

RARE BEHAVIORAL TRAITS

Green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) aggregations in the remote Hawaiian Islands National Wildlife Refuge are unique among marine turtles, according to George H. Balazs of the Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology, in that both adult males and females, as well as sexually immature individuals, crawl ashore at select undisturbed beaches to bask in the sunlight for hours at a time. Although green turtles in the Galapagos (and possibly at other locations) were formerly known to exhibit a true land-basking habit, such behavior now appears to be absent, except in the Hawaiian Archipelago. Other than the female during nesting, most marine turtles do not return to land after leaving the natal beach.

Another unique behavior has been observed in the wildlife refuge at the islet of Whale-Skate, French Frigate Shoals. The above photograph shows a Hawaiian monk seal (*Monachus schauinslandi*) and a Hawaiian green turtle basking together on the beach. Although both species share undisturbed beaches in the refuge, it is rare for them to be in physical contact with one another as shown. Generally, they will maintain a distance of at least 5 feet from one another. The turtles' and seals' social relationship on these beaches appears to be completely harmonious. As near as Balazs can presently determine, nowhere else has such a close, nonpredatory relationship developed between a reptile and a mammal.

The nature of monk seals is such that they are unable to adapt to the

5 feet = 1.5 meters

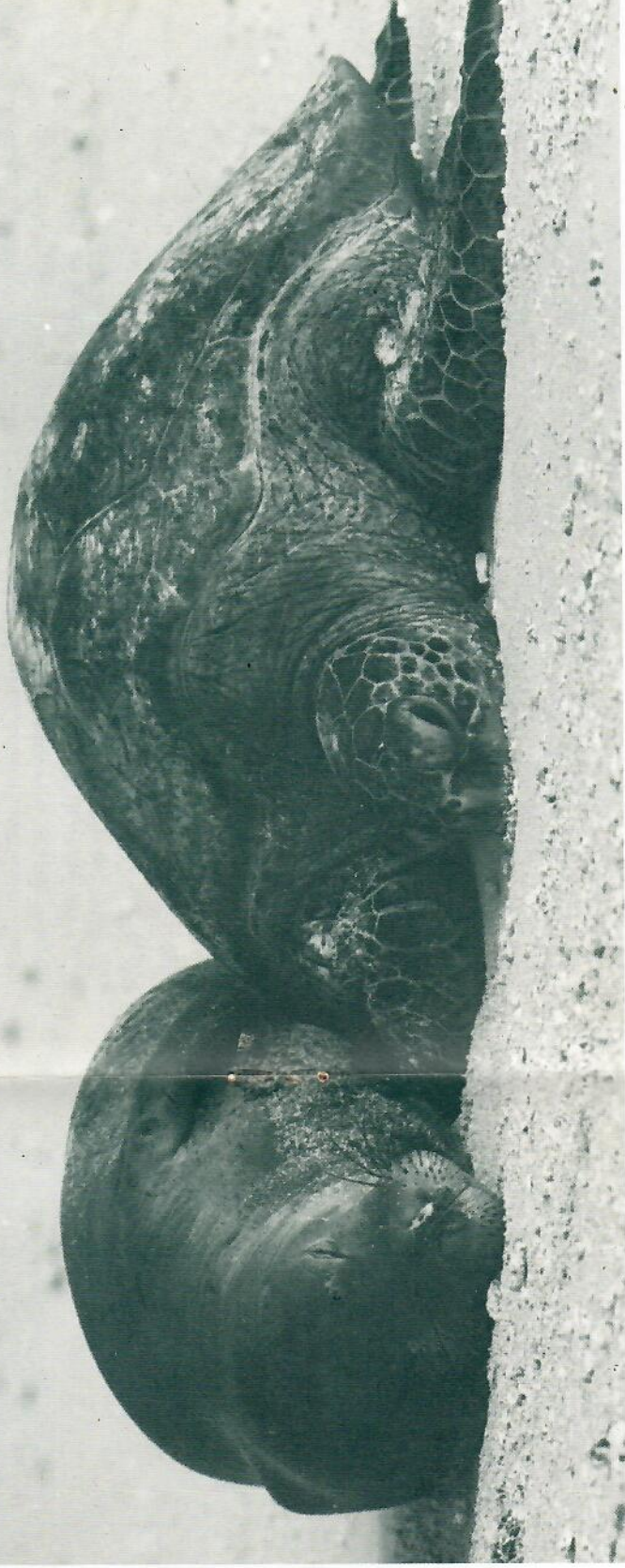


Photo by George H. Balazs, Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology/Sea Grant

A HARMONIOUS RELATIONSHIP. Rarely do the Hawaiian monk seal and Hawaiian green turtle come into actual physical contact with one another, as shown above at Whale-Skate Islet, French Frigate Shoals.

National Marine Fisheries Service has proposed it for listing as an endangered species in case remnant individuals do exist. According to "The Case of the Missing Monk Seal" in the October 1977 *Natural History*, the last authenticated citing of a Caribbean monk seal occurred in 1952. IOF members who observe what they believe to be a Caribbean monk seal are requested to photograph it and send details to The Marine Mammal and Endangered Species Division, National Marine Fisheries Service, Washington, D.C. 20235.

Interesting facts about the life history of the Hawaiian monk seal and

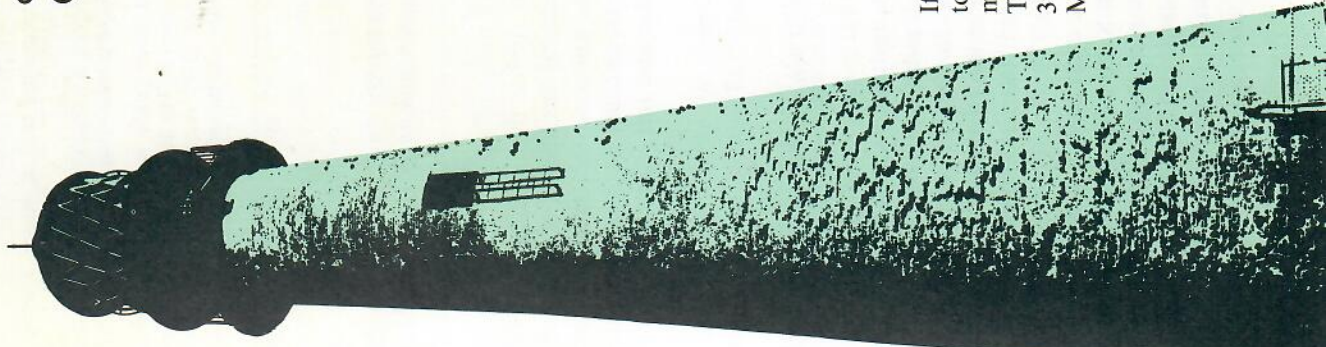
the Hawaiian green turtle are included in the full-color 32-page booklet *Hawaii's Seabirds, Turtles, and Seals*, available from World Wide Distributors, Ltd., 1132 Auahi Street, Honolulu, Hawaii 96814 at a cost of \$2.50 postage included.

BAY OF FUNDY TIDAL PROJECT

In response to "Update on Tidal-Energy Project" in the January-February *Sea Secrets*, member Alan Ruffman writes: "No formal public hearings are or have been held in the Canadian Maritime Provinces regarding the proposed Bay of Fundy tidal-power project . . . Indeed, only

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