

**WHEN VIEWING MARINE WILDLIFE
PLEASE REMEMBER:**



KEEP A SAFE DISTANCE



**BE CAREFUL NOT TO SURPRISE
MARINE WILDLIFE**



**NEVER FEED OR ATTEMPT TO
FEED MARINE WILDLIFE**



DISPOSE OF TRASH PROPERLY

**IT IS ILLEGAL TO HARASS, FEED, HUNT, CAPTURE
OR KILL WILD DOLPHINS, SEALS AND SEA TURTLES
IN THE U.S.**

**• Please report violations of federal laws to NOAA
Fisheries Enforcement statewide:**

(808)541-2727 or the NOAA Fisheries Enforcement
Hotline: (800)853-1964

• Please report all seal sightings by calling NOAA
Fisheries Service monk seal hotline at:

(808)220-7802 or email PIFSC.monksealsighting@noaa.gov

• Please report entangled or injured seals and dolphins:
(888)256-9840

• Please report sick, injured or dead sea turtles:
(808)983-5730 Mon-Fri, 7am-4pm and

(808)288- 5685 on weekends, holidays, or after hours

HAWAIIAN MONK SEAL

‘Ilio-holo-i-ka-uaua

Protect the Hawaiian monk seal, let sleeping seals lie



- It is natural for monk seals to come ashore or haul out on the beach for long periods of time. Please give them the space they need to rest and do not attempt to push them back into the water.
- Roped off areas on the beach are for your safety and their protection – please do not enter.
- If approached by a seal move away to avoid interaction. If in the ocean, cautiously exit the water.
- Pets, especially dogs, can pose a significant risk to monk seals. Please keep them on a leash when in the presence of monk seals to avoid injury or disease transmission.
- In the ocean, monk seals may exhibit inquisitive behavior. Approaching or attempting to play or swim with them may alter their behavior and their ability to fend for themselves in the wild.
- If you encounter a seal while fishing, take a short break or change locations and use a barbless circle hook.

**Cautiously move away if you observe the following
monk seal behaviors indicating it has been disturbed:**

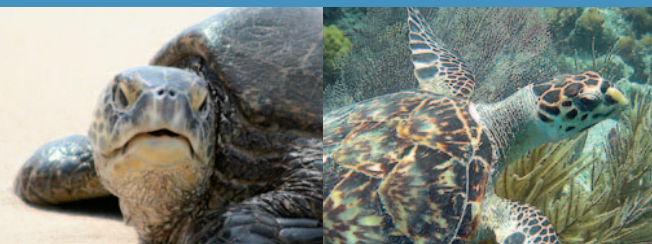
- **Female attempting to shield a pup** with her body or by her movements
- **Vocalization** (growling) or **rapid movement** away from the disturbance
- **Sudden awakening** from sleep on the beach

HAWAIIAN GREEN & HAWKBILL SEA TURTLES

Honu

Honu‘ea

Protect wild Hawaiian green and hawksbill sea turtles; show turtles aloha and keep wild turtles wild!



- Sea turtles are most often found in shallow nearshore areas also used by swimmers, divers, fishers, boaters and for other recreational activities. Use caution and give sea turtles space.
- Drive boats slowly near harbors and in shallow reef habitats to avoid interactions, disturbance and collisions.
- Sea turtles require air to breathe and will periodically surface for air. Never prevent one from surfacing to breathe.
- Sea turtles use Hawaii’s beaches to rest or to nest. Never try to push a sea turtle back into the water or pour water on it. Allow them a clear path and never block their access to land or water.
- Feeding, touching or attempting to interact with sea turtles can cause distress and adversely alter their behavior and long term survival.
- When fishing, watch your gear and check your bait after every nibble to help reduce the potential for hooking or entanglement. Use “turtle friendly” gear such as barbless circle hooks. If you accidentally hook or entangle a turtle – it’s ok to help remove gear and line if safe to do so.

HAWAIIAN SPINNER DOLPHIN

Nai‘a

Protect wild Hawaiian spinner dolphins, admire them from a distance



- Spinner dolphins use certain bays and areas close to shore that are good for avoiding predators, caring for their young and resting. Swimmers and boaters that visit wild spinner dolphins could potentially disturb a critical period of rest.
- Disturbance of these animals’ behavior may be caused by direct pursuit or from underwater sound produced by a vessel’s engines and propellers.
- Never attempt to swim with a wild dolphin. Leave the water if approached by one.
- Do not encircle or trap dolphins between boats or the shore.
- If approached by dolphins while boating; put the engine in neutral and allow them to pass.

