

PRENATAL, NEONATAL AND POSTNATAL OBSERVATIONS
ON A HAWAIIAN MONK SEAL

6/27/79
WED

This could very well be the
same female that came ashore
for the night of 6/25 in area 9-10.

uncomfortable
on land?

Between 2-3 PM a pregnant seal (very large) hauled out on the beach of area 16, near boat anchorage. Most of the time she remained very quiet - however several times she "rooted" forward with head buried in sand - presumably to form comfortable place in sand. On one occasion the "white spot" male hauled out by her for a short time. No particular alarm was displayed, and male left a short time later. During observations, I noted a peculiar "flopping" of the hind flippers periodically taking place. Due to the incoming tide, she eventually got hit by waves, thereby moving higher up beach. Spent much of the afternoon watching her for possible photographs of birth. At 7:30 PM she crawled all the way up into vegetation zone of area 16 and into large turtle pit. Sunset was approximately 7:55 PM - full darkness - 30-45 minutes later. At 10 PM there was a very hard cold rain lasting ~15 minutes. A 15 minutes after midnight, while returning from turtle survey, I noted newborn pup (by mother's posterior). Pup appeared clean, but I did not observe for very long. ^{Blood stain by nostril & mouth.} Mother and pup still in turtle pit. Prior to this, TC 54 attempted to nest a short distance away in area 17. Later on she went back into the water, came out in area 15, and laid eggs. At 0015 observation the pup was bleating (bawling), and nursing (sucking) an

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THURS.

28 June 1979
Thursday

attempt to nurse. There was no sign of the placenta.

at 0230, and 0600, mother and pup were still in turtle pit.

At ~ 0915, mother moved a short distance out of pit toward the water. Pup moved to her, to her head possibly in response to vocalization which took place. At ~ 0930 they had progressed about halfway down beach slope, where mother rolled to her side, and nursing took place. At 1100 observation, mother and pup's heads were toward the water lying side by side - and waves were occasionally washing their heads. Note that mother has ^{large} blood stain spot on back - apparently she rolled on the expelled placenta. At 1100h, heads are facing inland and pup is nursing. Frequent nursings probably take place during these early days, just like in the young of the human species.

→ Is regular use of an island for hauling / bogging purposes a prerequisite for pupping? This would seem like a logical sequence. Mother and pup stayed close to water all day. At ~ 5:30 PM they crawled back into vegetation zone into a different turtle pit.

At 7:30 AM, I made close observations of ~~the~~ sleeping pair. Pup had recently passed some dark brown feces.

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3:30 AM observation revealed that pup was not

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in contact with mother - both were sleeping. A young SA, possibly LYP, was also sleeping just five feet from head of mother.

At 6:30 AM mother and pup were still in vegetation. When I awoke at 9:30 AM, both were already laying close to the water. Juvenile LYP green seal is on beach ~ 15' from pair.

Upon departure the seals had still not been totally in the water, however, waves have lapped portions of body.

BOOK I

SCANNED

FFS
1979
Book 1

10-30 JUNE 1979

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EXPEDITION 23

BALAZS