

NOAA IRC
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East Island Turtle Camp
Special Operating Conditions Synopsis
From 2015 Field Season

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Introduction

The 2015 Turtle Camp was carried out differently from most years due to the absence of U.S. Fish and Wildlife facilities and personnel on Tern Island. The 2015 field season relied heavily on the Hawaiian Monk Seal Research Program (HMSRP) for assistance in camp set up and breakdown on East Island as well as acting as a shuttle between islands.

Turtle Camp Preparations on Tern Island

Upon arriving to Tern, the procedures from the previous year's SOP were followed.

Every week the turtle technician sent George Balazs the daily totals that included: the total number of new turtles observed, the number of returning turtles, and the total number of turtles up, as well as the number of basking turtles observed on East Island.

Turtle Camp Set Up and Break Down

The turtle camp was set up on the wooden platform permanently left on East Island with the help of the monk seal field team. It takes at least four people to set up the Weatherport tent used this season. The Weatherport was an excellent option in contrast to the smaller two person tent provided because it is able to withstand high winds and heavy rains. At the end of the season, all pieces of the Weatherport were scrubbed clean, covered with anti-corrosion spray, and put away in the Turtle Camp storage area in the Tern Island warehouse. It should be noted that the platform has moved closer to the water on East Island so that during very high tides the water is a couple of feet away from the Weatherport. I would suggest for next year's camp to move the platform a bit farther inland before the noddies and tropicbirds begin nesting underneath. After breaking down the turtle camp, subsequent visits were made to haul entanglement hazards to Tern Island to bring back to Honolulu on the monk seal pickup cruise.

2015 Data Collection Methods

Night surveys on East Island began on May 30, 2015 and were conducted weekly, primarily in sets of three consecutive nights per week, ending on July 22, 2015. In total, the technician monitored nesting turtles on 22 nights during the field season, with data collected on 10 partial, and 12 full nights.

At 20:00h every monitoring night, after checking in via radio with Tern Island, the technician conducted a preliminary walk around the island to map and note the placement of hauled out monk seals, and to cover any debris hazards and copper wire. Walks around the island to monitor for nesting turtles were conducted at 21:00, 23:00, 01:00, 03:00, and 05:00. Most data were collected the first time a turtle was recorded.

A straight carapace length measurement was recorded for most nesting turtles using 95cm metal calipers, generally at the time of first sighting. Exceptions included surveys made without carrying the 95 cm metal calipers when lightning was present. In those instances, straight carapace length (SCL) was not recorded until a subsequent sighting, if the turtle was seen again.

Each night's walks focused primarily on identifying and assigning a mototool number to newly sighted and unmarked nesting turtles. A number was harmlessly engraved on the third right

lateral scute of each newly observed turtle. Once the mototool ID was engraved on the carapace, it was coated in a thin layer of white spray paint to make subsequent identification throughout the season easier. Each turtle was scanned for PIT tags in both hind flippers using an electronic tag reader and checked for metal tags.

Communication

Usually three consecutive nights were spent at East Island for turtle monitoring during the 2015 season. The turtle technician was dropped off on Monday morning and picked up on Thursday morning correlating with the monk seal team's atoll counts. While on East Island two radio calls per day were scheduled to check in with Tern Island at 07:00 and 19:00. The two brand new handheld radios provided by MTBAP unfortunately did not work in the field to contact Tern Island. They only worked from close range if one of the small boats was close to shore. The main form of communication with Tern Island was with the base station VHF radio charged by a marine battery that was stored at Tern Island at the end of the season. The VHF radio was turned off once the turtle technician was picked up to preserve the battery.

The turtle technician was provided with two satellite phones this field season, one from MTBAP and a second one borrowed from HMSRP used as a backup. If it was not possible to contact Tern Island via radio, the satellite phone was used instead. The satellite phones were used to contact Honolulu periodically throughout the season.

