



MAUI NUI BOTANICAL GARDENS



Conserving Hawaiian Plants & Cultural Heritage | Fall 2020 Newsletter | Volume 53

A New Arbor Day for 2020

by Tamara Sherrill

The pandemic did not manage to slow down the 1,000 native trees that have been steadily growing for the 18th annual Arbor Day Garden Expo. With the support of Maui Electric Company (Hawaiian Electric), Maui Association of Landscape Professionals (MALP), and Kaulunani Urban and Community Forestry Program, an alternative, COVID-safe 2020 Arbor Day event will include a drive-through tree give away, tree and plant care webinars, and an island-wide nursery open house.

The event kicks off on Wednesday, November 4th with plant care presentations coordinated by MALP covering basic propagation, planting, tree care, and projects that protect trees, among other horticultural topics. Participants will be able to tune in virtually for free, as well as attend in-person workshops limited to 10 or less, through Friday, November 6th.

On Saturday, November 7th, the socially distanced drive-through tree giveaway will be held at the War Memorial Gym Parking Lot, simultaneously with open house plant sales at local nurseries.

Reserve Your Free Tree Before the Event

Visit arbordayexpo.com and look for "Click Here to Reserve Your Tree". From there, you will be able to access information about all 24 species



available and place your reservation. To reduce car wait times on November 7, you will also book a one-hour block of time for your pick-up. An email confirmation will act as your "ticket" on the day of the event.

Picking Up Your Free Tree

As you enter the parking lot, an attendant will place a colored card indicating your reserved tree on your windshield. The lot will be divided into color-coded areas with places to park and wait for our masked volunteer runners to bring the tree. No one will exit their cars during the event.

So, no more waiting in line at 8AM to make sure you can get an 'ōhia; this year you get to reserve both your tree and pickup time online, and get curbside delivery!

For more information and FAQs, visit the event website at arbordayexpo.com.

Koa tree seedlings waiting for their new homes.

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Garden News

Save the Date!

Living Wreath Making with Native Plants

Saturday, December 5

Two Sessions: 9am–12pm & 1pm–4pm

Native plants provide more than just food and habitat for wildlife: they also provide great beauty all year long! Learn to make a living wreath from Native Hawaiian plants just in time for the Holidays. This workshop will be led by MNBG Executive Director Tamara Sherrill and 'ohana.

Cost: \$50 for new members, \$25 for current garden members. Email info@mnbg.org or call 249-2798 to secure your spot.



Aloha Whit, e komo mai Alexa

Program Manager Whit Germano made the move to California with his partner Logan, after 10 dedicated years with Maui Nui Botanical Gardens. We will miss his extreme competence and uncanny ability to text the right GIF to the team in all circumstances. After interviewing many impressive candidates, we are thrilled to welcome Alexa Lasco as our new Program Manager. Alexa is a graphic designer with several years' experience as a secretary with the County of Maui.

Best of luck to Whit and Alexa as they embark on their new adventures.

Carex, Carex, Everywhere!

The elegant, understated nature of sedges is being celebrated this season at Maui Nui Botanical Gardens due to an unexpected glut of *Carex wahuensis* in our nursery. Emmely Felipe rose to the challenge, selected locations and planted more than 100 two-gallon mature plants in the landscape in three weeks. Emmely was assisted in this prodigious effort by Malia Reghi, our new Kupu member who will be serving with MNBG part-time for the next year.

Carex wahuensis is an endemic sedge without a known Hawaiian name. It is becoming more popular in local landscaping because it is easy to grow, long lived, and outcompetes many weeds. This sedge is native to dry to moist forests from low elevation mesic coastal forests, all the way up to alpine areas 8,000 feet in elevation. There are more than 2,000 *Carex* species in the world, more than any other genus in the sedge family.

How to tell a sedge (family Cyperaceae) from a grass (family Poaceae)?

"Sedges have edges" – grasses have hollow cylinders for stems; sedges have triangular solid stems. Try cutting the lower part of a stem and looking at the shape of the cut end to see which one it is.



Malia Reghi (left) and Emmely Felipe (right) with some of the *Carex* they planted.

Seed Storage Initiative Update

by Cathy Davenport

As the MNBG Seed Storage Technician, I am responsible for maintaining our Seed Bank and managing native Hawaiian seed storage projects. Seeds have fascinated me since I was a child with my own gardens. To just add water, and watch life emerge is profound. The variety of seed sizes, shapes, and dispersal mechanisms is endless. I love the work and even enjoy counting 'Ōhi'a lehua seeds, which are the size of an eyelash. It is meditative. To have a forest worth of 'Ōhi'a lehua seed on my worktable is humbling. At MNBG we are so very fortunate to have volunteers that do much needed work. To have many minds working on a project has helped us brainstorm and problem solve some seed processing challenges.

