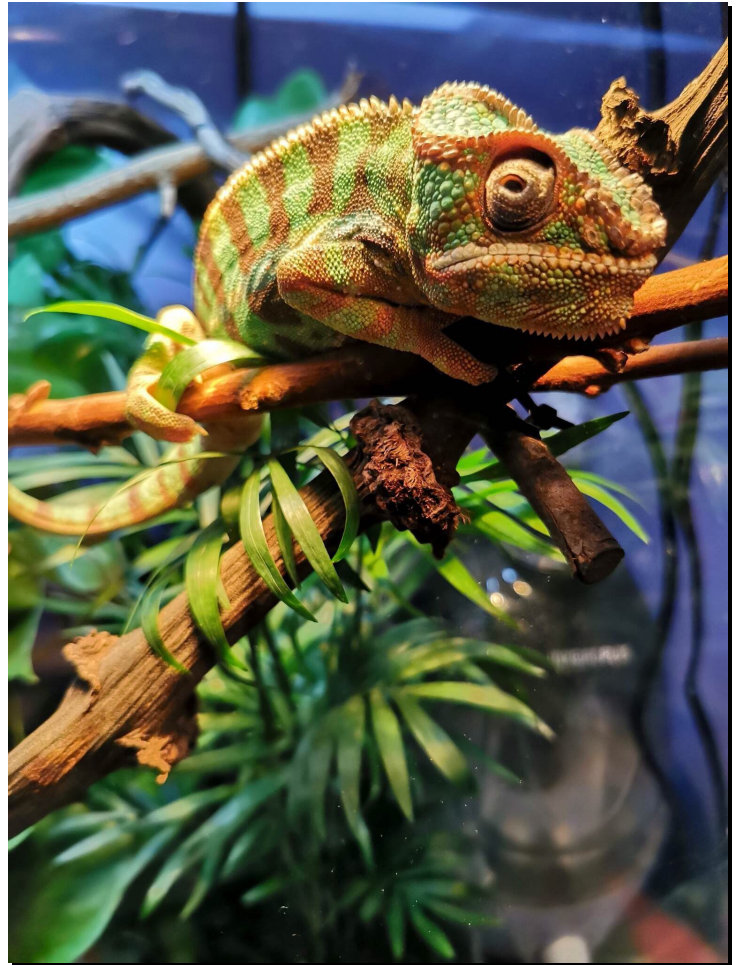
As you can see, our surrenders surpass our adoptions. This number is slightly inflated since we were able to take in more turtles than usual because Audrey's Legacy's female turtle pond is now operational.

Adoption Highlight: Walter, the Blind Chameleon

Earlier this year, we received a private surrender for Walter, a lovely blind chameleon. If you know anything about chameleons, you know that they can change colours to help them hide from predators.

How can a blind chameleon change colours if he can't see?

The neat thing is that a chameleon can decide what colour to change based on how they feel and their current temperature. It helps that they can see what colour they need to change to so they can hide, but as pets, it's not entirely necessary.



This particular blind chameleon has decided to turn yellow at night whereas his daytime colour is a bright green.

Walter has been adopted and is thriving at his new home. Claire, his adopter, has graciously shared her experience with Walter and how he came into her life:

“Hi, I’m Claire and this is my blind chameleon, Walter. His story with us begins at my hunt for a lizard. We knew to look for reptiles at Little RES Q because they are reputable and we already have a turtle from them who is doing quite well.

