

# About Turtle Trax



This page contains a lot of information about *Turtle Trax* that can help you enjoy your visit here more, as well as satisfy your curiosity about the pages, and why and how we made them.

We hope that you'll read our reasons for providing *Turtle Trax*. The rest of this page is for the curious.

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## Purpose

*Turtle Trax* was conceived with these purposes in mind:

- To provide a Web site that gave people a chance to become familiar with the [wonder and beauty of the marine turtle](#).
- To make people aware of the [reasons why all species of marine turtles are either threatened or endangered](#).
- To highlight a particularly gruesome threat to the green sea turtle, the [fibropapilloma tumor](#).
- To tell the story of one particular group of Hawaiian green sea turtles, the [Honokowai group of Maui](#).

Trying to accomplish these goals in the context of a home page is a daunting task. While we've made every effort to keep *Turtle Trax* simple and easy to use, we're still learning. If you find yourself confused, lost, or if you simply have suggestions about how we can improve *Turtle Trax*, please let us know.

Send email to:

[honu@turtles.org](mailto:honu@turtles.org) (Peter Bennett) or  
[howzit@turtles.org](mailto:howzit@turtles.org) (Ursula Keuper-Bennett)

For more explanation about why we created *Turtle Trax*, you can read [our oral presentation at the 17th Annual Sea Turtle Symposium](#).



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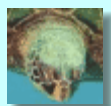
## Copyright Information

We, Ursula Keuper-Bennett and Peter Bennett, retain all rights to the text and images contained within *Turtle Trax* except where otherwise noted.

We grant the rights to use any or all of our copyrighted material to anyone who wishes to use it, subject to these conditions:

- You must include a credit acknowledging us as the creators of the material.
- You must *not* use the material in any manner that is detrimental to marine turtles. We reserve the right to decide whether a particular use is detrimental.

The images contained in these pages are limited in quality by the medium. We will, upon request, make our highest quality images available at no charge to those who intend to use them to further public awareness of sea turtles, or who are trying to raise funds for sea turtle research.



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## Acknowledgments

### George H. Balazs

Anyone who sets out to learn about fibropapilloma tumors in green sea turtles, especially Hawaiian greens, immediately encounters the name George H. Balazs. When we first mentioned the turtle tumors to people we knew on Maui, we were quickly steered to George.

We don't know how long George has lived in Hawaii, but we do know that he embodies the spirit of aloha. That means he was friendly, warm, and helpful from the beginning, with an obvious enthusiasm and love for the turtles. He always took an interest in our reports of turtle sightings and our photos and videotape. He made sure we were aware of developments in the effort to understand the tumor problem. Having seen some of Ursula's drawings, he encouraged her develop them further.

In 1993, George encouraged us to attend the 13th Annual Marine Turtle Symposium. We did, and it was there we met George face to face for the first time. We were delighted that his enthusiasm was even more infectious in person. It was George's energy that spurred us on to learn and do more.

Without the inspiration provided by George Balazs, *Turtle Trax* simply would never have come to be. While it has been

hard work, and will continue to be for some time to come, we have loved doing it. For that, we must say to George,

[Mahalo nui loa](#), and aloha!

**Note:** For more information about George's work, make sure you visit [French Frigate Shoals 25th Anniversary pages](#).

## **Capt. Nemo's Ocean Emporium/Pacific Dive**



Capt. Nemo's was simply the best dive shop on Maui. Located on Dickenson Street in Lahaina, it provided a full range of services. The staff were friendly and they knew their stuff. It had the best repair facility and the only air station on the island that provided fills on demand. Sadly, in 1998 Capt. Nemo's closed its doors for good. We will always remember it with great fondness.

The good news is that another great dive shop has taken over the premises: Pacific Dive, the people who sustained us through the summer of 1998. Nothing pleased us more than knowing that our new friends at Pacific Dive have moved into the building that housed our old friends from Capt. Nemo's.

Without Capt. Nemo's, we would have spent a lot less time in the water over the past summers. For the prompt repairs and providing air whenever we wanted it, we also must say,

[Mahalo nui loa](#), and aloha!

