

To George:

There once was a man named Balazs

Who championed a spectacular cause

Green sea turtles his claim

To worldwide fame

But his tick bites received great applause

From

Charlynn  
MAJOR  
1986

"EVERYTHING YOU EVER  
WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT  
TURTLE WORK AT FRENCH  
FRIGATE SHOALS, 1986"

by

G. BALAZS

and

Charlynn Major

PLEASE RETURN TO ME, WITH ALL DATA  
WRITTEN HEREIN. Photo copy for  
YOU TO KEEP CAN BE MADE AT NMFS LAB, IF  
YOU WISH.

Rick VETTER, FWS<sup>(\*)</sup> Refuge  
Manager at French Frigate  
Shoals, is the top authority  
here. See our "Special Use  
Permit" for further details.

OTHER PEOPLE HERE NOW

KRISTEN O'BRIEN - AN FWS VOLUNTEER  
HELPING WITH SEABIRD STUDIES  
(ARRIVED 5/29)

NANCY - SAME AS ABOVE, BUT ARRIVED 5/20

JOAN - RICK VETTER'S WIFE, AND A  
WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST HERSELF.

HEATHER WALBRIDGE - NMFS VOLUNTEER  
ARRIVED 5/15 APPROX. A SECOND OR  
THIRD YEAR UNIV. STUDENT WHO STARTED  
VOLUNTEERING FOR NMFS (BILL) 4 OR 5  
MONTHS AGO.

AN "EMERGENCY BUCKET"  
ALSO STAYS IN THE BOAT, CLIP DOWN,  
AT ALL TIMES. AMONG OTHER  
IMPORTANT ITEMS, THIS BUCKET  
CONTAINS FLARES.

(\*) = Fish & Wildlife Service

SAFETY

FIRST AND FOREMOST, AT  
ALL TIMES.

DON'T ENTER INTO ANY  
SITUATION WHICH COMMON  
SENSE, AND YOUR OWN  
LIMITATIONS, TELL YOU  
IS UNSAFE, ESPECIALLY

WHILE IN THE BOSTON WHALER.

THERE IS RELATIVE  
SECURITY WHILE ON THE  
ISLANDS, THERE IS ALWAYS  
POTENTIAL DANGER WHEN IN THE  
BOAT. CARRY EXTRA WATER

IN THE BOAT (1 OR 2 gal jug,  
AND YOUR 2 quart blue thermos,  
ALSO HANDY AT NIGHT IN THE TENT).

EMERGENCY "EPIRB" RADIO

BEACON IS UNDER THE STEERING  
COUNSEL IN THE BOAT. ALSO

50' OF EXTRA ROPE. ADHERE  
TO CAREFUL RADIO CHECKS  
WITH WALKY-TALKY WITH  
FWS TERN IS, AS REQUIRED  
BY THEIR SAFETY POLICY.

(MORE)

MUST BE TAKEN OUT  
TO ACTIVATE

## SAFETY, CONT.

RADIO-CHECK PROCEDURE WITH RICK VETTER FWS TERN IS. (MANDATORY):

BEFORE DEPARTING FROM ANY ISLAND, AND IMMEDIATELY UPON ARRIVAL AT ANY ISLAND, TERN MUST BE RADIOED AND NOTIFIED. RICK WILL TELL YOU IF HE FEELS THE WIND/SEA CONDITION IS UNSAFE AND YOU SHOULD NOT USE THE BOAT. IF HE DOESN'T HEAR FROM YOU WITHIN AN HOUR OF YOUR ETA, HE WILL INITIATE A SEARCH.

CHECK WITH RICK ABOUT ANY MODIFICATIONS OR UPDATE PROCEDURES OF THIS POLICY.

WHILE CAMPING ON EAST IS., THE NORMAL DAILY RADIO CHECK IS AT 8AM EACH MORNING.

## HINTS ON THE CONTROL OF TICKS

Periodically spray "OFF" AND/OR INSECTICIDE COMPLETELY AROUND OUTSIDE SURFACES OF TENT DOOR ZIPPER.

WHEN LEAVING AND ENTERING TENT, ESPECIALLY AT NIGHT, BANG AND SHAKE ZIPPER AREA TO KNOCK OFF "WAITING" TICKS. LEAVE AND ENTER QUICKLY, MAKING SURE ZIPPER IS PULLED TIGHT TO CLOSE SCREEN DOOR SECURELY, TREAT ZIPPER GENTLY TO PREVENT IT FROM CATCHING FABRIC OR COMING OFF THE TRACK (THE TICKS WOULD LOVE SOMETHING LIKE THIS TO HAPPEN!).

BEFORE ENTERING TENT AT NIGHT, "STOMP" YOUR FEET TO DISLODGE TICKS THAT MAY BE CLINGING TO YOUR SHOES. DON'T LINGER OUTSIDE THE TENT DOOR FOR LONGER THAN NEEDED, AS TICKS WILL GET ON YOU THERE.

THESE ARE "SOFT TICKS", NOT HARD ONES LIKE ON THE U.S. MAINLAND. SOFT TICKS SUCK BLOOD FOR 2-3 MINUTES, THEN DROP OFF YOU ON THEIR OWN.

FOUND  
IN THE  
TURTLE-TENT  
FIRST AID  
KIT.

