

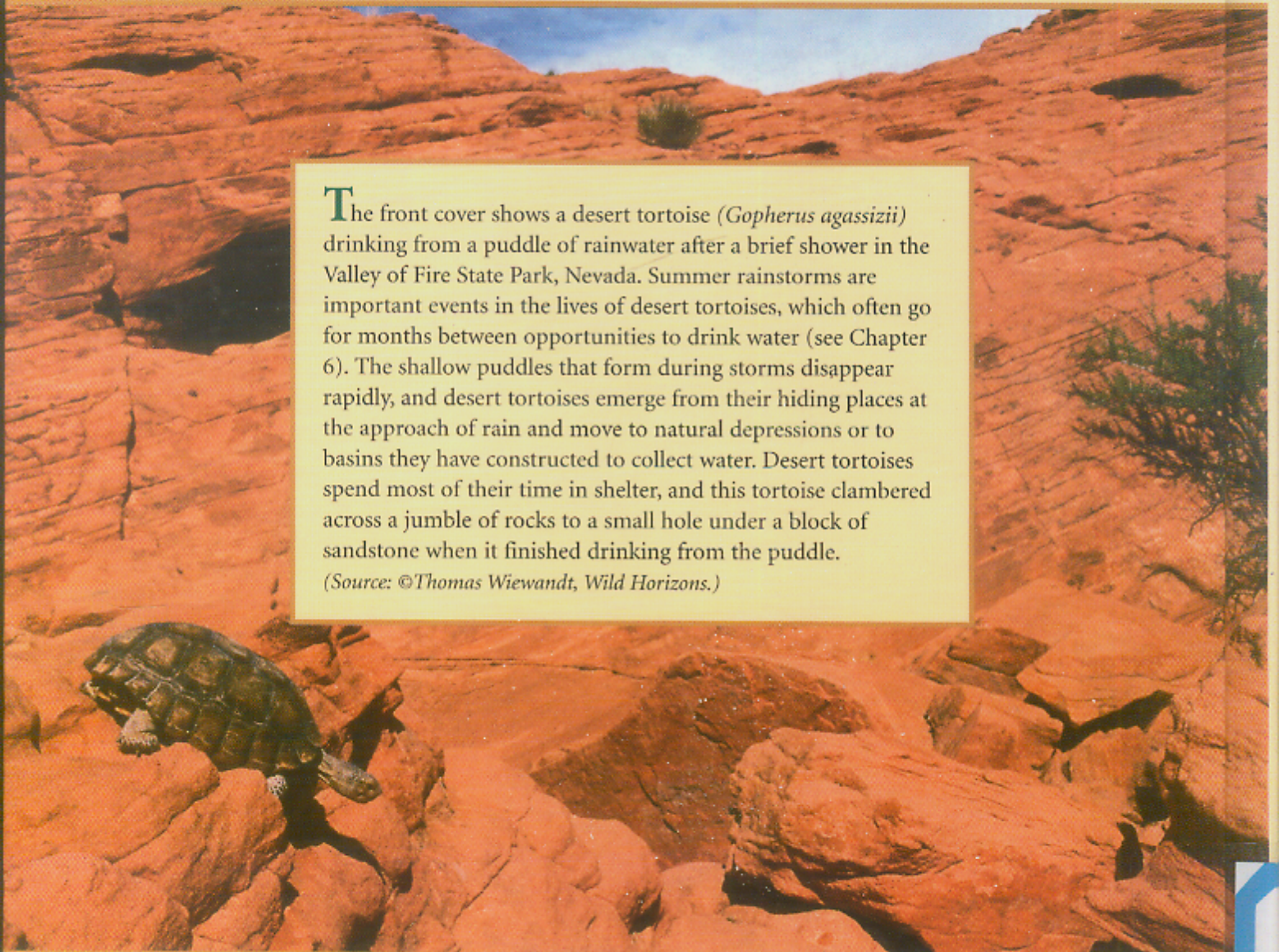
HERPETOLOGY

THIRD EDITION

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The front cover shows a desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) drinking from a puddle of rainwater after a brief shower in the Valley of Fire State Park, Nevada. Summer rainstorms are important events in the lives of desert tortoises, which often go for months between opportunities to drink water (see Chapter 6). The shallow puddles that form during storms disappear rapidly, and desert tortoises emerge from their hiding places at the approach of rain and move to natural depressions or to basins they have constructed to collect water. Desert tortoises spend most of their time in shelter, and this tortoise clambered across a jumble of rocks to a small hole under a block of sandstone when it finished drinking from the puddle.

(Source: ©Thomas Wiewandt, *Wild Horizons*.)

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