



MAUI NUI BOTANICAL GARDENS



Conserving Hawaiian Plants & Cultural Heritage | Fall 2022 Newsletter | Volume 57

Ka Palupalu o Kanaloa Returns to Kanaloa Avenue

by Tamara Sherrill,
Executive Director



"It is my understanding that the island of Kaho'olawe is shaped like the fetus of a child, with his head at Hanakanaea and his rear at Hakioawa. The piko and umbilical area is located around Kaneloa Gulch which is north of 'Ale'ale. I find it of profound coincidence that during this 1992 equinox of spring, which brings a new awakening to life and birth, I should find myself using my umbilical climbing line...and witness myself descending to the mother sea...Just a week before this I had broken a finger and cracked a few ribs in the remote Hanawi of East Maui, yet I had the strength to ascend 'Ale'ale. In pure honesty, I believe there was, and is, another power at work here, which has very little to do with me. An ancient psalm rolled through my mind ...Then I saw the Kanaloa, and time was no longer, I call it sacred time, and there before me was another being I've never seen."
(Wood, 1992, unpublished report).

This description was written by National Tropical Botanical Gardens botanist Ken Wood about his first encounter with an endemic Hawaiian plant genus and species not previously known to modern science. Ultimately it was given the scientific name *Kanaloa kahoolawensis*, and in Hawaiian, given the name Ka Palupalu o Kanaloa (the gentleness of Kanaloa). Kaho'olawe is a kino lau (body form) of Kanaloa and Kanaloa is another name for the island. The National Tropical Botanical Gardens on Kaua'i made many propagation efforts and were ultimately able to grow a few seedlings to full maturity in large, 50-gallon redwood planters starting in 1992. Wood and other researchers used pollen collected from these cultivated plants to confirm that, "...through many pollen core samples collected from the Hawaiian Islands... (in addition to Kaho'olawe,) Kanaloa also occurred on O'ahu, Kaua'i, and Maui. The pollen core data suggest that Kanaloa favors an arid or semiarid environment and has been found as high as 518 meters (1,700 feet). Early Pleistocene samples from the dry 'Ewa Plain of O'ahu contain up to 27% Kanaloa pollen. This sug-

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Above: 'Ale'ale Islet, Kaho'olawe. Photo courtesy of Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC)

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Top, from left: Ka Palupalu o Kanaloa at MNBG in 2010; flowering Ka Palupalu o Kanaloa; and seed and pod (photo by Anna Palomino). **Bottom, from left:** Anna Palomino with new seedlings; Michael Stevens and Tamara Sherrill potting up a seedling from Anna; and redwood planters to allow for full growth at MNBG.

KA PALUPALU O KANALOAO Continued from Page 1

gests that during that period Kanaloa was a major component of the flora along with the *Pritchardia* palms..." (Wood 1998, *The Status of Kanaloa kahoolawensis*)

Many native Hawaiian plants are well documented in Hawaiian oral and written history. Ka Palupalu o Kanaloa is not one of them. Human disruptions, first with human settlement, then with the introduction of feral ungulates, and finally the immense destruction caused by the U.S. Navy using Kaho'olawe as a bombing range from 1941 to 1994, had pushed what was left of any remaining Ka Palupalu o Kanaloa in the wild to only two individuals by the time modern botanists rediscovered it. This is not rare for native Hawaiian plants. Many remain only in refugia like botanical gardens and in wild places that keep animals and humans away. Offshore islets, massive cliffs, and kipuka surrounded by jagged a'a lava are some of the places where we find these fragments of what was. In 1992, the same year of Kanaloa rediscovery, the State of Hawai'i designated Kaho'olawe as a natural and cultural reserve and the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission was created to plan for the island's future. Military operations were ordered by the U.S. Federal Government to cease in 1992, but island ownership was not transferred back to the State until 1994. From rediscovery through spring of 2020, thousands of hours of efforts had only produced a few seedlings in cultivation at any one time, plus two

rooted cuttings, and in 2015 the last wild plant was declared dead.

