

Kauai's Honu Phenomenon: The Crossroads of Coexistence



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Mālama i nā Honu

THE CONTEXT

Honu on Poipu Beach

The phenomena:

- more than a century
- large numbers –post-COVID
- occurring at night
- 1-100+ guaranteed
- huddle together
- Sub-basking presence



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THE STUDY

The Poipu Phenomena = The Crossroads



Mixed Methods:
conducted over 7 months

- nightly counts
- docent questionnaire (21 respondents)
- visitor survey (101 respondents)

Quantitative Findings

December 1, 2023- June 30, 2024

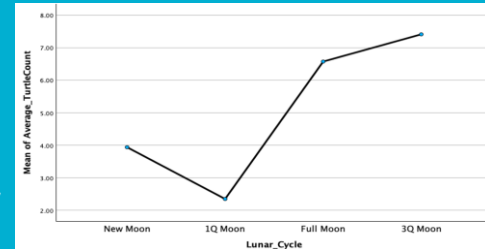
5:00 PM 1744 basking honu = avg. nightly 8
12411 visitors = avg nightly 59

9:00 PM 5969 basking honu = avg nightly 30
1626 visitors = avg. nightly 8

Higher concentration
of honu:

Temperature 75*-81*

Lunar Cycle
1st qtr. moon- least
3rd qtr. moon - most



Quantitative Findings



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There exists a strong relationship between the presence of honu and the number of visitors.

Early data suggests a relationship between the number of honu, air temperature, and the lunar cycle respectively.

Qualitative Findings



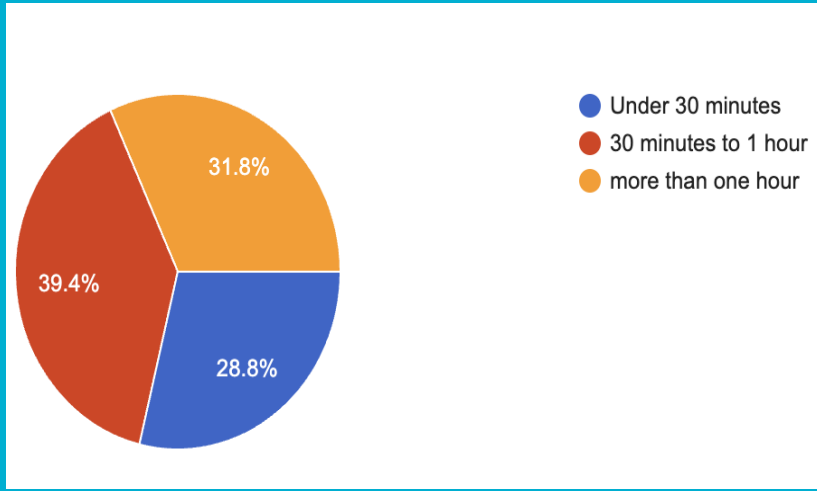
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Docent voices:

The findings from the docent surveys show the most common questions are related to; age and gender, and the reason they come to the beach.

An interesting finding was the lack of reasonable questions when wanting to know more about the phenomenon of the basking honu.

Qualitative Findings



How long did your stay to view the turtles?

Visitor voices:

How did you hear about this phenomena?

20% Social media

36 % word of mouth

23% Found on their own

5% tour operator

16% other means

When looking at the data, it is presupposed, that *what we do not know we do not know*. If the growing number of visitors do not understand the phenomena of wildlife on the beaches (in Hawaii), we run the risk of harm to the basking honu population.

Recommendations



Further research to better understand factors related to coexistence with a narrower focus:

- Honu to People- Collect data at more precise intervals
- Lunar cycle- relationship feeding patterns
- Number of Honu- collect air temperatures (*Poipu Beach*) at intervals

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Recommendations



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Further research and support for educational opportunities that highlight:

- the impact of coexistence on this beach; and
- provide general proactive public information on the beach and with county partnerships and federal organizations

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the dedicated
Mālama i nā Honu docents of Kauai who
input data nightly and consistently, for 7
months and running! We appreciate you!!

Special thanks to Peter Rath for the
amazing photographs of our beautiful honu.



Questions

CONTACT INFORMATION



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