Our Seed Bank shares a role in conservation, restoration and protection of native species. In this way whole ecosystems can be safeguarded, species by species, to preserve genetic diversity and battle extinction. We focus on the four islands of Maui Nui, usually coastal species, storing seed from native wild plants (not planted



by humans). Storing seed of the beloved 'Ōhi'a lehua (*Metrosideros* sp.) is one of our top priorities. Our seed collection and seed processing protocol are in accordance with standards used at Lyon Arboretum. We facilitate projects important to a variety of organizations. Seed we store is owned by the organization, unless they state otherwise. The organization has control over who, and when, the seed can be released. They determine the purpose of the seed.

Fortunately, MNBG can continue to collect seed during Covid-19 restrictions with mitigation protocol. MNBG limits the number of staff, they travel in separate cars, wear masks and keep a safe distance while collecting seed. Another

Seeds need to be dried at varying temperatures and relative humidity depending upon whether the seed will be stored in the freezer or refrigerator.

option is for the organization to bring us the seed they collected.

This year 2020 has been a difficult time for the world. Funding for the MNBG Seed Storage Technician is threatened by the economic changes brought by COVID-19 and we are looking for new funding to support this project. The seeds, however, are safely stored for many years.

Stay safe everyone, take care of each other, and we will get through this. E mālama pono.



Left: Cathy collecting seeds of coastal 'akoko (Euphorbia degneri). Right: Tom and Marilyn of the Weed & Pot Club process seeds after collection.

Educational Partnerships

MNBG Distance Learning Resources Now Available through Maui Huliau Foundation

Maui Huliau Foundation, a nonprofit organization offering environmental education programs to Maui youth ages 12–18, has partnered with upwards of 15 local conservation organizations to launch new distance learning resources for the upcoming school year.

The project, called the “Maui Aloha ‘Āina Virtual Classroom” began providing distance learning resources aimed at grades 8–12 in August 2020. Each unit features a different partner organization with self-directed distance learning lessons both online and outdoors at various partner sites. Units feature virtual field trips created by Maui Huliau’s filmmaking students or virtual guest speakers on local conservation topics.

Maui 7th graders Somate Feiloakitau and Malakai Karaca spent many hours with Maui Huliau at Maui Nui Botanical Gardens narrating and film-



ing a virtual ethnobotany tour of MNBG’s plants that pairs with Virtual Classroom activities created by Malia Cahill and Lily Solano, who lead the project. They also filmed Executive Director Tamara Sherrill demonstrating how to make oeo (kamani nut whistles). MNBG volunteers made take home oeo kits for students to pick up so they can follow along and make their own. You can view the video if you search “Maui Nui Botanical Gardens Virtual Huaka’i” on YouTube.

Somate Feiloakitau (left) and Malakai Karaca (right) speak about various plants and their uses.

A tentative fall schedule and enrollment information for students can be found on Maui Huliau Foundation’s newly launched virtual classroom web page: mauihuliaufoundation.org/classroom

“Pots That Rot”: MNBG Featured in Hawaii Youth Sustainability Challenge

Kupu & Kōkua Hawai’i Foundation just launched the 2020-2021 Hawai’i Youth Sustainability Challenge (HYSC), a program that empowers Hawai’i youth to create solutions to challenges facing their schools and communities. As a preview and kick-off to this event, an idea submitted by Maui Nui Botanical Gardens, “Pots That Rot,” was featured out of the more than 50 ideas submitted:

“MNBG grows hundreds of plants in lightweight plastic pots from 2” size to 3 gallon size. Larger pots can be re-used a few times, but ultimately all of them wind up in the landfill. Plastic is cheap, lightweight, durable, and holds moisture well. What could nursery plant pots be made from that have these same qualities but are greener? For example, compostable pots from a locally sourced material?”

Garden and Nursery Manager Chris d’Avella and Kupu member Vanessa Scott recorded a video explaining how using plastic pots is not much different from drinking from single use water bottles. They showed students what they need from our nursery pots and encouraged them to find a compostable material that would last at least two years. Executive Director Tamara Sherrill presented this to students across the state and showed examples of what types of indigenous materials are long lasting and durable. Hawai’i high school students who enter the Sustainability Challenge, where they can select this and other challenges, will receive funding up to \$1,000, mentorship, and training. To learn more about the Hawai’i Youth Sustainability Challenge, go to kupuahawaii.org/hysc.



Chris d’Avella (left) and Vanessa Scott (right) sharing about MNBG’s nursery pots.