Thanks to efforts by many, but most notably Anna Palomino of Olinda Rare Plant Facility (DOFAW/DLNR), the first seedlings ever produced from cultivated plants are now making their way to a range of Maui sites to be nurtured. In total there are now 22 individual plants in existence, all on Maui. In September of 2022, three seedlings came to Maui Nui Botanical Gardens to mature and be encouraged to reproduce. Our organization has previous experience growing one individual at Maui Nui Botanical Gardens from 2008 to 2021. This experience revealed some contradictions of the unique genus. Despite the Gardens being located on Kanaloa Avenue, we have no special advantages, and that individual succumbed to disease after 13 years. Although the species was found growing on a sea stack right next to the ocean, it can easily overheat in cultivation. Although it can flower profusely, the compound flower heads rarely have the female flowers essential for making viable seeds. Since the puffball, koa-like flower heads are either male or both male and female on the same inflorescence, the rare females are extremely well hidden among the many males. This makes it challenging to cross pollinate between individuals, which is necessary for rebuilding a robust new population from so few founders. Ka Palupalu o Kanaloa survived nearly the complete annihilation of the last island it inhabited, yet the "genetic bottlenecking" when a population decreases to two wild plants

makes it particularly susceptible to introduced diseases and pests, the production of unviable embryos, and other problems.

Another risk to mitigate is protection in case of high winds, now more likely due to climate change. With funding from the Hawai'i Tourism Authority, Botanic Gardens Conservation International, and Makena Golf and Beach Club, MNBG was able to construct planters for all host sites, and hurricane protection for the three plants that will now be living at MNBG on public display. The 50-gallon planters are on wheeled tracks that can be pushed into the existing open concrete huts that were once animal housing for the County Zoo. Frames and pre-cut plywood are in place for quick assembly, and the roofs have hurricane clips. The remaining funds will be used to make signage telling the story of the species, and railings to protect the plants from visitors. When the seedlings being nurtured at MNBG and the other Maui sites begin to bloom, pollen exchange and hand pollination will begin with the goal of producing at least 100 viable, genetically variable seeds to return to Kaho'olawe. Coastal and lowland dry forest is severely degraded and not much is left. Rare species like Kanaloa are much more likely to return when native ecosystems are restored on all islands. Please keep Maui efforts in your thoughts as we participate in this significant effort to restore a species that symbolizes so much to ko Hawai'i pae'aina (the land and people of the Hawaiian archipelago).

Garden News

Winter Workshops

Pre-registration is required for all workshops. Register online at mnbg.org. Space is limited, but is still available as of newsletter publication date.

Lau Niu (Coconut Frond) Holiday Crafts with U'i Kahue of Maui Grown 808

Class 1: Ornaments, Toys, & Party Favors

Two Dates: Sunday, November 27th or Saturday, December 10th | 10am–12pm

Learn the basics of coconut weaving/plaiting (weave, pattern, form) while making 3 holiday gifts with natural materials of Hawai'i. Projects include a lau niu (coconut fronds) ornament set, a traditional Hawaiian

toy - the pala'ie, and lau niu party favors that can also be used for ornaments. Along the way, participants will learn about the significance of the coconut in Hawai'i. All materials and tools will be provided. Items made with lau niu often last 10 to 15 years!

Cost: \$45 for MNBG members, or \$65 for new members

Class 2: Wreaths, 'Umeke, & Wrap

Two Dates: Sunday, November 27th or Saturday, December 10th | 1pm–3pm

Learn the basics of coconut weaving/plaiting (weave, pattern, form) while making holiday gifts and gift wrap with natural materials of Hawai'i: a holiday wreath that can be re-used for any season, traditional gift wrapping using ki (often called po'ulu), and a small 'umeke or woven bowl to be placed inside our gift wrap solo, or containing another gift! Along the way, participants will learn about the significance of the coconut in Hawai'i. All materials and tools will be provided. Items made with lau niu often last 10 to 15 years!

Cost: \$45 for MNBG members, or \$65 for new members

Living Wreath Making with Native Plants

Saturday, December 3rd

Two Times: 9am–12pm & 1pm–4pm

Make a holiday wreath with living, growing native plants; cut, green and dried native plants; or both! The living wreaths made in this class will grow outdoors for months or years if watered regularly. Cut foliage wreaths need no special care. Join Executive Director Tamara Sherrill and Horticulturalist Emmely Felipe in this annual Maui Nui Botanical Gardens tradition. This class will be held twice, once in the morning and once in the afternoon.

