

# Green Sea Turtle Nesting Survey, Moloka'i, 2008

## Participants

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## 2008 Green Sea Turtle Nesting Survey Kawa'aloa Bay, Moloka'i

This survey was done by a group of volunteers on behalf of Nature Conservancy of Hawaii, Molokai.

The 2008 Green Sea Turtle nesting survey was carried out from April 23 until November 17. From April 23 to May 12 the beach was checked two to three times a week, from May 13 forward observers walked the beach from East to West each morning, with the exception of 2 days in May, 1 day in July, 2 days in Sept and 2 days in November when volunteers were not available or access to the beach was not possible.

A meeting at the beach was held May 13th with the participating monitors. The procedures for identifying and recording the excavations were reviewed and it was agreed to continue identifying the excavations with the same procedure that was adopted in 2007. Using landmarks and measurements, gps way points, marker sticks and buried cans in the center of the last excavations to record their locations.

Of the 19 trips on shore 7 produced excavations. Of these, 4 hatches were observed and as in 2007 these nests were dug up at least 3 days after the last hatchling had been observed to emerge. The contents of these nests were as follows:

	<b>Nest</b>	<b>Successful Hatches</b>	<b>Undeveloped</b>	<b>Dead</b>	<b>Live</b>	<b>Total Eggs Laid</b>
Hatch 1	1	63	2	2	1	67
Hatch 2	2	unknown				
Hatch 3	4	unknown				
Hatch 4	6	20		57	1	77
		83	2	59	2	144

Hatch 2 had many tracks leaving the nest site, but the exit area was unclear and the shells were not found.

Faint tracks from Hatch 3 were observed as a possible hatch, 4 days later one clear track to the ocean was observed. The shells from this hatch were not found.

The 2 live hatchlings found in Nests 1, & 6 were released to the ocean.

The 57 dead hatchlings found in Nest 6 all showed mortality in the later embryo stage. The 20 empty shells were found in the lower portion of the nest. There had been heavy rains prior to the hatch and the sand in the nest was very damp.

The 2 undeveloped eggs, 2 dead hatchlings found between the exit areas and the shoreline, and the 57 dead hatchlings from Nest #6 were frozen and sent to George Balazs at the National Marine Fisheries Service in Honolulu.

Of the 12 false crawls made, 3 crawled high up onto the beach and 9 stayed below the tide line.

The nesting activity was in the area west of the river, the last 4 nesting trips were at the most western part of the beach close to the base of the rock cliff face.

Nesting activity also took place on the small sand beach immediately to the east of Kawa'aloa beach. The excavations were recorded and monitored but no hatches were observed.

Monk Seal Activity was observed on 5 occasions between early May to late September, seals were sighted on 2 of those occasions and reported to NOAA Fisheries Pacific Island Regional Office.

Submitted by Lil Macmillan.