Life at Turtle Camp

For the first two nights spent monitoring on East Island the turtle technician was accompanied by Louise Giuseffi, a NOAA Biological Science Technician who was on French Frigate Shoals for the first two weeks of the season to help set up camp. Louise assisted the turtle technician with the first nights as a data recorder, and to help unpack and set up the turtle camp.

As with past seasons, seabird ticks on East Island were a nuisance. The bug spray for both skin and fabric did provide relief along with hydrocortisone cream. While conducting nighttime surveys, knee-high pantyhose worn over socks and leggings covered any exposed areas from tick bites.

Turtle Gear

The new marine battery was left at Tern along with HMSRP's battery. Over the course of the season there were some issues keeping the marine battery charged, and it was occasionally brought back to Tern Island to recharge.

A new Goal Zero solar battery was purchased for the 2015 season. While it worked reliably throughout the season the solar panel responsible for charging the battery will need to be replaced. The solar panel only charges between one and three watts instead the 20 watt input.

A supply list of Turtle Camp gear left on Tern Island, as well as gear brought back to the IRC is included at the end of this document with the quantity, condition, and storage location.

Suggestions for 2016:

- Updating the communications sheet provided. Many of the personnel, e-mail addresses and phone numbers were outdated especially since USFWS has left Tern Island.
- More time in Honolulu for training especially since the monk seal training takes up a lot of time.
- Activating satellite phone's ability to send and receive text messages for easier contact between Tern Island and East Island when communication using the VHF base station radio cannot be established.

Turtle Camp Supplies 2015

LEFT AT TERN ISLAND

	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>CONDITION</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>	
FIRST AID	Turtle Camp Storage in Warehouse	ALL UNUSED		
Nasopharyngeal Airway			3	~
Band-aids			2	boxes
Icy Hot			1	~
Benadryl			5	sheets
Rolled Gauze			3	rolls
Sterile Pads Non Stick			10	~
Oral Airway			1	~
Sunscreen			2	~
70% isopropyl rubbing alcohol			3	bottles
Antacid tablets			10	packets
Ibuprofen tablets			15	packages
Medi-lyte tablets			15	packages
2 inch gauze bandage			4	~
Elastic gauze rolls			2	rolls
Ace bandages with safety pins			2	~
Sam Splint			2	~
Epipen			2	~
All Purpose First Aid Kit			1	kit
Reusable Cold/Hot Compress			1	~
Aloe Vera			1	~
Hydrogen Peroxide			1	bottle
Hand Sanitizer			3	bottles
Burn Pads			8	pads
Providone-iodine swabsticks			15	~
Hydrocortisone			1	tube
Urinary Pain relief phenazo			1	~
Ear Drops			1	bottle
Oral Rehydration salts			4	packets

Instaglucoase	1	~
DenTemp	1	~
Blistex	1	~
Sterile Water	1	bottle
Guedel Airway Kit	1	~
Dressing Retention Sheet	2	sheets
Tylenol	1,000	tablets
Pepto Bismol	1	bottle
Dayquil	1	bottle
Nyquil	1	bottle
Duct Tape	1	roll
Adhesive tape	6	rolls
Gauze Pads	16	~
Gauze Sponges	15	~
Dry back ABD pad	3	~
Tegaderm Film	12	~
Wound Closure strips	5	~
Tongue Depressor	5	~
Cotton tipped applicators	12	~
Sterile Disposable Scalpel	1	~
Antibiotic ointment packets	20	packets
Antifungal cream packets	15	packets
Antiseptic Towelettes	8	~
Advanced Clotting Sponge	3	~

EAST CAMP SUPPLIES LEFT AT TERN

<u></u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>CONDITION</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>	
Weatherport Tent	Tern Island	Good	4	bags
Weatherport washers and screws	Tern Island	Good	1	ziplocs
Weatherport poles	Tern Island	Good	4	sets
3 Gallon water cooler	Tern Island	Worn	1	
Shovel	Tern Island	Rusty	1	
Cot	Tern Island	(TRP cot broken, using HMSRP)		
Sleeping pad	Tern Island	New/Unused	1	garbage
Easy ups	Tern Island	New/Unused	2	bags