## **The Lahaina News**

*The Lahaina News* is a weekly paper that covers events affecting West Maui. Ever since the first West Maui algae bloom in 1989, *The Lahaina News* has followed this and related stories. It has taken strong editorial stands supporting the study of the algae blooms and the building of sedimentation basins for the flood and erosion control channels, and against the creation of more ejection wells. By keeping the public informed about these issues, *The Lahaina News* has played a significant part in the progress that has been made in West Maui. Again, we say,

[Mahalo nui loa](#), and aloha!

## **The U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service**

The NMFS takes great interest in sea turtles and their fate, and maintains a gold mine of information about them. In our efforts to learn about turtles and fibropapillomas, the NMFS has been consistently helpful, friendly, and willing to send material even to us, citizens of a foreign country. We are grateful to the NMFS, not just for sharing their sea turtle information with us, but also for collecting it in the first place. Once more we say,

[Mahalo nui loa](#), and aloha!

## Tony Burns

Tony Burns, a friend for over 25 years, is the only person who has seen *Turtle Trax* grow from our first crude attempts to the pages you see today. Tony has been an enormous help as a beta tester, as well as a source of encouragement. As an OS/2 person, Tony used Web Explorer to catch the sloppy mistakes that Netscape ignored. For saving us from numerous errors, we say to Tony,

[Mahalo nui loa](#), and aloha!

## vex.net

The Web server that brings you *Turtle Trax* is operated by vex.net. Everyone at vex.net has been of considerable help in getting our pages to the Web. For the assistance they've given, and for running a fine service, we say,

[Mahalo nui loa](#), and aloha!

## Ikelite Underwater Systems

All of our underwater images have been created using the excellent housings made by Ikelite Underwater Systems.

Ursula bought her first Ikelite (still camera) housing in 1978, and it provided wonderful service until 1994. That year, Ikelite notified us that they felt they could no longer refurbish the housing. Typically, they then offered us a substantial "trade-in" allowance on a completely new housing and strobe. Of course we seized the opportunity, and have been getting excellent service from her second housing ever since.

Peter bought his first Ikelite (video camera) housing in 1989, and with periodic refurbishing by Ikelite it is still in excellent condition. In 1996, however, we bought a new video camera, and that required a new Ikelite housing.

The real reason we recommend Ikelite housings, however, is the service. For example, when the aperture control on the still camera housing started to slip, we mentioned this to Ikelite, who proceeded to send us a replacement part *without charge!* Folks, you simply can't beat that kind of service.

For the excellent customer support, we therefore say,

[Mahalo nui loa](#), and aloha!



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## About Fancy Stuff

At *Turtle Trax*, there ain't any.

Since these pages were first created, the Web has changed considerably. Now your pages can have animated GIFs, frames, banners, backgrounds, RealAudio, Java, Shockwave, a bunch of other stuff and probably ten new things that were announced while this was being written. We decided quite deliberately to use none of it.

The philosophy behind *Turtle Trax* is to make information as widely available as possible. Using proprietary browser enhancements and plug-ins defeats that purpose. While *Turtle Trax* isn't as pretty or animated or noisy as it could be, it should be usable no matter what browser you choose. If it isn't, please let us know.



## About The Images

*Turtle Trax* contains three kinds of images: photographs, captured video frames, and drawings. All images are copyright 1995-2001 by Ursula Keuper-Bennett and Peter Bennett.

### The Photos

The photographs, with rare exceptions, were taken by Ursula. Until the summer of 1995, she used a venerable old Pentax in an Ikelite housing. Most photos were taken with a housed flash, although on occasion natural light was used--sometimes even on purpose.

In 1995, we upgraded the camera to a Nikon in a smart new Ikelite housing, supported by an Ikelite strobe flash. This combination led to more accurate exposures and a higher success rate. The equipment change could not have been timed better, since conditions in 1995 were unusually good for photography as well as diving.

In the beginning, many of our photos were transferred to Kodak Photo-CD. Today we are able to scan images directly from prints with our Microtek E6, or from slides and negatives using a Minolta Dimage. These images are then loaded up into Corel PhotoPaint and enhanced for electronic viewing. This usually means cropping and adjusting the colour balance, contrast, saturation, and sharpness.

