

## The Hawaiian Green Sea Turtle

Sydney

The Hawaiian Green Sea Turtle is also named *Chelonia mydas*. The Green Sea Turtle is listed endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature. The Hawaiians used the green sea turtle for their food, tools, and ornamentation.

The green turtle is the largest hard-shelled sea turtle. Hatching weighs about 25 grams. The female can weigh 115 kg. The male weighs 150 kg. George Balazs estimates that the age of the Hawaiian Green Sea Turtle is 11 years to 59 years old.

Female green turtles emerge at night to deposit their eggs, the process taking about an average of two hours. They can lay about 100-110 eggs. When green sea turtles navigate they know where they are going. The earth's magnetic field plays a good role. The earth's magnetic field helps the green sea turtle to nest their eggs. The green sea turtle that has been tagged has been coming to French Frigate Shoals to nest since 1989. Some turtles nest on the beach where they were born.

When the green sea turtles get fibropapilloma tumor they can die early. It is very common for the turtles to come to Hawaii because the climate is great, and there are many different feeding habitats. Bellows Beach, Oahu has a sandy bottom to the shore. The reefs protect the coast line from heavy surfs. The hatchlings like the warm sun on them, so that's why they come to Hawaii. They also sleep in the sun.

Only human beings and sharks feed on the turtles. Most Tiger sharks hunt adult turtles. Hatchling predators are crabs, small marine mammals, and shore birds.

Green turtles migrate long distance between feeding sites and nesting sites. Some Green turtles swim more than 1,616 miles. Females mate two to four years. At around 45 to 75 days, the eggs hatch during the night. It is very dangerous for them because there are a lot of predators. When people hurt, kill, or keep a sea turtle they will go to prison for a year and be fined for \$20,000. Only 100 to 350 female turtles nest at French Frigate Shoals.

Once there were tens of millions of green turtles, but now there are fewer than 200,000. They can weigh 200- 400 pounds. Their shell can grow to about 1 inch to about 42 inches. The Hawaiian name for the Green Sea Turtle is Honu. They are found throughout the oceans of the world. Sea turtles evolved 180 millions years ago, long before the Hawaiian islands were formed. When Christopher Columbus sailed through the Caribbean in 1503, he saw so many of them that he named the three islands Las Tortugas.

The green sea turtle are the few species that are ancient because they watched the dinosaurs evolved and become extinct. They got their name by the color of their body fat, which is green from algae or limu that they eat. You can tell the differences between the male and female by their tail. The males have long, thick tails and the females have short, stubby ones.

### Five Interesting Facts

1. It was killed for their skins, calipee, meat, and shells, but they are no longer hunted in Hawaii.
2. The hatchling are 4-5 cm. long in length.
3. Even though it is illegal, sea turtles are still hunted.
4. They are hunted because their flesh are used in turtle soup.
5. They did not get their names from their shell. They got it from their fat deposit.

## Reference

"Hawaiian Green Sea Turtles." *Kauai Vacation Rentals - Homes, Condos, Resorts, Villas, Cottages & Accommodations, Hawaii Beach Vacation Rental - Summit Pacific INC*. N.p., n.d. Web. 8 Dec. 2010. <<http://www.summitpacificinc.com/Kauai/hawaiian-sea-turtle.html>>.

"Interesting Facts." *BioWeb Home*. N.p., n.d. Web. 6 Dec. 2010. <[http://bioweb.uwlax.edu/bio203/s2007/martinel\\_meli/Interesting%20Facts.htm](http://bioweb.uwlax.edu/bio203/s2007/martinel_meli/Interesting%20Facts.htm)>.

"Let's Go Hawaii - Hawaiian Green Sea Turtle (Honu)." *Let's Go Hawaii - Big Island Vacation Guide & Travel Information*. N.p., n.d. Web. 8 Dec. 2010. <<http://www.lets-go-hawaii.com/diving/turtles.html>>.

"Sea turtles." *turtles*. N.p., n.d. Web. 6 Dec. 2010. <[www.turtles.org/hawgrnd.htm](http://www.turtles.org/hawgrnd.htm)>.

sharks, tiger, and speed. "GREEN SEA TURTLES." *Earthtrust - Wildlife Conservation Worldwide*. N.p., n.d. Web. 8 Dec. 2010. <<http://www.earthtrust.org/wlcurric/turtles.html>>.