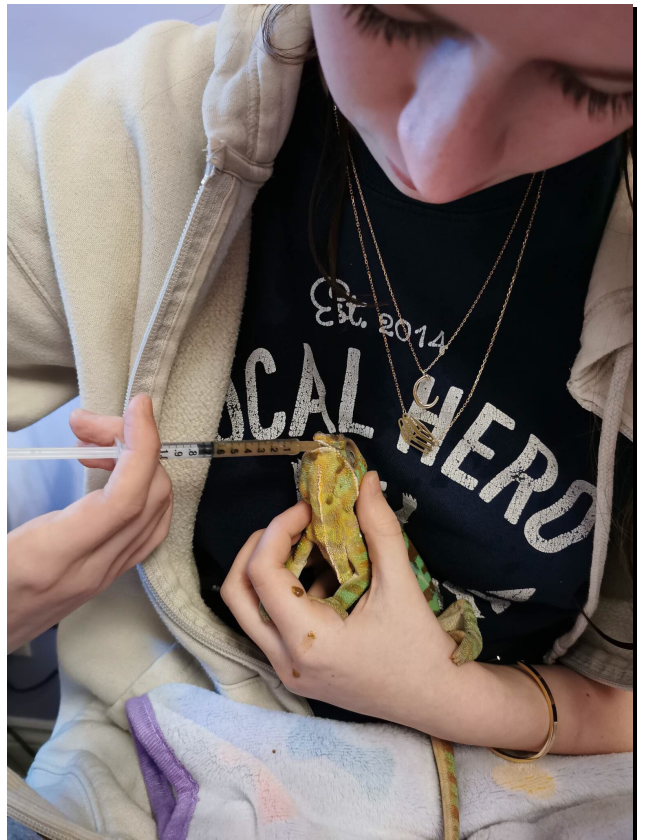
They [Little RES Q] were going on live to talk about their animals and I instantly fell in love with Walter, deciding that this needed to happen. In January of this year, I picked him up from Little RES Q after frantically rushing to get the supplies we needed the week before.

I've wanted a pet chameleon for years, but I've known it's not an easy job, so having no lizard experience we jumped right into the deep end.

When having a pet, there is always a learning curve, especially a special needs one like Walter is. We don't know his vision levels well, but we've been testing him on small things to see what he's capable of.

When we got him, very little was known about his past, but we learned on a trip to Reptillia that they were the ones who turned him down, leading to our adoption of our newest baby. He is a very high-maintenance boy, a bit of a drama queen and quite tricky to feed but I regret nothing about his adoption.

Though half of his diet consists of syringe-serve grub pie paste, he has recently enjoyed crickets, mealworms, and one silkworm Reptilia gave us for free after talking to them a bunch. Despite some falls, he's thriving in his new home. We're very proud of grumpy old Walter and I'm super excited to be his forever home."



We've included some photographs from Walter's new home so that you can see just how well he's doing.

If you're interested in adopting an animal from us, visit littlereq.net and browse our available reptiles.

Volunteer Highlight: Brian

First Name: Brian

Role with Little RESQ: Board of Directors member, event volunteer, construction assistant/diver at Audrey's Legacy, animal pooper (they like to go on me for some reason!)