FOR TICK BITES, USE (1%)  
HYDROCORTISONE TO CONTROL  
ITCHING. 0.5% DOESN'T  
USUALLY HELP MUCH.

THE MORE YOU SCRATCH,  
THE MORE IT WILL ITCH,  
AND LIKELY BECOME INFECTED.

Some people are far more sensitive  
to the bites than others.  
Like me ... I swell up  
bad from each bite.

TICKS WILL SOMETIME CLING AROUND THE  
UNDERSIDE EDGE OF THE LID TO THE WATER CONTAINER.  
GIVE IT A RAP BEFORE SCREWING BACK ON.

LAST NOTE: A recent problem that  
has cropped up is the  
presence of ticks on or around  
the outdoor toilet. "OFF"  
should be sprayed here, too  
every so often. Also, it  
will help to shorten your  
"toilet stays" as much  
as possible (I got two  
bad bites on the  
"apole" this morning  
6/22!)

## WHEREABOUTS OF THINGS NMFS AT TERN IS.

BATTERIES - IN THE WALKIN  
FREEZER, RIGHT SIDE, TOP  
SHELF, IN A CARDBOARD  
BOX SO MARKED. NMFS  
FROZEN FOOD IS ON THIS  
TOP SHELF TOO. ALSO A SUPPLY  
IN "TURTLE CAMP" TENT (IN DRUM CONTAINERS)

MISC. GEAR - EXTREME WEST  
END, OCEAN SIDE, ROOM  
OF MAIN BUILDING. ENTER  
THROUGH SECOND DOOR  
LEADING OFF THE "DARK  
ROOM". WHITE BUCKETS ARE THERE  
FOR TRANSPORTING DRY THINGS IN THE BOAT.

REFRIG, NMFS FOOD - WALKIN  
REFRIGERATOR, RIGHT SIDE,  
TOP AND THIRD SHELVES  
ONLY MARKED "NMFS".

SOME MISC. CANNED AND DRY GOODS,  
INCLUDING CRACKERS - ROOM  
LEADING IMMEDIATELY OFF  
OF KITCHEN -- SHELVES  
MARKED "NMFS".

MAIN CANNED GOODS SUPPLY - DORM

AND THE SECOND  
SHELF ALSO

MORE  
PROPANE  
AND STOVE UNIT  
HERE

## WATERABOUTS (continued)

ROOM MORE TOWARD WEST END, BUT COURTYARD SIDE OF THE BUILDING, (YOUR SPECIAL BOXES FROM 5/29 FLIGHT ARE HERE TOO)

MISC. ITEMS - Cupboard  
TO THE LEFT AND ABOVE MICROWAVE OVEN IN KITCHEN.

NMFS "OFFICE" - EXTREME WEST END OF THE NORTHERN WING OF THE DORM BUILDING.

I recommend that you take an hour to look through all NMFS food and supplies to fully acquaint yourself with what we have available. You may ~~take~~ take, eat and use anything we have.

However, FWS food and supplies are not normally available to use, except by very special arrangement.

OUTBOARD MOTOR MAINTENANCE LOG BOOK, ALONG WITH MANUALS, ARE IN THE NMFS OFFICE ON THE DESK.

## WATER

RECOMMEND THAT FOR DRINKING YOU ONLY USE FILTERED WATER, ONLY OBTAINABLE FROM SLOW-RUNNING SMALL TAP IN THE KITCHEN. EAST IS. BLUE WATER JUGS FIT IN SINK FINE FOR FILLING. AN EXTRA FULL JUG IS STORED AT THE SEAL TENT (CLEAR PLASTIC WITH MY NAME ON IT)

ELECTRICAL POWER ON TERN IS.

<sup>IS</sup>  
GENERATOR ~~AREA~~ USUALLY TURNED ON BY 6:45 AM WEEKDAYS, 8:30 AM OR SO WEEKENDS. IT GOES OFF AUTOMATICALLY AT ABOUT 11:45 PM. SOMETIMES ON WEEKENDS RICK LEAVES IT ON UNTIL 1-2 AM. FRESHWATER DOES WORK WHEN GENERATOR IS OFF. TOILETS DO, AS THEY ARE SALT WATER. KEEP A FLASHLIGHT BY YOUR BED TO FIND THE TOILET, IF YOU NEED IT AFTER THE GENERATOR IS OFF. IT CAN BE REAL DARK IN THE BUILDING AT NIGHT.

## RADIO CALLS TO HONOLULU, AND ELSEWHERE

MESSAGES CAN BE PASSED  
ANY WEEKDAY MORNING  
THROUGH RICK VETTER.  
WHEN HE TALKS TO THE  
FWS OFFICE IN HONOLULU.

"K.M.I." MARINE OPERATOR  
CAN BE OBTAINED FOR  
HOOK-UP TO TELEPHONE  
CALLS ANYWHERE.

CHARGES IN USA ARE  
\$15.95 FOR 3-MINUTES,  
\$5 MINUTE THEREAFTER.

YOU MAY CALL COLLECT, BILL  
TO A THIRD PARTY, OR  
USE A CHARGE CARD (I THINK).  
SEE RICK FOR HELP.