Cost: \$45 for current MNBG members; \$70 for new members



From left: Lau niu (coconut frond) ornaments, toys, and party favors; lau niu wreath with foliage; MNBG Staff Member Karen Pollard with her granddaughter at the Living Wreath Workshop

Buy Chocolate to Support MNBG

As the holidays approach, support local and give a gift that gives back.

As a member of Maui Ku'ia Estate Chocolate's Chocolate Laulima Giving Program, MNBG receives 40% of the retail price of all purchases made on our page within the MKEC website. Purchases can be shipped or picked up from their Lahaina chocolate factory during normal open hours.



Visit <https://mauichocolate.com/collections/maui-nui-botanical-gardens> or scan the QR code to learn more.



Conservation Partnerships

Lānaʻi 'Ōhi'a Seed Collecting Trip: 2022 August 17–19

by Emmely Felipe, MNBG Horticulturalist

Maui Nui Botanical Gardens staff and volunteers; Tamara Sherrill, Cathy Davenport, Emmely Felipe, Jennifer Higashino, and Bob and Doreen Hobby spent a couple of days on Lānaʻi working alongside Kari Bogner and Jon Sprague of Pūlama Lānaʻi to collect 'Ōhi'a seeds for the ROD (Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death) Resistance Project.

Our first day, we flew over with Mokulele Airlines. I've never flown to Lānaʻi, only rode Expeditions Maui-Lānaʻi Ferry, so it was a wild experience for me! We got our Jeep rental, settled at our housing, shopped at the little market for our food at Richard's and had our lunch at The Views Four Seasons. In the afternoon, we held an 'Ōhi'a seed collection training workshop via zoom by Marian Chau (Kalehua Seed Conservation Consulting) at the baseyard office teaching some of the Pūlama folks and community members. We overviewed the different taxa of 'Ōhi'a; Lānaʻi has only 4 of the 14 types of 'Ōhi'a (*Metrosideros polymorpha* var. *glaberrima*, *Metrosideros polymorpha* var. *incana*, *Metrosideros polymorpha* var. *polymorpha* and *Metrosideros waialealae* var. *faurei*), learned how to identify the leaves using the dichotomous key, looked at the different seed zones, how to collect the data using Kobo toolbox and how to collect the seeds. After, we drove to Kānepu'u to one of the TNC (The Nature Conservancy) enclosures exploring the precious dryland forest, seeing beautiful plants such

as Olopua, 'Ohe Makai, Lama, Naio, Keahi and 'A'ali'i. Then we went to dinner at Pele's Other Garden.

Our second day, we started off doing a brief overview training of our collection kits before we got into the field. This big ānueue appeared as we were getting ready to head to our first collection location at Waiapa'a known as "Second Bench". As we were heading down the road, we stopped by to see a massive Wiliwili growing in the gulch. We went back down to the basin to drive up to Munro trail to head to Puhielele and do more collections. As we finished, the ua started to bless us for a short while. Then we visited the Kāhuli enclosure but didn't see any at the time. We then drove back to Kānepu'u to do another collection and visit the Kupuna trees of Lama, Keahi, Naio, 'Ōhi'a and the amazing pohaku landscape. We then had dinner at Lānaʻi Grill and Bar with the Pūlama folks, listening to some solid mele from Dale Kapua and seeing some of my 'Ohana.

On our last day, Jennifer and I walked through the city from our housing to the base yard, admiring everyone's cute little hale and gardens. We drove straight up to Lānaʻi Hale; of all the times I've visited the island, this was my first time being up there! We stopped by another Kāhuli enclosure and saw one bebeh snail (*Partulina semicarinata*). Since it was my first time up mauka on the island, I felt like I had to walk most of the way but drive some too. There such an array of biodiversity of 'Ōhi'a, Māmaki, 'Akia, 'Ama'u, Kolea, Olopua, Kopiko, Pūkiawe, Kanawao,

Hāhā, Loulu, Uki, Wawaiole & Maile. Had our lunch, then drove to Maunalei lookout listening to the mo'olelo of the Ahupua'a. We ended up stopping off at the graveyard to visit my Papa and then went to my Mama's house to talk story/show pictures of what I've been doing on the island. Before we left, Kari Bogner showed us the nursery of the plants she's been growing for future outplantings.

