

Suite 2860  
737 Bishop Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
Telephone 808-523-8802

March 19, 1987

Mr. George Balazs  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
2570 Dole Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822-2396

Dear George,

Enclosed is a copy of the Mauna Lani Bay turtle release along  
with the article which appeared in WEST HAWAII TODAY.

Thank you for all your help, it is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

*Darian Robin*

Darian Robin  
Assistant Account Executive

DR:lo

Enclosure

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737 Bishop Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
Telephone 808-523-8802

**Client: Mauna Lani Resort**

**For more information: Sheila Donnelly  
(808) 523-8802**

**Release date: Spring 1987**

**Title: NEW AQUATIC RESIDENTS AT MAUNA LANI BAY**

KOHALA COAST, Big Island of Hawaii -- Makana Kai (Gift of the Sea) is the newest Hawaiian green sea turtle in residence at Mauna Lani Bay. There are now three such turtles at Mauna Lani on long term loan from the National Marine Fisheries Service in Honolulu. These exotic animals are classified as endangered species and are protected by the U.S. Endangered Species Act as well as the laws of the State of Hawaii.

The turtles were initially brought to Mauna Lani because the hotel's ponds are large enough to accommodate the turtles once they mature. They are currently part of a study being conducted by the Fisheries Service to compare growth differences between turtles in the wild and those raised in captivity. Zoologist George Balazs, leader of the Hawaiian Sea Turtle Recovery Team, pointed out that, "this is the first time a federal agency and a private corporation

## The Mauna Lani Bay

### Add One

have joined forces on a long term study that will promote better understanding and survival of the species." Balazs went on to say that the study has shown turtles raised in captivity can eventually be released and survive in their natural habitat.

All aquatic animals at Mauna Lani are under the care of groundsman and historian Danny Akaka. Daily fish feeding tours for guests at the hotel are conducted at 10:00 a.m. There are ten feeding areas at the hotel, each with a multitude of species. On the tour, Akaka discusses the ponds and sea life in each area. He also shares ancient stories about the fish, giving insights to Hawaiian history and legends. Both children and adults enjoy learning of the rich history that exists at the hotel. The ponds are home to black and white tipped reef sharks and a large variety of Hawaiian reef fish such as parrot fish (uhu); milkfish (awa); mullet; file fish; and yellow tangs.

Over 50 acres of prehistoric ponds can be found on the hotel grounds. Interspersed with the natural pools are ten man made ponds that recreate this natural environment. They



## The Mauna Lani Bay

Add Two

are home to many reef fish that guests can see close-up when snorkeling just a few yards off shore in the coves along Mauna Lani's coastline.

The 351-room Mauna Lani Bay opened in February 1983. Catering to the carriage trade of Europe, Canada, the United States, and the Far East, the hotel establishes the standard of excellence for the Mauna Lani Resort which encompasses 3,200 acres and a three-mile coast line of bays, beaches, and pre-historic fishponds. Mauna Lani Bay is operated by Emerald Hotels Corporation which operates the Hawaiian Regent at Waikiki Beach and the Emerald of Anaheim next to Disneyland.

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## New green sea turtle in Mauna Lani bay

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More than 50 acres of prehistoric ponds can be found on the hotel grounds. Interspersed with the natural pools are ten man made ponds that recreate this natural environment. They are home to many reef fish that guests can see close-up when snorkeling just a few yards off shore in the coves along Mauna Lani's coastline.

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# Luxury on the Big Island's

4-19-87 HSB & Alver.

By Michael Carlton  
Dancer Post Service

**KOHALA COAST, Hawaii** — In the shadow of luxury, on the edge of a gray-rock pond, where a little waterfall tumbles over a volcanic shelf, one of nature's best shows takes place each day at 10 a.m.

From under the waterfall pokes a small head on top of a long, leathery neck. Soon, a baby green sea turtle is flying under the water, flapping its water wings and racing toward the shore. The baby turtle, large black doe eyes soft in a sweet face, accepts a piece of tuna from Kaniela Akaka as a group of tourists watch, enchanted to be so close to such an endangered species. Then a young girl from Wisconsin is allowed to feed the turtle, and squeals her delight; a man from northern California gives the chubby turtle a morsel, and a Coloradan tosses the creature a slice of fish.

Then it's back to the bar for a gin and tonic, and an afternoon resting in the blazing sun of the Big Island of Hawaii. Can't take this nature thing too far, you know.

Mauna Lani Bay Hotel, arguably the most luxurious property in Hawaii, offers all the usual attractions for tour-



A view of the lobby entrance at the Mauna Lani Bay Hotel. The hotel is situated at the ocean's edge on the Kohala Coast, 17 miles from the Keahole Airport.

ists — tennis and golf, fine restaurants, a splendid strand of spun-sugar beach, pools, bars and rooms heavy with comfort. But it's the daily nature walk, 45 minutes of touring the salt-water ponds of the hotel, which attracts the most applause from the hotel's guests.

Groundsman Akaka, son of one of Hawaii's congressmen and a graduate student in Hawaiian studies, leads the tour, taking a dozen or so tourists each day to 10 feeding sta-

tions scattered through the lush grounds of Mauna Lani Bay.

At each station — some located in the open-sided lobby of the hotel, others in gardens which rim the building — Akaka talks about the fish swimming in the hotel's ponds, fish only a few feet from visitors' hands.

Many of the fish are dull, gray-sided mullet, but there is electric color in others — angelfish and parrotfish, clownfish and broomfish, yellow tang and triggerfish, boxfish and

# Kohala Coast

squid-like fish. There are small sharks to feed — black-tips and white-tips — and a lazy spiny lobster that creeps from under its private rock to snatch a piece of raw fish.

There are also koi — Japanese carp — their orange and white bodies heavy with mouthfuls of Purina trout chow, their preferred snack. Koi, which look like oversize goldfish to the uninitiated, live to be as old as 200 years, you learn, and a fine specimen can cost as much as \$250,000.

Four members learn many facts. For example: Before 1819, women were not permitted to eat most fish in Hawaii, which were reserved for men; and ancient Hawaiians ate nearly all possible fish except one, called a "death-death" fish, which is today a gourmet item on Japanese menus. (And a potential killer of the unwary diner if the chef is unskilled.)

You'll learn to identify a whiskered goatfish and the Hawaiian national fish, a triggerfish, and you'll see a plump puffer fish grow even larger when threatened. Along the walk you'll see fish that are orange and powder blue, others as red as an apple or as yellow as a lemon, and some that are pink.

The three green sea turtles on permanent loan from the

National Marine Fisheries Service are the biggest attractions — two 150-pounders and a baby — which are waiting at feeding time, their heads out of the water, begging like an old hound for a bone.

As you feed these magnificent endangered creatures you'll learn a lot about them as well. They can hold their breath for two or more hours underwater, make long migrations to deserted Leeward Hawaiian islands to breed, grow to 400 pounds and live more than 40 years.

You also learn to love these gentle creatures, and to appreciate all the rainbow fish flashing about in the many ponds and waterfalls of Mauna Lani.

After the tour you can go back to all the tropical vacation activities such as golf and tennis, and dress up that night for dinner at the elegant and formal Third Floor restaurant. But the next day, I wager, you'll be back with Kaniela Akaka, walking along the ponds feeding your new-found friends their breakfast.

If you go:

For more information, write the Mauna Lani Bay Hotel, P.O. Box 4000, Kohala Coast, Hawaii 96743. Or call toll-free 800-992-7987. Rates at the Mauna Lani Bay range from \$195 to \$295.