## SPARE POLES FOR SEARS (TURTLE CAMP) TENT

SOME SPARE POLES ARE HERE JUST IN CASE ONE BREAKS OR BENDS. CHECK STORAGE BRUMS INSIDE TENT AND ALSO PACKAGE UNDER TARP OUTSIDE (WRAPPED WITH GRAY PLASTIC GARBAGE BAGS & TAPE).

## TURTLE-CAMP TENT AWNING (BLUE)

WHEN IT RATTLES FROM THE WIND, IT OFTEN LIKE LIVING IN A "PLASTIC GARBAGE BAG". EAR PLUGS CAN BE BORROWED FROM RICK VETTER, IF NEEDED.

LINE ON AWNING CONSTANTLY NEED TO BE ADJUSTED, CHANGED, ETC. AS IT TEARS MORE.

PROP-UP AWNING FACING THE WIND DURING THE DAYTIME TO CREATE A SMALL WIND-SCOOP EFFECT. YOU WILL ROAST IN THE TENT ON HOT DAYS IF YOU DON'T.  
(MORE)

WITHOUT THE PROTECTIVE BUFFERING OF THE AWNING, THE TENT WON'T HOLD UP (LITERALLY WON'T STAND UP). ALSO, THE AWNING PROVIDES "RAIN PROOFING", AS WELL AS AN EXTRA LAYER OF PROTECTION FROM SOLAR RADIATION. THE FLAPPING NOISE IS UNPLEASANT, BUT WILL BE FAR MORE UNPLEASANT IF THE AWNING WAS REMOVED. USE WIDE DUCT-TAPE TO TRY TO PATCH TENTS.

### COT IN TURTLE TENT

WHEN I ASSEMBLED THIS COT THE HEAD-BOARD WAS LOOSE AND KEPT FALLING OUT. TO KEEP IT IN PLACE, I GLUED IT LIGHTLY WITH SILICON. WHEN IT COMES TIME TO DISASSEMBLE IT, GIVE IT A HARD PULL AND IT WILL COME UNGLUED.

## WASHING CLOTTES ON TERN ISLAND

MACHINES IN WASHROOM.  
FWS REQUESTS FULL LOADS ONLY TO CONSERVE ON FRESHWATER. NMFS SOAP IS SO MARKED IN THE WASHROOM. ALSO A NEW BOX IS IN THE DORMITORY FOOD STORAGE ROOM.

SHEETS AND BLANKET CAN BE BROUGHT FROM TERN FOR USE ON EAST, IF YOU WISH, ALL BEDDING ITEMS, AS WELL AS A <sup>weight</sup> SCALE, AND THE "CHARGER" FOR THE HAND-HELD RADIOS, ARE IN THE DRY-ROOM WITH THE DOOR LABELED FIRST AID. THIS IS AN FWS ROOM, BUT YOU CAN PUT ANY ITEM IN HERE THAT YOU WANT TO STORE IN LOW HUMIDITY. SEE JOAN (RICK'S WIFE).

SWIMMING OR GOING IN  
THE WATERS AROUND EAST IS.

I DON'T RECOMMEND ANYTHING  
OVER "KNEE DEEP" FOR  
ANY PURPOSE, IF YOU  
SEE 6' GRAY REEF SHARKS  
NEARBY, OR A 9' + TIGER  
SHARK (THEY DON'T COME ANY  
SMALLER THAN 9'), THEN  
DON'T GO IN EVEN TO

KNEE DEEP. STAY DRY  
ON THE BEACH. USE FRESH WATER  
FOR A SPONGE OR PAN BATH. THERE ARE  
PLENTY OF WATER JUGS - HAUL ALL YOU NEED FOR  
USE ON EAST ISLAND.

PROPANE STOVE ON EAST

STORE IT OUTSIDE THE TENT WHEN  
NOT USING. IF IT LEAKED INSIDE,  
WHILE YOU WERE ASLEEP . . . .

ASLO, WITH A POT ON IT  
HEATING, IT'S ~~THE~~ EASY  
TO ACCIDENTALLY TIP OVER,  
CAREFUL ABOUT BURNS.

I ALWAYS COOK INSIDE THE  
TENT, BUT AM CAREFUL ABOUT  
NOT CATCHING TENT FABRIC ON  
FIRE. (MORE OVER)

ANOTHER

## PROPANE STOVE SAFETY TIP-

DON'T HEAT CANS DIRECTLY ON THE BURNER. IF YOU DO, THE LEAD SEAM OF THE CAN WILL PARTLY MELT AND CONTAMINATE YOUR FOOD WITH LEAD (BAD STUFF!). INSTEAD, HEAT FOOD IN CANS BY PUTTING THEM IN A PAN HALF FILLED WITH WATER, THEN BOIL. OPEN THE CAN FIRST. I FIND THIS METHOD CONVENIENT BECAUSE IT GETS AROUND HAVING TO WASH PANS.

LEFT OVER SPRAY PAINT ←  
AND PROPANE SHOULD NOT BE  
RETURNED TO HONOLULU. STORE  
AT TEEN IN PROPER LOCATIONS.  
REMAINING BATTERIES SHOULD  
BE PUT IN THE BOX IN THE FREEZER.