MNBG is seeking donations towards a \$500 cash prize for the local 9th–12th grade student team chosen as the winner of our “Pots that Rot” Kickoff challenge! To donate towards this prize, visit mnbg.org. Click the yellow “donate” button, and write “Pots that Rot” in the special instructions section. Mahalo!

With Gratitude from Our Garden

- Printers INC. / Wailuku Rapid Print for sponsoring MNBG's Spring Newsletter Printing
- Lorna Hazen for Arbor Day 2020 donation of hala pepe, kulu'i, *Kokia drynarioides*, and *Hibiscus waimeae*
- Diane Carr for a portable electronic speakerphone
- Gloria Adlawan for garden pruners
- Maggie Sniffen for plates and forks
- Paula Loomis for hala mats and manure
- Kimo Hueo of Café O Lei at the Dunes for 10 5-gallon buckets.

MNBG's Contributions to the Community

- Weekly Community Giveaways of kō, 'ōhai, 'ihi, ti, 'uala, and kalo huli,
- Ka'ehu Bay (kō)
- Keālia Pond National Wildlife Refuge (*Carex wahuensis*, nehe, 'uki'uki, hau, 'ihi, ti)
- Paki Cabatingon (wauke, kō)
- Hawaiian Islands Land Trust Waihe'e Coastal Restoration Site ('ōhai)

Mahalo to our Interns & Volunteers

- MEO Youth Services
- Ka'ehukai Molitau
- Kailei & Tyler Aina
- Marvin Rudolph
- Traci Kala
- Clement Antonio
- Tiana Lewis
- MNBG's Weed & Pot Club
- Vanessa Scott
- Mālia Reghi

Wish List

MNBG is currently in search of the following items to help support our conservation goals. Please call us at (808) 249-2798 if you are willing to donate any of the following items.

- Dehydrator for making Taro Flour
- Garden gloves (all sizes)
- Hand pruners (clippers)
- HawaiianMiles (for interisland travel for staff training)
- Leaf shredder
- Medium sized picks
- Outdoor tables & chairs
- PowerPoint projector
- Rakes (leaf or landscaping)
- Shovels
- Sickles
- Wood chipper
- Umbrellas

Check out MNBG's Amazon Wish List:
<http://a.co/eWBZKw3>

Note: We are no longer accepting drop offs of used plastic pots. If you have new or used cement or ceramic pots to donate, please give us a call and we will be happy to arrange a pick up.



Mahalo Weed & Pot Club for all you do!

- | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
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MAUI NUI BOTANICAL GARDENS

Location

150 Kanaloa Ave., Keōpūolani Park, Kahului
Across from the War Memorial Sports Complex

Hours of Operation

Tuesday–Saturday, 8am–4pm*
Closed Sunday, Monday, and Major Holidays
**Weather permitting*

Group Reservations

Reservations are required for group activities.

Contact Information

Mailing: P.O. Box 6040, Kahului, HI 96733
Phone: (808) 249-2798
Fax: (808) 249-0325
Email: info@mnb.org
Web: www.mnb.org

Mission Statement

The mission of the Maui Nui Botanical Gardens is to foster appreciation and understanding of Maui Nui's plants and their role in Hawaiian cultural expression by providing a gathering place for discovery, education, and conservation.

Save a Tree!

If you would like to receive your newsletters via email, please email us at info@mnb.org. You may also view them on our website: mnb.org.

We are extremely grateful to all who have made donations the Gardens over the years. We make every effort to assure an accurate membership list; however, if your name was omitted or misspelled, please contact us at info@mnb.org and we will be happy to update our records.

Follow Us!

Follow MNBG on social media for the latest information on:

- Workshops
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- Giveaways
- MNBG's Plant of the Day



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Maui Nui Botanical Gardens

P.O. Box 6040

Kahului, HI 96733

Arbor Day is coming! Visit arbordayexpo.com



Hala signifies a time of transition.

During this time of rapid change, please consider helping us make up for revenue losses as a result of the pandemic.

Donate

Donations of monetary or in-kind contributions are greatly appreciated. To contribute, please fill out the enclosed donation envelope, call 249-2798, or donate online at mnbg.org.

Membership

Yearly memberships help to fund important botanical and educational programs, research and conservation efforts. Fill out the enclosed donation envelope or call 249-2798 to become a member.

Leave a Legacy

Play a lasting part in protecting Hawai'i's native plants through planned giving. Consider making a bequest to the Maui Nui Botanical Gardens in your will or trust.

Learn More

Our work conserving Native Hawaiian plants through seed storage and crop cultivar collections is highlighted in a short video created during our closure. Visit mnbg.org to see the people and projects that need your support.

Mahalo to Forest & Kim Starr for their photo.

(808) 249-2798 | info@mnbg.org | www.mnbg.org