I'm grateful for experiences like this where I can continue to gain new 'ike and mana'o from an amazing group of conservation professionals. Beyond blessed to have kuleana on this island and growing my knowledge and skills of Nā mea kanu o Hawai'i. At the highest point of the island at 3,379 feet elevation, as Auntie Doreen sang a mele; glimpses of fond memories of all the places I've been to on Lānaʻi with my 'ohana & friends weather it was in town, fishing or to holoholo around, everything just came pouring through my head, and that; that is when I've felt & seen the true beauty of Lānaʻi.

Mahalo e Pūlama Lānaʻi; Kari Bogner & Jon Sprague, Maui Nui Botanical Gardens; Tamara Sherrill, Cathy Davenport, Jennifer Higashino, Bob & Doreen Hobby. Mahalo e Lānaʻi

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



From left: Emmely Felipe collecting 'ohi'a lehua seeds; a new variety of 'ohi'a lehua confirmed to be on Lānaʻi on the trip; MNBG and Pūlama Lānaʻi team scouting a gulch full of 'ohi'a lehua.



'Ohia 'ai photo courtesy of Forest & Kim Starr



GARDEN EXPO & TREE GIVEAWAY

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2022 | 9AM-3PM

FREE ADMISSION & PARKING

Maui Nui Botanical Gardens

150 Kanaloa Ave., Kahului

**Bring your donation for the Maui Food Bank
and receive a free native tree!**

- Home garden and tree care presentations by Maui Association of Landscape Professionals
- 1,000+ Hawaiian trees, one per person, any age
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'Awa: Tradition & Wellness

by Aaron Guerrero,
MNBG Grounds &
Maintenance

The human body is made up of many different systems working together that can greatly affect our quality of life from how we feel mentally and physically, to how well we are able to perform our activities of daily living. The multiple causes of stress are most likely different now than from those that were felt by humans a hundred years ago. The affects of stress on the human body have been linked to many negative impacts on our brain, muscles, joints, and organs, but cultures of the Pacific had a natural remedy that was cultivated for centuries. *Piper methysticum*, kava or 'awa, is the only plant that contains the chemicals known collectively as kavalactones. These chemicals have been found to interact with specific receptors in our brain that serve as pathways to counteract the bodily response to stress. There are six major kavalactones present and according to some research, different strains of 'awa contain different blends of the six. Although all six contribute to the stress reducing effects, some may present stronger reactions to reducing stress. Current research shows solid evidence of kavalactones reducing anxiety, and more recent studies are showing positive correlations with its anti-inflammatory effects. All these uses were known throughout ancient Oceania and here in Hawai'i, it was a staple crop that was cared for and cultivated for centuries.

In May of 2022, the Gardens hosted an 'Awa Workshop hosted and taught by Ka'iana Runnels, an avid kalo and 'awa farmer currently residing on the Big Island. This workshop covered the main differences between the known Hawaiian varieties of 'awa, as well as the differences between the South Pacific strains of kava. According to his own research, the Hawaiian 'awa supports a much more calming and controlled affect.



Mahakea variety 'awa, freshly processed by workshop participants.

The kavalactone kavain was found in higher concentrations in Hawaiian 'awa roots than those of the South Pacific. Research supports that kavain has a more profound affinity to the receptors in the brain that reduce anxiety. Ka'iana also shared knowledge of the ancient traditions and practices of 'awa consumption, as it tied to many different aspects of old Hawai'i from political warfare, business, and even ceremonial worship of major gods. It was evident that 'awa was considered a sacred plant to the ancient Hawaiians. The growing and preparation of 'awa is not an easy process. The roots are dug up, cleaned, and ground into a pulp and because it is consumed raw, much care was taken. It is then strained into fresh water and consumed. The traditions and mo'olelo that surround this sacred plant connected the person to akua and their ancestors. The misuse of this plant was highly unlikely.

There are 13 known Hawaiian 'awa varieties and Maui Nui Botanical Gardens cultivates all of them. Each has their own backstory and ancient uses. Learning about them can become a fascinating journey. Modern science is slowly updating their research to support the positive claims that this plant has on people, but the wisdom of the ancients should never be disregarded. It was discussed in the workshop that Hawai'i may very well be the home to the most refined and purest 'awa, and scientific research are beginning to support that claim. This notion of ancient elites has a growing theme here in Hawai'i, from arts and crafts to the management of our natural resources. It is possible that the focus on health and wellness could be resourced from the ancients as well. "E hānai 'awa a ikaika ka makani. Feed with 'awa so that the spirit may gain strength."