## "CALL AND ASK"

IF A DIFFICULT PROBLEM COMES UP, OR THERE'S SOMETHING THAT SEEMS IMPORTANT THAT YOU'RE SIMPLY UNCERTAIN ABOUT PLEASE RADIO CALL (THROUGH RICK VETTER, FWS) BILL GILMARTIN OR ME FOR AN ANSWER.

## ITEMS TO BE RETURNED TO HONOLULU

REMAINING TAGS AND PLIERS SHOULD BE BROUGHT WITH YOU BACK ON THE AIRPLANE. ALSO, ANYTHING LABELED "BALAZS" and "NMFs" (ie flashlights, propane stove parts, first aid kit, etc.) IF WEIGHT ALLOWANCE ON RETURN FLIGHT WILL ALLOW YOU TO DO SO. IF NOT, STORE IN CARDBOARD BOXES AND LABEL FOR FUTURE SHIPMENT TO HONOLULU (MORE)

WHEN SPACE ON A FLIGHT  
BECOMES AVAILABLE. NOTE:  
DRUM CONTAINER CAN NOT BE  
NORMALLY SHIPPED ON THE  
AIRPLANE BECAUSE THE PILOT  
(BOB JUSTMAN) FINDS IT VERY  
DIFFICULT TO STRAP THEM  
DOWN SECURELY.

THE TURTLE CAMP TENT  
AND LARGE BLUE AWNING SHOULD  
BE PACKAGED AND STORED AT  
TERN ISLAND FOR USE NEXT  
YEAR. NOTE AND PLEASE  
REPORT TO ME ANY TEARS  
OR PROBLEMS WITH THE TENT.

ALL REMAINING <sup>WOOD</sup> STAYS STORED  
AT TERN IS. FOR FUTURE  
USE (RUST & ALL!).

THE SMALL BLUE TRAP BEING USED  
AS A DOOR MAT BELONGS TO  
ME. IF POSSIBLE, PLEASE BRING  
IT BACK ON THE PLANE. OR BOX  
FOR FUTURE SHIPMENTS. ALSO THE  
3 PIECES OF SILVERWARE IN THE  
TURTLE TENT.

## AM RADIO RECEPTION

WORKS VERY GOOD AT  
NIGHT ON EAST ISLAND.  
KANAI "KUALI" (720) COMES  
IN CLEAR, BUT OFF THE  
AIR AT MIDNIGHT. THIS  
STATION CAN ALSO OFTEN  
BE OBTAINED DURING THE  
DAYTIME.

NOTE - NEON LIGHT  
CAUSES BAD RADIO  
INTERFERENCE. USE  
INCANDESCENT HEAD LAMP  
LIGHT INSTEAD WHEN THE  
RADIO IS ON.

I CAN LOAN YOU A SMALL  
RADIO IF YOU DIDN'T BRING ONE  
WITH YOU. EXTRA BATTERIES  
FOR IT (RED - 9V) ARE IN  
THE DRUM IN THE EAST IS. TURTLE  
TENT.

## FLASHLIGHT BULBS

THE BLACK METAL DOUBLE-AA FLASHLIGHT ("MAGNILITE") HAS AN SPARE BULB IN THE CAP THAT UNSCREWS IN THE HANDLE END.

ALONG WITH OTHERS, PLEASE RETURN THIS FLASHLIGHT TO ME WHEN ~~THE~~ FIELD WORK IS OVER.

IF THE NEON BULB IN MY LARGE LIGHT BURNS OUT, REPLACE IT WITH THE ' BULB FROM THE SMALLER-SIZE (BODY ONLY) NEON LIGHT IN THE SEAL TENT. THEY HAVE TWO NEON LIGHTS, BUT ONLY EVER USE ONE. THE ~~ARE~~ BULBS ARE THE SAME SIZE AND INTERCHANGEABLE.

## OBSTACLE-BARRIER AROUND TENT

THESE ARE TO DISCOURAGE NESTING TURTLES FROM PLOWING INTO THE TENT, DIGGING AROUND IT AND DESTROYING THE CAMPSITE. ESPECIALLY WHILE YOU ARE AWAY FROM EAST IS. MAINTAIN THE BARRIER SYSTEM, AS NEEDED. IN ADDITION, ITS POSSIBLE A TURTLE COULD BECOME ENTANGLED IN THE CAMPSITE, LINES, ETC. IF TRAPPED THERE DURING THE DAY IN THE HEAT, THE TURTLE COULD DIE.

(TOO BAD THE TURTLE CAMPSITE DOESN'T HAVE A NICE FENCE AROUND IT, LIKE THE SEAL CAMP)

ON THE NIGHT OF 6/9 A TURTLE CAME OVER THE BARRIER, BECAUSE I HAD THE ALUMINUM STRETCHER LYING FLAT INSTEAD

OF UPRIGHT (LIKE IT IS NOW). THE TURTLE APPARENTLY CRAWL/SIDE RIGHT OVER THE STRETCHER, I WAS DOZING IN THE ~~THE~~ TENT, BUT QUICKLY AWOKE. IT WAS A MESS GETTING HER OUT. I SCRAPPED UP MY FEET AND LEGS IN THE PROCESS, SINCE BOOTS WEREN'T ON. FORTUNATELY, I "GUIDED" HER OUT, WITH STRONG-ARM TACTICS TO THE HEAD, BEFORE SHE DEMOLISHED THE TENT AND AWNING.

