



COURTESY STATE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

4/19/2019 HSA  
**This green sea turtle sustained minor injuries after a 39-year-old Lihue man allegedly struck it with a knife and rock Thursday.**

## Lihue man is cited for abusing sea turtle

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The state has cited a 39-year-old Lihue man after he allegedly tried to pry open the shell of a live Hawaiian green sea turtle using a knife and rock.

A witness reported seeing the man at about 5 p.m. Thursday in Nawiliwili striking the turtle with a knife and a rock in an attempt to pry open its shell, according to Dan Dennison, spokesman for the Department of Land and Natural Resources. The witness called police.

Dennison said the Division of Conservation and Resources Enforcement responded and cited the suspect for "take of endangered/threatened species."

Kauai aquatic biologist Don Heacock found the tur-

tle on its back. Estimated to be about 4 years old, the turtle suffered minor wounds on its shell, or carapace, but did not have any penetrating knife wounds.

DLNR Spokeswoman Deborah Ward said, "It appeared lethargic. It was limp and with no energy."

Heacock took the turtle and tended to it for two days until it showed signs of energy. He released it at an isolated beach Saturday night, when the turtle quickly shuffled down the beach and into the ocean.

"It has a good chance of recovery since the wounds appeared minor and honu are very hardy marine reptiles," Heacock said in an emailed statement.

Hawaii's green sea turtles are protected under federal and state laws.