

Class - Gelid  
Genus - Gelidium  
Species -

May 6, 1974

Dear Mr. Balazs,

Thank you for your letter of April 20 and especially for all your effort in preserving marine Turtles in Hawaiian waters.

I was a turtle fisherman for over thirty years with an approx. catch of one thousand turtles, and all was used for home consumption. Despite the fact that my family and I are heavy users of turtle meat, we favor regulation 36 with reservations. I believe that regulation 36 has not gone far enough in guaranteeing the protection of the turtles. However it will help, as the regulation is headed in the right direction. I did make some of my objections known in my testimony at both public hearings. Because regulation 36 has already passed, I will not go into detail.

I have heard from various people that you are an expert on turtles, here in Hawaii. I am enclosing a piece of sea weed that I know turtles especially favor.

I know this for a fact <sup>and</sup> ~~and~~ <sup>have</sup> cleaned many a ~~turtles~~ <sup>box</sup> and have also cleaned ~~many~~ <sup>intestines</sup> and have noticed an abundance of this <sup>red</sup> seaweed in its gut. I have also noticed that all ~~eggs~~ <sup>eggs</sup> does not appear to develop at the same time. I notice in the years of slaughtering turtles, especially in the months of Aug. and September, four or five eggs are ping pong ball size or nearly so, and the rest of the egg taper down to about one eight inch in diameter, which shows that the eggs appear to develop one or two at a time. I have also noticed that when the female has eggs there is an abundance of green fat, about one inch thick on the upper shell. While I catch turtles in my area (Paia-Kahului) and I do fish clear around Maui, I notice all large turtles are found ~~res~~ <sup>res</sup> only near sandy beaches. It appears that the higher the cliffs on the shoreline, the smaller the turtles.

In the years that I've caught turtles I have learned a lot about their habits and ways. If I can be of any assistance, write me and I'll be glad to help. Aloha  
Rene Sylva

Rene Sylva

P.O. Box 218

Paia, Maui 96779

Nanuwai

Waiwai eole

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Mr. Rene Sylva  
P. O. Box 218  
Paia, Maui 96779

Sept 24, 1974  
Paia, Maui

Dear Mr. Balazs,

In response to your questions about nesting sights here on Maui, I know of no nesting sights any where on Maui. On your second question about the metal tags of captured sea turtles by me, in all the years of almost a thousand turtles that I was involved with ~~tags~~, none were ever captured with tags. However my last turtle caught was in 1970, when I caught five. Since then I have voluntarily stopped catching turtles and have destroyed my nets. Your third question about the hawksbill turtle. I am positive I've caught some in the past, but because there are lots of different people involved with the catching and slaughtering, I cannot recall the details. Your fourth question on tumors. Yes, I do recall catching several over the years, especially one that I caught in 1964 or 65. I remember this particular turtle because of the bad state of deterioration. We had three or four turtles that day, and I recall this huge male turtle in our net. As we brought the turtle on board our boat, it was in such a poor state, with tumors about the size of golf balls around the edges of his eyes mouth and around the edges of his shell and wings. The bottom shell was partially colapsed and badly concaved. Some of the tumors were bleeding. The turtle was still alive and I ordered the turtle thrown over board. However an old time turtle fishermen, who was also aboard and who was catching turtles since the early 1920's requested that I give him the turtle, that there was nothing wrong with it. He and his family did eat the turtle and he is still in good health today. On your last question about jigging. I'm not familar with this technique, and do not believe it was used in our area. I'm very interested in learning about further protection on Green Sea Turtles. I agree with you that the green sea turtle should become an endangered species. Please provide me with information on who and where to write and I will send testimony in favor of putting the green sea turtle on the endangered list. Thank you for all your efforts to preserve the green sea turtle.

Aloha  
Rene Sylva.

*Rene*