NOTE: Sometimes one side of the shell will be reasonably dry, while the other side is wet (resulting from light blowing rain shower). In such cases, just spray paint the dry side.

USE ONLY DUPONT LUCITE.

MORE  
DISHES, COOKWARE,  
SILVERWARE, CANNED FOOD,  
ETC.

IN BUCKETS AND STORAGE DRUMS AT SEAL CAMPSITE ON EAST IS.

HELP YOURSELF TO EVERYTHING AS MAY BE NEEDED.

### TIPS ON USING SPRAY PAINT TO MARK TURTLE SHELLS

SHAKE CAN WELL JUST BEFORE EACH USE.  
SHELL MUST BE REASONABLY DRY. IF ITS GLISTENING WET, IT ABSOLUTELY WON'T STICK SO THERE'S NO SENSE SPRAYING IT. A FINE LAYER OF DIRT/DUST ON THE SHELL IS O.K.  
AFTER EACH USE TURN CAN UPSIDE DOWN, HOLD AWAY FROM YOU, DOWN WIND AND PRESS NOZZLE FOR APPROX. 5 SECONDS. THIS WILL HELP TO CLEAR THE SPRAY JET OF PAINT. IF YOU DON'T DO THIS, IT WILL QUICKLY CLOG AND BECOME (more)

## PAINT, CONT.

USELESS AFTER 2 OR 3 PAINTINGS.

POT THE LID BACK ON LOOSELY WHEN CARRYING THE SPRAY CAN IN THE SHOULDER BAG. IF YOU DON'T THE CAN'S NOZZLE WILL OFTEN PRESS AGAINST THE SIDE, AND BE GOING OFF WITHOUT YOUR KNOWLEDGE UNTIL YOU SMELL PAINT AND LOOK DOWN TO SEE IT DRIPPING OUT OF ~~THE~~ THE BAG ONTO YOUR CLOTHES. (AS YOU MIGHT GUESS, I'VE LEARNED THIS FROM HARD EXPERIENCE!).

WHEN MARKING THE SHELL, A FINE COAT WILL ULTIMATELY STICK BETTER THAN A SATURATED, DRIPPING COAT. THE LATTER SEEMS MORE LIABLE TO CHIP OR PEEL OFF AFTER A FEW DAYS.

PAINTED MARKS CAN STAY READABLE FOR 2 WEEKS OR LONGER, BUT THERE IS

## PAINT, CONT.

CONSIDERABLE VARIATION BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL TURTLES, THE PRESENCE OF PAINT CAN USUALLY BE DETECTED UP TO A MONTH OR LONGER, THOUGH IT WILL USUALLY NOT BE READABLE.

## PAINT<sup>COLOR</sup> CODES

JERN IS. - WORK BEING DONE BY RICK VETTER & FWS VOLUNTEERS -

BLUE only

NUMBER 1 ~~THROUGH~~ CONTINUING CONSECUTIVELY

EAST ISLAND -

G. BALAZS -

5/29 - 6/18

YELLOW

NUMBERS

1 THROUGH 32 AND 34

G. BALAZS

6/19 - 6/23

GREEN

NUMBERS

33 & 35 THROUGH

M. MAJOR

6/24 - 6/

IVORY

USE ALPHABET LETTERS A THROUGH Z; IF MORE THAN 26 ARE NEEDED, GO AA, BB, CC, etc.

YOU HAVE 1 1/2 CANS OF  
IVORY PAINT (~~ALL~~<sup>BOTH</sup> IN THE  
TURTLE TENT). A FULL  
CAN SHOULD LAST FOR  
ABOUT 35 TURTLES, SO I  
DON'T EXPECT YOU TO RUN OUT  
OF IVORY. BUT IF YOU DO,  
START USING ~~THE~~ GREEN.  
(NEARLY FULL CAN ON EAST, AND  
SEVERAL NEW ONES <sup>ARE</sup> IN STORAGE  
ON TERN).

YOU ARE NOT EXPECTED, NOR SHOULD  
YOU, GO OUT AT NIGHT WHEN IT'S RAINING.  
WAIT TILL THE RAIN/SHOWER COMPLETELY  
PASSES. IF IT RAINS HARD ON AND OFF  
FREQUENTLY ALL NIGHT, JUST SKIP THAT NIGHT,  
GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP INSTEAD!

THREE TIMES  
A NIGHT WILL BE ADEQUATE  
ONCE YOU BECOME EXPERIENCED.  
MORE THAN FOUR TIMES A NIGHT  
IS UNNECESSARY AND, IN FACT, CAN  
BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE AND EVEN  
HARMFUL BY PUTTING TOO MUCH  
PRESSURE/DISTURBANCE ON THE  
TURTLES, MONK SEALS & SEABIRDS  
TOO.

## OBJECTIVES OF YOUR TURTLE WORK AND METHODS TO USE

OBJECTIVE  
**I.** TO DETERMINE THE NUMBER  
AND IDENTITY OF FEMALES  
NESTING EACH NIGHT ON  
EAST ISLAND.

THE FEMALES UP TO NEST ON ANY ONE  
NIGHT WILL CONSIST OF TWO COMPONENTS:

- TURTLES THAT I HAVE "HANDLED"  
ALREADY THIS SEASON AND MARKED  
WITH EITHER YELLOW OR GREEN PAINT;
- TURTLES THAT I HAVE NOT  
HANDLED AND, THEREFORE, ARE BEING  
SEEN FOR THE FIRST TIME NESTING  
THIS SEASON.

