

# GREEN SEA TURTLES RELEASED AT TURTLE BEACH, MAKAHA

by Sharon Hendrix

During September, 1981, the National Marine Fisheries Service Honolulu Laboratory released a total of 165 green sea turtles (*Chelonia mydas*) at various coastal sites on Oahu, Kauai, Maui, Hawaii and French Frigate Shoals. On Sept. 24, 15 of the green sea turtles were released at Turtle Beach on our Waiānae coast. The released turtles were one year old, weighed about 8 lbs. and were involved in the "headstart" project. The project involved obtaining turtle hatchlings at French Frigate Shoals (where green sea turtles go to breed) and transporting these turtles back to Sea Life Park for one year of rearing. The turtles were experimentally marked by surgically grafting small pieces of white tissue into the hatchling's black shells.



Jeanine Ortogero and her daughter Makani carry one of the young turtles to its new ocean home.

The "headstart" project offers potential for aiding the recovery of depleted turtle populations. According to Marty "Smitty" Smith and Wil Pickett and the Cabanas, green sea turtles were often seen at Turtle Beach, however, through man's over-exploitation and habitat encroachment, the green sea turtle population has declined here and throughout the islands.

The green sea turtle is currently protected under the U.S. Endangered Species Act and the wildlife regulations of the State of Hawaii. It is hoped that the turtles released in the "headstart" project will become part of the breeding colony when they mature into adults. Green sea turtles can take as long as 10-60 years to grow into adulthood, and are usually 36 inches in shell length.

November 1981

about 200 lbs. in weight and feed mostly on limu.

Scientists have much to learn about the green sea turtle and hope that the "headstart" project will demonstrate that restocking is a valuable conservation practice ("headstart" projects are currently in practice in several areas of the world). All of the young turtles that have been released are individually identified with a small numbered metal tag attached to a front flipper. Information from the public on the sightings of these tagged turtles will be appreciated.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, TELEPHONE WILLIAM GILMARTIN OR GEORGE BALAZS AT NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE 946-2181.

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The Leeward Cable & Communities Publication

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Country Livin' is published monthly and is the only regular newspaper or magazine published exclusively for the Leeward Communities. Issues are mailed to Makaha, Waiānae, Maīli Nanakuli, and selected homes in Honokai Hale, Makakilo and Ewa Beach. Country Livin' features articles of specific and general interest to residents living in these areas as well as complete listings of daily cable programs and Pay TV entertainment provided by Cablevision, Inc. and Home Box Office.

**COVER PHOTO:** A scene from "The Glass Menagerie" featuring WHS Drama Club members Jerry Michaelson, Monique Tremblor and Anna Ibanez (background). Photo by Richard Tanaka.

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13,500 copies distributed free via mail to residences throughout the Waiānae Coast and to selected portions of Makakilo, Honokai Hale and Ewa Beach. Single copy rate, 50¢. Year subscription, \$5.00.

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Published by Cablevision, Inc. 87-880 Farrington Hwy., Waiānae, Hawaii, 96792.  
Telephone (808) 866-2344.

Unsolicited material submitted for publication must be accompanied by a self-addressed envelope and return postage. All materials are submitted at the owner's risk. Publisher reserves the right to edit all letters and other material sent to Country Livin'. Although considerable effort is made in compiling this publication, the publisher makes no warranties and assumes no responsibility for the accuracy or completeness of the information contained.

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**PAID**  
Honolulu, Hawaii  
Permit No. 1242

# Country Living

November 1981

The Leeward Cable & Community Publication

## WHS Drama Club to Stage "The Glass Menagerie"

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## Makaha Open Golf Tournament

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☆ HBO Brings in Live Boxing  
Welterweight Title Fight: Benitez vs. Santos

See page 42 for Details

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