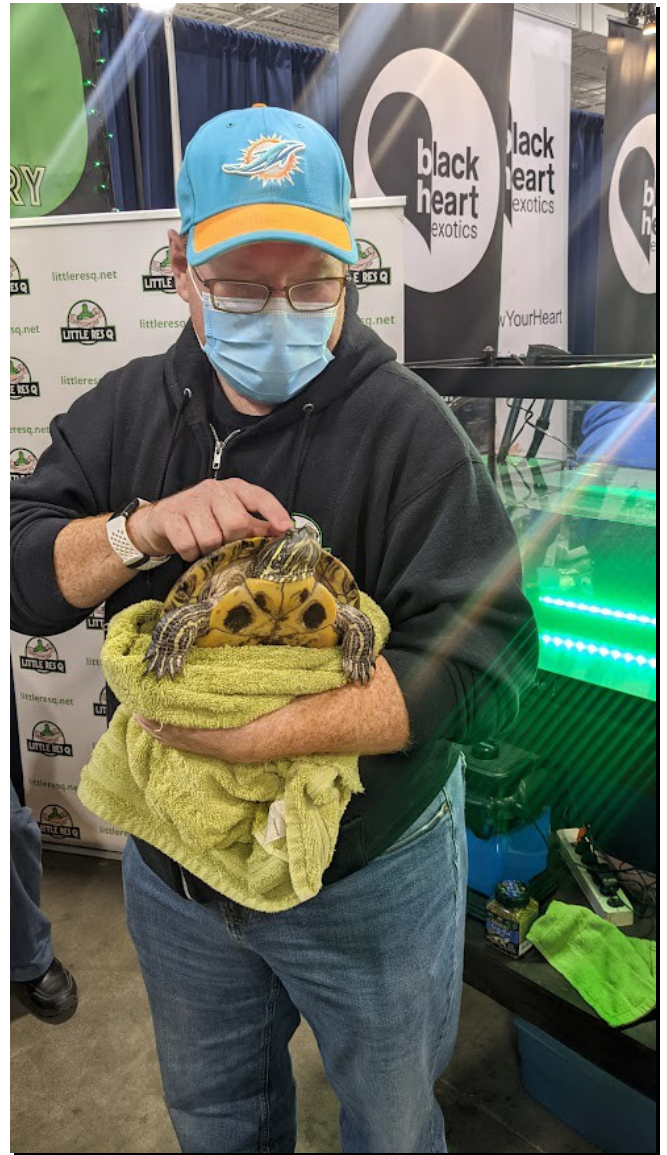
When did you get involved with Little RES Q?: I have been involved for around 10 years.

What does your volunteering look like and what does it include?: My roles have changed over the years as the rescue has grown and developed. I started out helping out at events, then progressed to running events myself for the rescue.

Since the rescue became a registered charity, I have been a member of the Board of Directors.

Most recently, I have been helping with the construction of Audrey's Legacy, and as a certified diver, I have been one of the crew that gets in the water.

What attracted you to the cause/organization?: When we rescued our first turtle, we needed some info and help to give her the best possible life, so we reached out to Little RES Q. Many conversations and a few expos later, when they were looking for help, we decided to pay it forward and help them out. Never looked back since!



What motivates you to stay involved?:

I'm an animal lover. Furry, scaly, or otherwise; they are so much fun!

In your opinion, what is the most important work that Little RES Q does?: Preventing animals from being needlessly abandoned or put down.

What do you hope Little RES Q will achieve in the near future?: I hope we are able to continue growing Audrey's Legacy into the vision we have for it. We will never be able to save every animal sadly, but we can help so many more that way.

Does anyone in your life play a role in supporting your involvement? In proving inspiration?: Of course! My wife Valentine is also a volunteer with the rescue. She attends expos and shows as well, and is a big part of why we have so many animals at home.

Volunteer Opportunities

We have started a facebook group to feature volunteer opportunities. You don't have to be a registered volunteer to join but if you are going to be at an event, you do need to register.

We have all sorts of opportunities available that are both remote and in person. [Click this link to be redirected to the facebook group](#) or search for Little RES Q Volunteers next time you're on facebook.



Newsletter Author

Hello, I'm Celeste. You may know me from such publications as When to take your turtle to the vet or Little RES Q's social media posts.

You can find my own turtle blog at <http://theturtlelady.ca/>

This publication and all of the other newsletters have been written by me as a volunteer.



On top of doing the digital publishing for Little RES Q, I coordinate volunteers, order merchandise, connect with businesses, design and execute social media campaigns across multiple networks (including tiktok!), write grants and other official releases, create video presentations, organize fundraisers and events, design graphics, and so much more.

Little RES Q has been gracious enough to allow me to learn about my strengths as a person and grow alongside them. Blunders are turned into learning opportunities and met with compassion and understanding.

I cannot recommend volunteering with Little RES Q enough.

[Get started today!](#)

Please Note: The volunteers of Little RES Q are available upon request for one-on-one video or phone consultations. Please be aware that our consultations are a service provided by our volunteers and are subject to availability. All services may come with a recommended donation amount to help keep our shelter running. We hold the right to waive and withdraw service fees depending on the circumstances surrounding the service request. Thank you for your understanding.

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