TO ACCOMPLISH THIS OBJECTIVE,  
YOU MUST MONITOR NESTING  
ACTIVITY THREE OR FOUR TIMES  
EACH NIGHT BY WALKING AROUND  
THE ISLAND RECORDING TURTLES'  
PRESENCE AND "HANDLING" THOSE  
THAT FALL UNDER "b" CATEGORY  
ABOVE. SUGGESTED TIMES TO GO  
OUT ARE 9:30 pm, 12:30 am,  
3:30 am, and if needed 6 am.  
EACH TRIP OUT WILL LAST 45 MIN TO  
1 1/4 HOURS, DEPENDING HOW MANY

Turtles are present, NESTING  
IS LIGHT THIS YEAR.  
ONE NIGHT I HAD "0".  
THE BEST NIGHT I HAD 8.  
TURTLES THAT HAVE BEEN  
PREVIOUSLY MARKED WITH YELLOW  
OR GREEN PAINT NEED ONLY  
BE RECORDED, NOT HANDLED.  
IF ~~THE~~ THE NUMBER IS LEGIBLE,  
RECORD IT. IF NOT, JUST WRITE  
THE COLOR AND PERHAPS YOUR  
"BEST GUESS" as to what the number is.  
IF THE TURTLE HAS NO  
VISIBLE PAINT, IT NEEDS TO  
BE HANDLED, BY YOU. THIS IS  
BY FAR, THE MOST IMPORTANT  
PIECE OF YOUR WORK. FIRST  
IF THE SHELL IS DRY ENOUGH,  
USE YOUR IVORY PAINT TO  
PUT AN ALPHABET LETTER ON  
EACH SIDE. NEXT, CHECK  
FOR THE PRESENCE OF A TAG OR  
TAGS USING ONLY THE ONE-CELL  
(AA) FLASHLIGHT PROVIDED. THIS  
WORKS EXCELLENT BY HOLDING  
IT IN YOUR MOUTH, WHEN  
NEEDED. YOU ONLY NEED TO  
READ ONE TAG WITH CERTAINTY,

IF SEVERAL TAGS ARE PRESENT.  
HOWEVER, IF IT'S EASY TO DO  
SO (MEANING THE TURTLE "LETS YOU  
READ THEM"), READ AS MANY  
TAG NUMBERS AS YOU CAN.  
THEY ARE RARELY CONSECUTIVE  
NUMBERS. IF YOU CAN ONLY  
READ ONE NUMBER, THEN NOTE  
HOW MANY TAGS THE TURTLE  
HAS TOTAL. WE NEED THIS  
INFO TO COMPUTE TAG  
SHEDDING RATES. IF YOU  
CAN'T READ ANY OF THE TAG  
NUMBERS BECAUSE ENCRUSTING CORALLINE  
~~AND~~ ALGAE OR OTHER FOREIGN MATERIAL  
ON THE TAG, USE THE POCKET KNIFE  
PROVIDED, OR OTHER APPROPRIATE  
METAL OBJECT, TO SCRAPE THE  
TAG AND EXPOSE THE NUMBER.  
NOTE - THERE IS ALOT OF  
BEHAVIORAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN  
TURTLES. SOME WILL SIMPLY  
NOT LET YOU FOOL AROUND  
WITH THEIR TAGS, THEY WILL  
RESPOND IN A WILD MANNER.  
JUST DO THE BEST YOU CAN  
WITHOUT GETTING YOURSELF HURT  
BY THE TURTLE. WATCH THAT

THEY DON'T GRIND THEIR SHELL AND FLIPPERS AGAINST YOUR ANKLES AND FEET (NOTE BANDAGES ON MY LEGS NOW FROM NOT HEEDING THIS WARNING!) TO HELP IN READING TAG NUMBERS ACCURATELY, I SUGGEST YOU FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH HOW EACH NUMBER IS FORM (THEIR STYLE). STUDY NUMBERS AS THEY ARE PRINTED ON THE NEW TAGS.

IF NO TAGS ARE PRESENT ON THE TURTLE, THEN AT LEAST ONE, AND IDEALLY TWO, NEED TO BE APPLIED. IT TAKES PRACTICE TO DO THIS CORRECTLY, QUICKLY AND SAFELY. DEMONSTRATION AND INSTRUCTION WILL BE GIVEN 6/23-6/24 ON EAST. AGAIN, THE EASE OF TAGGING DEPENDS HEAVILY ON THE BEHAVIORAL DISPOSITION OF THE TURTLE. THE KEY THOUGHT IS ALWAYS SAFETY TO YOURSELF. THEY ARE STRONG, POWERFUL ANIMALS THAT ARE CAPABLE OF DOING

DAMAGE WITH THEIR FLIPPERS AND BODY. ALSO, FLIPPER CAN AND DO THROW SAND WITH INCREDIBLE STINGING FORCE. A "BLAST" IN THE FACE AND EYES IS AN UNPLEASANT EXPERIENCE (I KNOW!).