Because many of these photos document the effects of tumors on green sea turtles, we had to be careful not to manipulate these images in any way that would distort this evidence. Nevertheless, the nature of this medium makes it impractical to present completely unaltered images. If we could, we would.

In the bad old days, when not all browsers supported JPEGs (yes, this was once true!), we used inline GIF thumbnails, usually at 240x180. Today we are slowly converting the thumbnails into small JPEGs. Thumbnails are linked to larger JPEGs, usually 640x480. The JPEG versions are suitable for use as wallpaper or screensavers. You are welcome to capture them and use them as such, but we ask that if you do this, please donate to one of the institutions listed in [How You Can Help](#).

### The Video Frames

Until 1996, Peter shot most (but by no means all) of the video on regular 8mm. We then used a frame grabber and ImagePals to get individual images. Originally, we did this strictly as a technique to allow us to [identify individual turtles](#) from long shots. As the concept of *Turtle Trax* took shape, however, we realized that some images that we wanted were available only in this form.

NTSC is abysmal as a graphics standard, and when you combine this with the fact that all video was shot without any enhanced lighting or colour correcting filters, you quickly realize that high quality video images are unlikely. We have included them anyway because *Turtle Trax* is not supposed to be just another pretty face. We felt these images were necessary to tell the story properly.

Worse, the grabbing technique we used often left us with an image that had an overall green or blue tint that is difficult-to-impossible to remove. To identify individual turtles, we converted the images to 8-bit greyscale, so the tint doesn't matter, but for *Turtle Trax*, it was a bit annoying. When we're rich and can afford 16mm film, this problem will no doubt be surmounted.

In 1996 we began using the excellent little Snappy card, which comes with software that is capable of much better

quality than we got previously. More significantly, we switched to Hi-8 video and started using a colour-correcting filter. While the images we got were still no match for photographs, they were an order of magnitude better than pre-1996 video captures. In 1998, we upgraded to a Sony TR900 MiniDV video camera, which yields near-broadcast quality video and pretty good web-quality frame captures.

For display here, we treat video images the same way we do the photos: JPEG or GIF thumbnails and 640x480 JPEG images.

## The Drawings

Ursula made black and white outlines that were scanned, then she used Corel PhotoPaint to colour them. Throughout most of *Turtle Trax*, we treated these images the same as we did the photos: we provided GIF thumbnails (no JPEGs for line art) and links to 640x480 JPEGs of the original drawings. For the *Turtle Trax Toon*, however, we decided to provide a larger GIF than the usual thumbnail: 480x360. While this makes the Toon page quite slow to load, we decided that it was the only way to do the cartoons justice.



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## About the Links

Hypertext links are wondrous things, but they can also be exasperating as you try to find your way back from somewhere you never expected to go. *Turtle Trax* has many internal links, most--but unfortunately not all--of which have a nice icon at the bottom to take you back to where you were.

Why don't all our pages have an icon to resume where you left off? It's because you can reach a page such as [How You Can Help](#) from many different places, and HTML does not provide a generic *Back* function. (Yes, we know you can do it with \*ptui!\* Javascript. We hate Javascript.) This is left to the browser, so it will probably reduce your frustration level somewhat if you keep your browser's *Back* function close at hand.

Most browsers show you where a link points to before you select it, so another tip is to watch the links and anticipate where you're headed. Although there are few links from *Turtle Trax* to other sites (aside from the ones in [The Turtle Transporter](#)), there are some, so keep an eye out for them.



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## About The Glossary

We are slowly building a [glossary](#) to supplement *Turtle Trax*. We are trying to document terms that might be confusing or unfamiliar. Glossary terms are either linked (we've done the entry) or shown with **strong** emphasis (we're planning an entry). If you spot a term that you think needs clarification and does not fall into one of these categories, please tell us.



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# The Caretakers

If you care, you can find out more [about the authors](#).

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[Who's Who Underwater at Honokowai](#)



[Turtle Trax Home Page](#)

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Send comments or corrections to [webmaster@turtles.org](mailto:webmaster@turtles.org)