From left: Workshop participants work to cut back the 'awa plant before harvesting; Ka'iana Runnels leads participants in cleaning and processing 'awa roots; participants watch as the 'awa is strained.

MNGB's Contributions to the Community

- Community Giveaways of pā'ū o hi'iaka, 'ākulikuli, 'ala'ala wai nui, 'uki'uki, noni, 'ihi (*P. lutea*), 'ānapanapa
- Huli Distribution to Maui Community - 20 varieties
- Huli Distribution to Lāna'i Community
- Makawao Elementary School (māmaki, 'ākulikuli, koki'o 'ula'ula, 'ilima, 'olena, 'ākulikuli, pōhinahina, 'ōhi'a lehua)
- Punana Leo o Maui (ipu seeds, kalo)
- Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Lahainaluna ('awa)
- Keālia Pond National Wildlife Refuge (pā'ū o hi'iaka, 'ākia, naio, alahe'e, 'ōhelo kai, loulou, nehe, 'ōhai, hala)
- Pomaikai Elementary School (koki'o ke'oke'o, māmaki, 'olena, 'ākulikuli, pōhinahina, 'ōhi'a lehua)
- Boys & Girls Club (ēkaha, 'ōhi'a lehua, 'uala)
- Maui Food Bank ('ākulikuli, 'ala'ala wai nui, pā'ū o hi'iaka, ko'oko'olau)
- Paeloko Learning Center (noni)
- Pukalani Elementary School (hala pepe, kalo, 'olena, 'ōhi'a lehua, 'ilima, 'ōhi'a 'ai, alahe'e, ipu)
- Haleakalā Ranch ('ōhi'a lehua)

Mahalo to Our Interns & Volunteers

- Ago 'Ohana
- Ammon Thrifty
- Andrew & Rebecca Dellavilla
- Andrew Maea
- Angele Tolosa
- Ann-Kristine Thrift
- April Shiotani
- Arc of Maui
- Blade Doeller
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- Uma Chaluvadi
- Valerie Palmer
- Welina-Lani Carino

With Gratitude from Our Garden

- Maggie Sniffen for potluck supplies
- Paul Kastner for canned drinks
- Joel Helge for banana stumps for Imu Workshop
- Janet Allan for paper goods
- Jeff Gray for mulch
- Maui Arborscapes for mulch
- Maui County Dept. of Parks and Recreation for assistance with water conservation.

Wish List

MNGB is currently in search of the following items to help support our conservation goals. Please call us at (808) 249-2798 or email us at info@mnbg.org if you are willing to donate any of the following items.

- Dehydrator
- Garden gloves (all sizes)
- Hand pruners (clippers)
- HawaiianMiles (for interisland travel for staff training)
- Medium sized picks
- Outdoor tables & chairs
- Rakes (leaf or landscaping)
- Shovels
- Sickles
- Umbrellas

Check out MNGB'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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Corey Westbury
Kelsey Willison
Allison Wright
Jenny Wu
Annadele Yahiro
In Memoriam
Dr. Fern Duvall
Stanley Kawamata
Charlie Lamoureux
Gage Schubert



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
(808) 249-2798 | info@mnbg.org | www.mnbg.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@mnbg.org. You may also view them online at mnbg.org.

We make every effort to assure an accurate membership list; however, if your name was omitted or misspelled, please contact us at info@mnbg.org and we will be happy to update our records.



Photo courtesy of Hawaiian Airlines

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Maui Nui Botanical Gardens

P.O. Box 6040

Kahului, HI 96733

Arbor Day is coming! Visit arbordayexpo.com



Become a part of Maui Nui Botanical Gardens

Join us in our mission 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.

Volunteer

Join the Weed & Pot Club every Wednesday from 8:30am to 10:30am. The group spends an hour weeding and an hour potting plants in our nursery. Wear covered shoes and clothes you can get dirty.

Membership

Yearly memberships help to fund important botanical and educational programs, research and conservation efforts. Fill out the enclosed donation envelope or call 808-249-2798 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. We are now able to accept donations of stocks.

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.

Dr. Lei Ishikawa with her mo'opuna Lauka'ie'ie at the Kapa Dyes Workshop.

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