IF YOU SIMPLY CAN'T GET A TAG ON AN ANIMAL, DON'T BE OVERLY CONCERNED. THE PAINTED NUMBER FOR OUR NIGHTLY CENSUS WORK IS ALMOST AS IMPORTANT AS TAGGING. AND I AM SURE YOU WILL ALWAYS BE ABLE TO APPLY THE PAINT WITH NO PROBLEMS.

IF ANY TAGS TEAR OUT ON YOU, OR FOR SOME OTHER REASON ARE RUINED, PLEASE DON'T THROW THEM AWAY. RECORD THE NUMBERS IN THIS BOOK AND RETURN THEM TO ME.

THE STAGE OF NESTING THAT THE TURTLE IS INVOLVED IN WILL ALSO, TO A LARGE EXTENT, DETERMINE HOW EASY IT MAY BE TO TAG. THE "BEST" TIME TO AT IS WITHIN 5-15 MINUTES AFTER THE EGGS HAVE BEEN

DEPOSITED AND THE HIND  
FLIPPERS ALONE ARE PULLING  
SAND OVER THEM. SHE  
IS THE LEAST IMMUNE  
TO DISTURBANCE AT THIS  
TIME. I NEVER APPLY THE  
TAGS WHILE EGGS ARE BEING  
DROPPED. THIS COULD CAUSE  
HER TO "SHUT-DOWN" AND  
LEAVE. HOWEVER, IT IS AN  
EXCELLENT TIME TO APPLY  
PAINT WHILE EGG LAYING IS  
HAPPENING. ALSO, TO INSPECT  
HER OVER/CAREFULLY WITH  
THE SINGLE-CELL LIGHT LOOKING  
ESPECIALLY FOR:

1. Tumors on the eyes,  
neck, front flippers  
close to the body, chin,  
or anywhere else visible.
2. Any signs of fresh  
amputations or mutilations  
(usually from shark attack).
3. Any signs of old  
and completely healed  
amputations.
4. Anything else that  
seems not worthy to  
document.

NOTE - THE SINGLE-CELL FLASHLIGHT  
BATTERY MUST BE CHANGED FAIRLY  
REGULARLY (APPROX. EVERY 3<sup>RD</sup> NIGHT) AS  
IT DRAINS FAST, MAKING IT TOO  
DIFFICULT TO SEE THINGS YOU NEED  
IT FOR (I.E. TAG NUMBERS).

WHILE THE TURTLE IS LAYING  
EGGS (ACTUALLY DEPOSITING THEM), IT IS  
ALSO AN EXCELLENT TIME TO  
MEASURE THE CURVED CARAPACE  
LENGTH WITH THE TAPE PROVIDED.  
SINCE YOU MAY NOT  
ENCOUNTER TURTLES VERY  
OFTEN ~~WHEN~~ THAT ARE  
RIGHT IN THE PROCESS OF LAYING  
EGGS, I DON'T EXPECT YOU  
TO MEASURE VERY MANY  
TURTLES. IT IS VERY HARD  
TO MEASURE A TURTLE WHEN IT IS  
OUT AND MOVING AROUND.

MONITORING A <sup>FULL</sup> NIGHT'S NESTING  
IS A PRIME OBJECTIVE. TO  
GO OUT JUST ONCE OR  
TWICE TO CHECK ON TURTLES  
UP NESTING CAN PROVIDE GOOD  
INFORMATION, BUT THIS IS NOT

NEAR AS VALUABLE AS  
"COMPLETE COVERAGE" (3 or 4 TIMES  
OUT, SPACED PROPERLY) OF A NIGHT'S  
NESTING. ALSO, CONSECUTIVE  
NIGHTS OF COMPLETE COVERAGE  
MONITORING ARE OF GREATER  
VALUE. FOR EXAMPLE, YOUR  
SCHEDULE COULD BE 4 OR  
5 CONSECUTIVE NIGHTS ON EAST  
IS. DOING COMPLETE COVERAGE,  
AND THEN 2 OR 3 NIGHT BACK  
AT TERN IS. RESTING UP, GETTING  
A SHOWER, AND EATING SLIGHTLY  
BETTER FOOD. YOU DEVISE THE  
SCHEDULE THAT SEEMS BEST FOR  
YOUR WORKING ABILITIES. ALTHOUGH  
THE USE OF THE BOAT IS  
PRIMARILY FOR ACCOMPLISHING  
THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE  
MONK SEAL RESEARCH. HOWEVER  
THERE SHOULD BE SOME  
ACCOMMODATION OF YOUR NEEDS  
AND WISHES.

IF YOU WANT, YOU CAN STAY ON  
EAST IS. ALONE WHEN THE  
OTHER TWO GO BACK TO TERN  
IS. FOR OVERNIGHT STAYS.  
HOWEVER, TO DO THIS YOU

MUST PLAN AHEAD AND BRING  
AN EXTRA HAND-HELD RADIO SO  
YOU CAN MAKE 8 AM RADIO CHECKS  
WITH TERN IS, WHILE ALONE. SEE  
RICK. MAKE SURE THE RADIO IS  
FULLY CHARGED (I.E. RADIO ON THE  
CHARGER FOR SEVERAL HOURS - AND  
PREFERABLY FOR OVERNIGHT. NOTE THE  
RED AND GREEN INDICATOR LIGHTS  
ON THE CHARGER DON'T WORK. A RED  
LIGHT MAY BE ON, ~~THE~~ BUT THE RADIO  
WILL NEVERTHELESS BE FULLY CHARGED  
IF IT HAS BEEN ON LONG ENOUGH.  
SEE RICK).

