



A Hawaiian hawksbill turtle swims underwater. Photo taken with NOAA USFWS Permit #TE-739923-8.

May 15 marks Endangered Species Day, a time when we celebrate the protection of endangered species and their habitat. Hawai'i is often called the endangered species "capital" of the nation. We have more than 500 listings on land and in the sea—nearly 20 percent of the nation's listed species. Across the Hawaiian Islands, NOAA manages [14 threatened and endangered species](#), including whales, turtles, fishes, and the iconic Hawaiian monk seal.

Endangered species conservation efforts have had a huge impact on some species. The Hawaiian [green sea turtle](#) population has been steadily increasing at a rate of 5 percent per year over the past two decades. Thanks to these encouraging signs toward recovery, residents and visitors alike may encounter turtles basking on beaches or feeding on limu (algae) in the water. But most people have never seen the Hawaiian hawksbill turtle. They are another marine turtle that regularly nests in the Hawaiian Islands but are at high risk of extinction.



Threatened Hawaiian green turtles now frequent heavily visited beaches, making it hard for them to find space to rest without close encounters with humans. If you are lucky enough to encounter a turtle on the beach or in the water, maintain at least a 10-foot (3 meter) viewing distance to avoid disrupting their natural behavior.
Photo: NOAA Fisheries/Marylou Staman.

The NOAA Fisheries Pacific Islands Regional Office supports marine turtle conservation projects like the Hawai'i Island Hawksbill Project. Based out of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, this small conservation program monitors, studies, and protects these ancient reptiles.

Our recent and engaging [StoryMap \(link is external\)](#) detailed this struggling population and the trials and tribulations of the tiny team working hard to save endangered honu'ea.

Take the Quiz!

Do you think you know more about hawksbills and the Hawai'i Island Hawksbill Project than your family, friends, and colleagues? Put it to the test in this 10-question quiz, which increases in difficulty as you go along! The [StoryMap \(link is external\)](#) holds the answer to every question, and the correct answer will appear after each question and at the end of the quiz. Time yourself and share your score: how well do you know honu'ea?

[Take the Quiz!\(link is external\)](#)

More Information

- [Take the hawksbill sea turtle Quiz!\(link is external\)](#)
- [StoryMap: One Program's Quest to Save an Endangered Turtle Population\(link is external\)](#)
- [Hawksbill Turtle](#)

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