

24 June 81

Miss Lisa Phillips
c/o A. J. Noon
24 Macaulay Street
Coorparoo
Brisbane, Queensland
AUSTRALIA

Dear Miss Phillips:

You will be pleased to learn that on May 27th at 3:00 p.m. the bottle containing your message of September 27, 1976 washed ashore near my campsite on East Island, French Frigate Shoals, in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands. The bottle beached itself near a large green sea turtle that was basking in the sun. The time and distance involved since you set the bottle afloat suggests that it may have traveled in circles around the North Pacific. Your message was in excellent condition and perfectly legible. I have enclosed a photocopy, but if you wish, I can send the original when I find out if this is still your correct mailing address.

East Island is a 12 acre uninhabited islet situated in the middle of a 16-mile long reef area named French Frigate Shoals. There are nine other small sand islets in the area, as well as a basalt rock pinnacle of 125 feet in height. French Frigate Shoals is about 500 miles northwest of Honolulu and a part of the Hawaiian Islands National Wildlife Refuge. The May 1976 issue of National Geographic Magazine has an excellent article and color photograph series on the area.

I have been visiting East Island during late May and June of each year since 1973 to tag and study green sea turtles. The major portion of nesting in the Hawaiian Islands takes place at this site. The turtles have been found to migrate for up to 700 miles to get to East Island.

It was fun to find your message and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

GEORGE H. BALAZS
Assistant Marine Biologist

GHB:ec
Encl.