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To: Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation <CTURTLE@lists.ufl.edu>

Subject: "Fire in the Turtle House"- A decade of positive conservation influence

Dear Cturtlers: Before 2011 slips any farther behind us, I'd like to Recognize and Warmly Congratulate author Osha Gray Davidson on the 10-Year Anniversary of his acclaimed and timely book "Fire in the Turtle House" first published in 2001. Many of you will know that this book focuses on fibropapilloma (FP) tumor disease, primarily in Hawaiian and Floridian green turtles. The book clearly served, and continues to serve, to raise awareness and promote research and conservation, not only for sea turtles, but for all aspects of the global marine environment.

As a reviewer wrote for Fire's 2003 second printing: "A hard-working, sincere and scientifically valuable little book...a truly menacing and heart-achingly sad tale. Davidson is a disciplined and cogent storyteller."

Another reviewer remarked: "Fire in the Turtle House" is a profound and beautifully written account of the plight of the sea turtle. It is also, surprisingly, a story of hope for the future of these magnificent creatures."

And 'Hope for a Better Future' has indeed Reigned Supreme, after decades of worry by many, including Florida researcher Lew Ehrhart, and myself here in Hawaii. When Lew (Doc Ehrhart) and I first met and exchanged notes on FP disease at the 6th Sea Turtle Symposium (now ISTS) in Waverly, Georgia, the outlook was one of doom and gloom. But decades have now gone by and the dire calamity we feared might happen has happily not come to pass. True, the disease is not dead, and may always be with us at some lower level of prevalence. Most importantly though, both Florida green turtles nesting at the Archie Carr National Wildlife Refuge, and Hawaii green turtles nesting at French Frigate Shoals in the Hawaiian Islands National Wildlife Refuge, have shown record nesting, with annual increases surpassing everyone's (especially our own) expectations.

In the 9/18/2011 issue of the Tampa Bay Times (please see the following link) Lew wrote about the recovering Florida green turtle, saying "I believe it should be regarded as one of the great events in the history of wildlife conservation in North America."

<http://www.tampabay.com/news/perspective/where-sea-turtles-nest/1191561>>

Additional information about spectacular green turtle nesting in the Carr

Refuge can be found in The Carr Companion (Fall 2011), entitled "Nesting Numbers Break Records":

http://www.seaturtlespacecoast.org/images/newsletters/carrcompanion_2011_fall.pdf

In Hawaii, the highest nesting on record for 39 seasons of difficult monitoring and tagging occurred during 2011. A nice overview of the Hawaiian green turtle was recently authored by IUCN MTSG Co-Chair Nick Pilcher, at the following link:

http://seaturtlestatus.org/sites/swot/files/report/033111_SWOT6_p10-11_Hawaii.pdf

Osha Davidson himself, I suspect, may find it 'curiously odd' that the two locations ~8000 km apart, Florida and Hawaii, that experienced severe FP disease, are now the two most robustly increasing green turtle assemblages on record. Curiously odd, indeed. But Mother Nature herself can be odd, and we kindly accept this blessing she has given to us. Thank You, Mother Nature, and Thank You Osha- from George Balazs.