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Sent: Saturday, July 31, 2021 6:59 AM
To: CTURTLE@LISTS.UFL.EDU <CTURTLE@LISTS.UFL.EDU>
Subject: [CTURTLE] Five Decades with Hawaii's Green Turtles- A Commentary

Five Decades with Hawaiian Honu- and More to Come
by George Balazs
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I saw my first green turtle (honu) in 1964 while spearfishing in the lagoon waters of Paea, Tahiti. In 1969 my wife Linda and I watched with alarm as a boat full of large helpless honu was offloaded in Lahaina destined for restaurants catering to Hawaii's expanding tourism. In 1972, as a novice University of Hawaii graduate researcher, I did captive rearing studies of little honu at HIMB on Coconut Island (Moku O Lo'e in Kaneohe Bay) where I worked for 11 years. In 1973 I spent my first of many summers at French Frigate Shoals (Lalo) monitoring and tagging nesting honu. In 1975 I contributed science support and applauded the State of Hawaii for permanently banning the hunting of honu for commercial purposes. In 1983 I accepted a position with NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service to head up their newly created Marine Turtle Research Program in Hawaii. In late 2017, after 34 years with NOAA, I retired to work without compensation as a self-described 'Global Independent Sea Turtle Scientist' to assist others in the conservation, cultural heritage restoration, and research of sea turtles.

The above are some of the many life-changing times I easily recall. My CV/Resume provides a more complete overview of my life with sea turtles <https://georgehbalazs.com/george-h-balazs-cv/> My web page www.GeorgeHBalazs.com, initiated in late 2016, serves as a repository for 50+ years of historical papers, reports, notes, photos, and recollections. And, for archiving and making available for present and future generations new findings by others- journal published or otherwise, since only a small fraction of studies is ever published.

Someone once commented to me that it was indeed a fortunate person whose professional work was their hobby, and their hobby their work. I personally know that truth. While I have retired from paid employment, my life's work and hobby with sea turtles continues undiminished. I trust this helps to explain why I do what I do when I wind my way with vigor through corridors, sometimes bumpy ones, in search of information and updates on new activities and findings, especially those in Hawaii supported with public funds.

Here are a few relevant articles about my life with sea turtles. Mahalo for reading:
[How Many Honu? \(2001\) Chapter 2 from Fire in the Turtle House- by Osha Gray Davidson](#)

[2015- Green Turtle Success Stories- Study and Recovery of Hawaiian green turtle population celebrates 40 years of data. CCB Allen Press.](#)

[Balazs 2016 "A Lifelong Relationship." English version](#)

[2018- A Look Back: Scientist Dedicates Career to Sea Turtles in Hawai'i.](#)

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