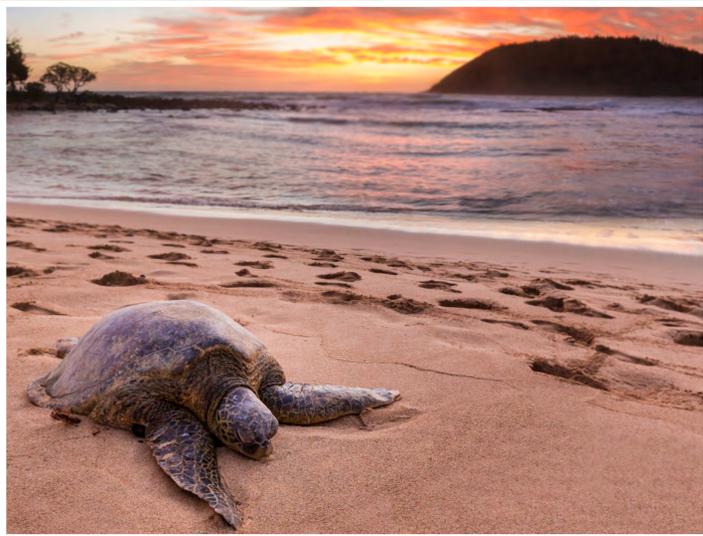


# Ke Ala Hele O Ka Honu

## *Honu Trail*

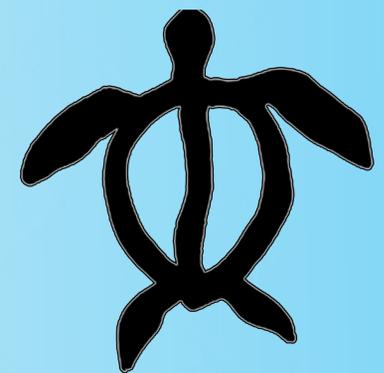


### **About the Honu**

The Honu (green sea turtle/*Chelonia mydas*) is one of Earth's most ancient creatures and has been gracing our planet for nearly 70 million years. Named for the green color of its fat, its shell ranges in color from dark olive to black. Its amazing ability to travel hundreds of miles to lay its eggs on the same beach where it was born makes it a powerful symbol of navigation in Hawaiian culture. These majestic animals can live to 80 years but many factors threaten its survival. Hawai'i has laws to protect these gentle creatures, so remember to enjoy them from a reasonable distance and never touch or feed them.

### **Honu in the Hawaiian Culture**

The Honu holds a very special place in Hawaiian culture as an 'amakua (guardian spirit) and as a symbol of mana (spiritual strength). It is mentioned in the ancient Hawaiian creation chant and in stories that tell of the Honu leading the ancient Polynesian voyagers to these islands. Hawaiian legend, as reported by historian Mary Kawena Pukui, tells the story of a mystical sea turtle named Kauila whose mother and father (named Honupo'okea and Honu'ea) used their flippers to dig deep into the sand to form a freshwater pond near the precious nest where they placed Kauila's egg. The people cherished Kauila for the drinking water her pond provided and for watching over their children as they played on the beach.



### **How the Honu Trail was Named**

This beautiful trail began as a volunteer project by a group of Texas Roadhouse Restaurant employees back in 2005. As they were clearing rocks from the path just beyond the Native Hawaiian Traditional Healing Center, members of the Kūpuna (elders) Council arrived just as the volunteers came upon a large boulder that would not budge no matter what they tried. The Kūpuna immediately could see that the boulder had the distinct shape of the sacred honu and declared, "That rock is not going anywhere!" In Hawaiian culture, all things (including rocks) have mana (life force) and this one was particularly powerful due to its shape. This inspired the trail's name and the boulder remains in its original spot while the trail gently makes its way around it.

*Honu Rock*



*Honu basking in the sun*



*Spirit of the Honu in Honu Rock*