**Cautiously move away if you observe the following
spinner dolphin behaviors indicating it has been
disturbed:**

- **Erratic swimming patterns** or rapid changes in direction or speed
- **Female attempting to shield a calf** with her body or by her movements
- **Aerial behaviors** such as leaps, spins, headslaps or tailslaps
- **Sudden stop in important breeding, nursing, feeding or resting activities** after your arrival



**MARINE WILDLIFE
VIEWING GUIDELINES**
for Hawaii

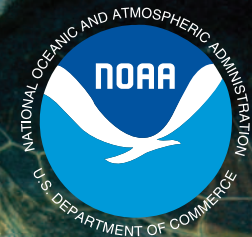
**NOAA Fisheries Service
Pacific Islands Region**

Pacific Islands Regional Office
www.fpir.noaa.gov
Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center
www.pifsc.noaa.gov



Watch from a distance...

for your safety and their protection



We're lucky to be in Hawaii where the opportunity to view monk seals, sea turtles and dolphins is increasing. It's not uncommon to share the surf with sea turtles or to share the beach with a monk seal. However, it is a privilege that comes with responsibility. Responsible wildlife viewing helps to ensure your safety and their protection and long term survival in the wild.

Stories passed from generation to generation often mention them as revered and sacred. Today, these animals are embraced by our local culture and fascinate those who are privileged to see one in the wild. View them responsibly so we can all continue to enjoy these animals!



Marine animals such as **monk seals, sea turtles** and **dolphins** are part of the **identity** of the islands and **hold a special place** in the minds and hearts of the people of Hawaii.

TIPS FOR MAXIMIZING YOUR VIEWING EXPERIENCE

KEEP A SAFE DISTANCE

- Do not chase, closely approach, surround, swim with, feed or attempt to touch marine wildlife. Never entice marine wildlife to approach you.
- Keep your distance – we recommend 150 feet. Disturbing wildlife interrupts their ability to perform critical functions such as feeding, breeding, nursing, resting or socializing.

- Use binoculars to view animals from a distance without disturbing them.

BE CAREFUL NOT TO SURPRISE MARINE WILDLIFE

- Loud noises and abrupt movements can startle and stress wildlife, which can react unpredictably, harming themselves or you.
- Use extra caution in the vicinity of mothers and their young and in other sensitive wildlife habitat such as feeding, nursing or resting areas.

NEVER FEED OR ATTEMPT TO FEED MARINE WILDLIFE

Feeding or attempting to feed marine mammals and sea turtles is prohibited under Federal law and can:

- Alter their natural behavior, make them dependent on humans, act aggressively or bite
- Deprive young animals from learning important survival skills
- Habituate them to humans and vessels, placing them at risk of injury
- Cause them to become sick or die from ingesting unnatural or indigestible food items

DISPOSE OF TRASH PROPERLY

- Improperly discarded fishing gear and other plastic items can entangle and kill marine wildlife.
- Animals can mistake plastic debris for food, which can be deadly.

FEDERAL LAWS PROTECTING WILDLIFE

MARINE MAMMAL PROTECTION ACT (MMPA)

The MMPA prohibits the “take” of marine mammals. “Take” includes actions such as hunting, harassing, killing, capturing, injuring and disturbing a marine mammal.

Hawaiian monk seals, dolphins and whales are **protected by the MMPA.**

For more information please consult the text of the MMPA at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/laws/mmpa>

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT (ESA)

The ESA prohibits the “take” of a threatened or endangered species in US territorial waters. “Take” under the ESA means to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, collect or to attempt to engage in any such conduct.

All species of **sea turtles, Hawaiian monk seals and some dolphin and whale species** are **protected by the ESA.**

For more information please consult the text of the ESA at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/laws/esa>



Watch from a distance...

for your safety and their protection



These marine wildlife viewing guidelines are intended to help you enjoy watching marine wildlife without causing them harm or placing personal safety at risk. While viewing marine animals, you should ensure that your actions do not disturb the animals you are observing. Since an individual animal's reactions will vary, carefully observe all animals and leave the vicinity if you see possible signs of disturbance.

For more information on simple things you can do to protect marine life please visit:
www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/education/viewing.htm



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