Propane
 Futon
 Marine Battery

Tern Island	New/Unused	8
Tern Island	Good	1
Tern Island	?	1

STORED IN HONOLULU

KITCHEN

Pot and pot lid
 Bowl
 Sponges
 Cup
 Pasta strainer
 Plate
 Can Opener
 Pot Holder
 Fork
 Spoon
 Knife
 Camp Combo Silverware
 Dish Soap
 Camp Stove

<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>CONDITION</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>
IRC	Good	1
IRC	Good	3
IRC	Unused	6
IRC	Good	3
IRC	Good	1
IRC	Good	2
IRC	Worn	1
IRC	Good	1
IRC	Good	4
IRC	Good	3
IRC	Good	4
IRC	Good	1
IRC	Good	1
IRC	Good	1

EAST CAMP GEAR

Alarm Clock
 Kelty 2 person tent
 Marmot Limestone 4 person tent
 Binoculars
 Tick repellent
 Duct Tape
 Dry bag
 Boombox
 Heavy Duty Silicone Lubricant
 Lantern
 Saw

<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>CONDITION</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>
IRC	New	1
IRC	New	1
IRC	New	1
IRC	Need to replace	1
IRC	Good	3
IRC	Good	4
IRC	New	2
IRC	New	1
IRC	Good	1
IRC	Good, salty	2
IRC	Rusty, didn't use	1

Fire Extinguisher	IRC	Good	1
70% isopropyl rubbing alcohol	IRC	New	2
Towel	IRC	Replace	1
Pillowcase	IRC	Good	2
Sheets	IRC	Good	2
Fitted Sheets	IRC	Good	2
D8 Batteries	IRC	Good	24
C4 Batteries	IRC	Good	38
AA Batteries	IRC	Good	115
AAA Batteries	IRC	Good	52

COMMUNICATION/ELECTRONICS

	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>CONDITION</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>
Goal zero solar panel	IRC	Broken	1
Goal zero accessories/spare parts	IRC	New	1
Goal Zero	IRC	Good	1
VHF Radio	IRC	Good	4
VHF Radio fuses and parts	IRC	Good	1
GPS Units and chargers	Shandell	Good	2
Handheld radios with chargers	IRC	Broken	2
Pit tag reader chargers	George	Good	2
Camera and charger	Shandell	Old, wasn't used this season	
Satellite Phone SIM card	Shandell	Good	1

CLOTHING

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SIZE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>CONDITION</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>
Leggings	S	IRC	Good	5
Tank tops	S	IRC	Good	4
Shorts	S	IRC	Good	6
Field Shirts	Kids XL	IRC	Good	3
Sweatshirt	M	IRC	Good	1
Hats	one-size	IRC	Good	3
Sports bra	S	IRC	Good	1
Socks	S	IRC	Good	5
Slippers	7	IRC	Worn	1

Sneakers	7	IRC	Good	2
Jacket	M	IRC	Good	1
Vest	S	IRC	Good	1

TURTLE SURVEY GEAR

		<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>CONDITION</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>
Yellow books		IRC	New	26
Gloves	S	IRC	New	3
Knee pads	One size	IRC	Good	2
Data supplies		IRC	Good	1
Sand paper		IRC	New	5
Pantyhose	One size	IRC	New	30
Spray Bottle		IRC	New	1
Tape Measure		IRC	New	3
Multitool		IRC	Good	2
Flashlight		IRC	Good	6
Squeeze bottle		IRC	Good	1
Eye Protection		IRC	Good	3
Fanny Pack		IRC	New	2
Backpack		IRC	New	1
Headlamp		George	Good	3
Pit Tag Readers		George	Good	3
Metal Tags		George	New	4
Tagging pliers		George	Good	4
EPIRB ResQLink+ (Personal Locator Beacon)		George	Good	1