

COMMON NAME: Hawksbill Turtle

HAWAIIAN NAME: *Honu'ua*

SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Eretmochelys imbricate*

LEGAL STATUS: Endangered (Federal/State). Endangered IUCN Red List. Protected under CITES.

APPEARANCE: Hawksbill turtles are a small to medium sized marine turtle; averaging two and a half feet in length and weighing 100 to 150 pounds (can grow as large as 200 pounds). The top shell is dark to golden brown with streaks of orange, red and black with a serrated back and overlapping thorny scales or plates. The bottom shell is clear yellow. They usually have 2 claws on each of their 4 flippers. Head is elongated and tapers to a point with a beak-like mouth.



HABITAT: Hawksbill turtles frequent rocky areas, coastal reefs, shallow coastal areas and estuaries, and prefer water less than 65 feet deep.

DIET: Hawksbill turtles are often associated with the coral reef community and feed primarily on sponges, other invertebrates, and algae.

REPRODUCTION: Hawksbill turtles nest in the MHI, predominantly on the Island of Hawai'i at the same beaches where they were born. Females nest every 2 to 3 years after they mature at about 30 inches in size (age unknown). Females lay an average of 3 to 5 nests (or clutches) of approximately 130 eggs each every 14 to 16 days. Eggs incubate for 2 months before hatching.

THREATS: Threats to all of Hawai'i's sea turtles include: loss of foraging and nesting habitat due to climate change (sea level rise), development, and pollution; recreational beach use (including nest damage by recreational vehicles); predation of eggs and hatchlings by mongoose, free-roaming cats and pigs; coastal development; beach erosion; artificial lighting; boat collisions; entanglement in fishing gear and marine debris; incidental take in sport and commercial fisheries; poaching; military testing and training activities on beaches; and the fibropapilloma virus.

MCBH OCCURENCE: Although no hawksbill turtles have been officially recorded within areas of MCBH jurisdiction, the environmental conditions are favorable for their presence. An October 2016 nesting on Bellows AFS (adjacent to MCTAB) was suspected to be a hawksbill turtle.

MCBH CONSERVATION MEASURES

Management activities aimed at maintaining ecosystem health benefits these species indirectly, such as implementing measures to minimize erosion and polluted run-off and invasive species removal.

Predator Control.

Sea Turtle Monitoring. Natural Resources staff monitor for and record occurrences of sea turtle activity. Ability to monitor more frequently is constrained by personnel availability, vehicle availability, and the fact that there are miles of shoreline to monitor, much of which is currently accessible only by foot. MCBH consults with NOAA Fisheries and USFWS as necessary. Information collected during monitoring includes: survey date, turtle activity (e.g., nests, false crawl, non-nesting

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excavation, observation of adults), general location of nests, approximate size and age (adult/juvenile), and other noteworthy observations (e.g., tumors, tag).

- MCBH Kaneohe Bay Shorelines: Pyramid Rock, 2,000 ft; North Beach, 5,300 ft; Fort Hase, 6,300 ft with (3,100 ft within Wildlife Management Area)
 - Efforts will be made to enlist support from volunteers, water safety personnel, and NOAA monk seal volunteers to gain more visual coverage of Mōkapu Peninsula beaches.
 - Monitor all beaches at least 1x/week year-round for green sea turtles coming ashore to bask. Opportunistic monitoring will supplement routine monitoring.
 - During nesting season (May 15-Sep 30), monitor Fort Hase Beach (site of 2015 nesting) 2-3x/week.
 - Monitor any discovered nests 2-3x/week. Within 2 weeks of eggs hatching, monitor every other day or daily if personnel availability and time permits.
- MCTAB Shoreline [5,000 ft]
 - Will seek to enlist the support of Bellows Air Force Station (AFS) to help monitor MCTAB's shoreline.
 - Monitor once a week for green sea turtles coming ashore to bask.
 - Monitor 1-2x a week if a nest is discovered, more frequently if conditions allow.
- Pu'uloa RTF Shoreline [2,950 ft]
 - The Range's beach guards monitor Pu'uloa's restricted beach almost daily to prevent unauthorized access.
 - The beach is highly eroded, very narrow, and inland movement is restricted by impact berms.
 - On the rare occasions a green sea turtle comes ashore on the beach at Pu'uloa, it would be reported.

Wildlife Friendly Lighting.

Beach Management/Shoreline Protection.

Sea Turtle Protection Zones. Any incidences of basking or nesting sea turtles should be reported to the military police at (808) 257-2123.

Marine Debris Removal.

Access Restrictions.

Protocols for Military Maneuvers and Large-scale Recreational Events.

Injured/Dead Response.

Educational Outreach.



For more information: MCBH Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan. 2016. Sections 4, 6, 7.4, 7.6, 7.7, 8, Appendix C & D.

PHOTOS

1. Nick Caloyianis. <http://animals.nationalgeographic.com/animals/reptiles/hawksbill-turtle/>