CONCERNING OCCASIONAL TRIPS  
THE SEAL PEOPLE WILL BE MAKING  
TO DISTANT ISLANDS (SHARK, DISAPPEARING  
AND GINS) TO COUNT SEALS:  
I WOULD PERSONALLY RECOMMEND  
AGAINST YOUR GOING. IN MY  
VIEW, THERE ARE SAFETY CONSIDERATION  
IN FAVOR OF NOT GOING, UNLESS  
YOU FEEL YOU ARE VERY ~~WELL~~ WELL  
SKILLED IN SMALL BOAT HANDLING  
AND RELATED MARINE ~~AND~~ TALENTS.  
FOR ONE THING, THREE PEOPLE  
IN THE BOAT, VERSUS TWO,

DISAPPEARING IS 16 MILES SOUTH TERN, AT THE VERY SOUTHERN LIMIT OF THE ATOLL.

TAKES MORE GASOLINE. AND GASOLINE IS NOT IN ABUNDANT SUPPLY HERE. ANOTHER FACTOR IS THAT IF A BIG PROBLEM OCCURS (I.E. MOTORS WON'T WORK, BOAT DRIFTS OUT TO SEA) TWO PEOPLE ADrift WITH LIMITED FRESH WATER IS A BETTER SITUATION THAN THREE PEOPLE ADrift.

USE YOUR OWN JUDGEMENT IN THIS MATTER, BUT THAT'S MY ADVISE TO YOU.

(ALL OF THE ECOLOGICAL DIVERSITY FOUND AT FRENCH FRIGATE SHOAL IS REPRESENTED ON TERN, WHALE-SKATE AND EAST ISLAND.

DISAPPEARING, SHARK AND GINS VIRTUALLY BARREN SAND BARS.

YOU SHOULD AND WILL BE VISITING WHALE-SKATE. IT IS USUALLY STOPPED AT FOR SEAL WORK WHEN TRAVELING EITHER TO OR FROM EAST IS. WHALE-SKATE IS AN ATTRACTIVE, INTERESTING ISLAND WHICH YOU WILL ENJOY SEEING.

WHEN THE SEAL PEOPLE GO TO THE DISTANT ISLANDS, PLEASE ASK THEM TO TELL YOU THE NUMBER OF TURTLES SEEN BASKING ASHORE AND ALSO IF PAINT IS PRESENT ON ANY OF THEM. RECORD THE INFORMATION IN THIS BOOK.

OBJECTIVE

2.

TO COUNT AND RECORD THE IDENTITIES OF TURTLES BASKING ALONG THE SHORELINE OF EAST ISLAND (WHALE-SKATE TOO, WHEN YOU VISIT THAT ISLAND).

The best time to do this count is between 3 pm and 6 pm, but other times as schedule permits will be O.K. Most turtles on East bask at the Southeast end of the island. An OCCASIONAL ONE will haul out elsewhere. Take 45 minutes to walk around the island to do this CENSUS. RECORD IN THIS BOOK THE DATE, TIME AND NUMBER SEEN. ALSO ENTER THE PAINTED NUMBERS SEEN, OR THE PRESENCE OF PAINT AND COLOR.

MALES, AS YOU KNOW, HAVE A VERY LONG, LARGE TAIL. IF YOU ARE ABLE TO DISTINGUISH THEM, RECORD AS SUCH. NORMALLY THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE WITHOUT GETTING VERY CLOSE AND BEHIND THEM. YOU SHOULDN'T DO THIS. WHEN WALKING AROUND THE ISLAND YOU SHOULDN'T GET SO CLOSE TO BASKING TURTLES AS TO DISTURB THEM, CAUSE THEM TO MOVE DUE TO YOUR PRESENCE AND RETURN TO THE SEA. AT TIMES THEIR EYESIGHT SEEMS VERY GOOD OUT OF WATER. MUCH BETTER THAN WHAT IT'S REPORTED TO <sup>SUPPOSE</sup> BE IN THE SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE.

ONE COUNT OF BASKING TURTLES PER DAY WILL BE FINE WELL YOU ARE ONE EAST ISLAND. IF YOU WANT TO DO TWO PER DAY, THAT WILL BE FINE TOO.

YOU SHOULD NOT ATTEMPT

TO TAG OR READ TAGS ON BASKING TURTLES.

ALSO NOTE THAT IT IS NOT UNCOMMON FOR A TURTLE OR TWO TO "BASK" ALONG THE SHORE AT NIGHT. DO NOT CONFUSE SUCH ANIMALS WITH THOSE OUT TO NEST. BASKING TURTLES NEVER GO MUCH ABOVE THE HIGH TIDE MARK. BASKING TURTLES STAY IN ONE PLACE MOTIONLESS FOR LONG PERIODS. TURTLES HAULING OUT TO NEST ARE ~~ALSO~~ ALMOST CONSTANTLY IN-MOTION OR ON THE MOVE.

TURTLE

LOG

JUNE-JULY 86

FOR

MARILYN MAJOR

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