

SHOW TURTLES ALOHA. PLEASE DO NOT FEED, HANDLE, CROWD OR TEASE.



Did You Know??? **HONU**

The Hawaiian Green Sea Turtle:



- * crawls ashore to warm its body (bask and sleep), usually for several hours at a time
- * is protected as a Threatened Species under the U.S. Endangered Species Act and wildlife laws of the State of Hawaii. Please treat them with respect and do not feed, touch, crowd or tease them.
- * can reach a shell length of 40" and weigh up to 400 pounds
- * lives to be an estimated 60-70 years old
- * can swim in short bursts up to 20 mph
- * feeds primarily on seaweed and sea grass
- * has no teeth, but has a serrated jaw that can inflict a serious bite
- * can eat and swallow only while under water
- * has excellent underwater vision
- * can hear low frequency sounds but has no external openings to the ears
- * has countershaded coloration, dark on top and light on the bottom, providing some camouflage in the ocean
- * sheds tears that rid its body of excess salt and help to clean its eyes
- * is not green on the outside but gets its name from the color of the internal body fat
- * has thin plates of keratin (like human fingernails) forming the outer layer of the shell while underneath are bones, cartilage and tissue giving the shell its strength
- * is mainly preyed upon and eaten by large tiger sharks
- * is sexually mature at 25-35 years of age.
- * when mature, the male can be distinguished from the female by its much longer and thicker tail
- * migrates over 1000 miles roundtrip from Oahu to French Frigate Shoals in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands to mate, nest and lay eggs
- * does not normally nest on Oahu

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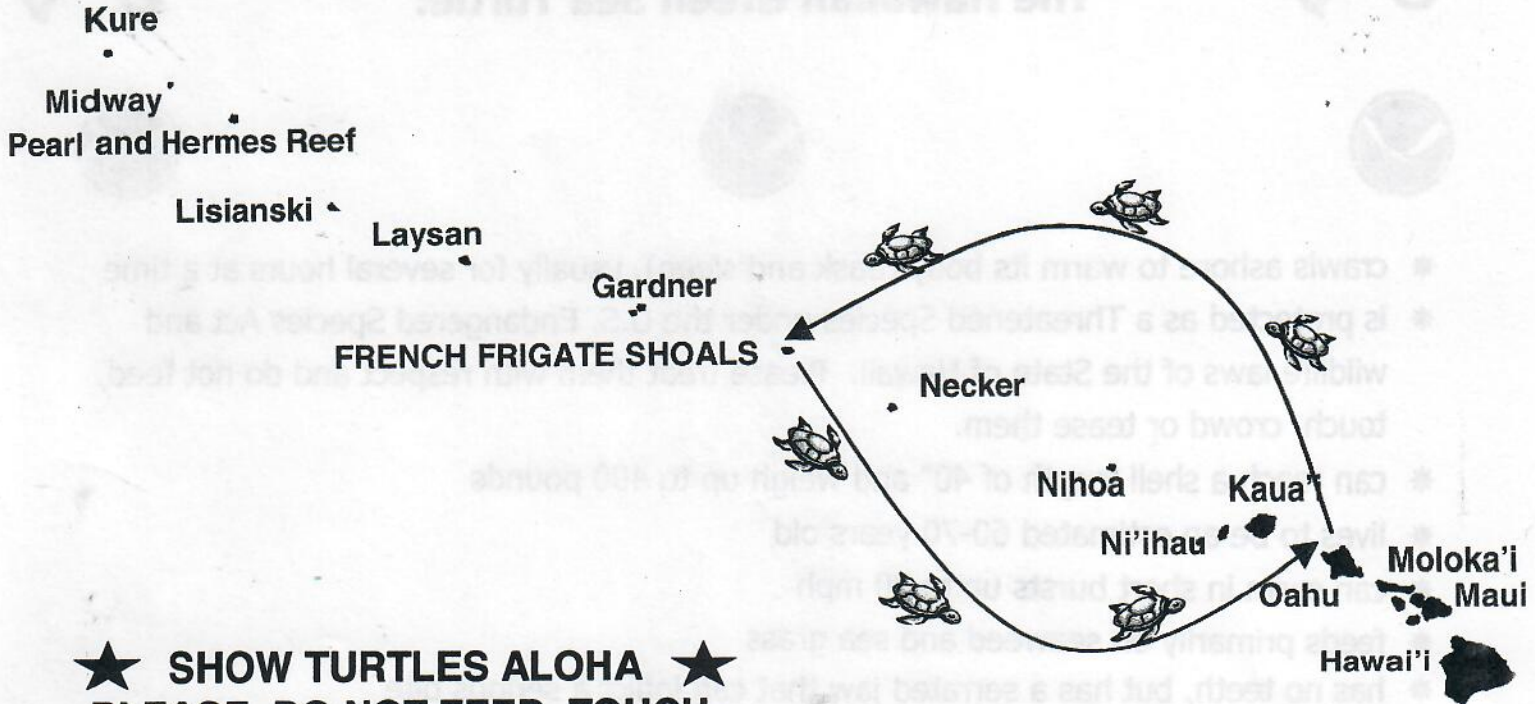


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Turtles that sleep on the beach and feed in the shallow waters of Oahu migrate 500 miles to French Frigate Shoals to mate and lay eggs



★ SHOW TURTLES ALOHA ★
PLEASE DO NOT FEED, TOUCH,
CROWD OR TEASE

★ PLEASE Do NOT Feed the Turtles ★

**Feeding Causes Turtles
to be Aggressive and
Bite Other People
Including Children**



“Old Injury – I’m Fine Now”

The short story of Hawaiian Honu “L2” sleeping ashore at
Laniakea’s HonuLani Beach

“L2”, as she is affectionately called, is a large female sea turtle that can regularly be found basking on the beach at Laniakea on the North Shore of Oahu. Quite a few turtles come here to sleep ashore and feed on seaweed in the shallow waters. The turtles seem to happily share the sand and sea with hundreds of people that also come here daily for surfing and sightseeing. L2 has a fissure or “crack” on the top of her shell resulting from an old, healed injury. The fissure has completely mended from inside the turtle’s body. Although the grooves and scar tissue detract from L2’s beauty, she is healthy in every other way.

While no one knows for sure, L2’s injury was most likely caused by a speeding boat colliding against her shell. It’s amazing, and a great credit to a sea turtle’s will to survive, that she didn’t die from this bad accident. L2 was treated by our sea turtle veterinarian, Dr. Robert Morris, in December of 2001. At that time L2’s injury had already begun to heal and was probably more than 6 months old. L2 was taken to Dr. Morris’ veterinary hospital to have the broken portion of the shell repaired with an acrylic dental patch. She was returned to the ocean and several months later the patch started to shed as the injury continued to heal from within.

In June of 2002, L2 surprised everyone when she was seen nesting and laying eggs 500 miles northwest of Laniakea at French Frigate Shoals. L2 was healthy enough to swim like other turtles on an ocean migration to this famous Hawaiian sea turtle breeding site northwest of Kauai. Later in the summer she returned to Laniakea, thereby accomplishing a round-trip voyage of 1000 miles or more. Since most adult female sea turtles in Hawaii only breed once every 3 years, it’s very possible that L2 will migrate again to French Frigate Shoals in the near future. So if you see L2 asleep on the beach at Laniakea, please let her rest in peace—she will have a long trip ahead of her.

By Cody Hooven and George Balazs

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