



My Hawai'i Story Project 2007

An Anthology

A collection of stories and poems
about Hawai'i's environment



Hawai'i Conservation Alliance
Leaders in Environmental Management, Research and Education



My Hawai'i

2007

An Anthology

A collection of 25 stories and poems
about Hawai'i's environment written by
Middle School students of Hawai'i

Hawai'i Conservation Alliance and The Pacific Writers' Connection
Honolulu, Hawai'i
2007

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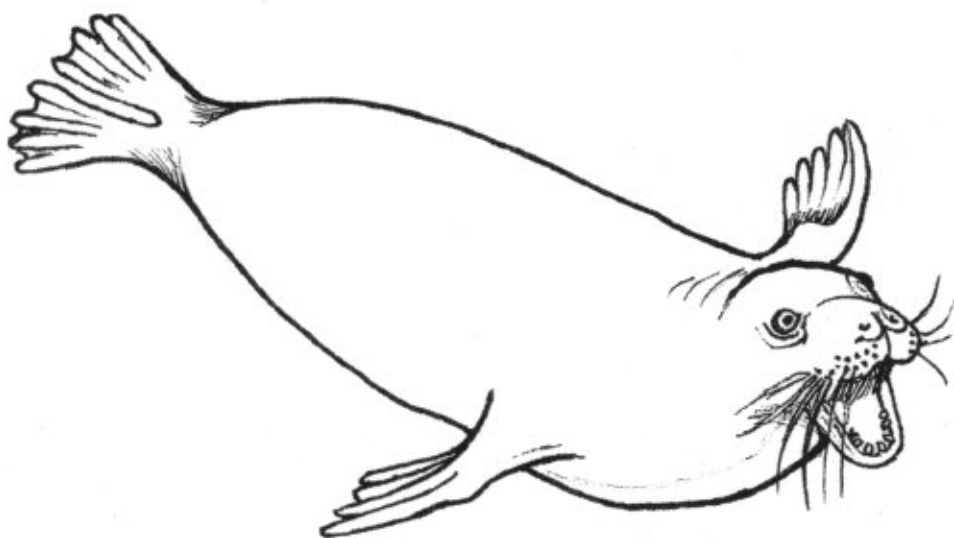
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FOREWORD

This anthology is a compilation of the 25 best literary works in the *My Hawai'i* environmental writing contest for young people. We think you will agree that we have found some really talented students in this, our first year. These 25 student writers will be presented to Governor, Linda Lingle at the Hawai'i Conservation Conference on July 25, 2007 where they will be awarded with an array of books and others prizes.

The *My Hawai'i* project is an education outreach endeavor for Middle and Intermediate schools statewide. The Hawai'i Conservation Alliance and The Pacific Writers' Connection invited all sixth through eight grade students from all public and private schools across the State to express in either a 1,000-word essay or 150-word poem, their thoughts and feelings about Hawai'i's natural environment.

This ambitious project, the first of its kind for Hawai'i, was very successful with a total of 321 entries received by the deadline on May 17, 2007. We thank all 321 students for their submissions online. Also a special thanks to the teachers who encouraged students to write as part of their class work.

A favorite theme was the sea, and particularly honu and monk seals getting caught in marine debris. Another was sewage spills and fish swimming through the sludge (ugh!). Clearly the campaigns and news events of 2007 have made their mark. On dry land the themes revolved mostly around human destruction of the native environment, lack of stewardship of the forest, and allowing weeds and pests to push native species to the brink of extinction.

The *My Hawai'i* stories we received were assessed by a panel of 33 reviewers against eight predetermined selection criteria, tallying 100 points. The reviewers had no access to the names of students, nor the schools they attended. Exceptional stories were then re-assessed to find the best 25.

Congratulations to these young writers. Of the winners this year, 22 are from schools on O'ahu, two from Kaua'i, and one from Hawai'i. The *My Hawai'i* 2007 anthology has been arranged by two themes: firstly, stories and poems about our marine environment, and secondly, stories and poems about our 'āina and our endangered plants and birds.

Finally, we hope that you all will continue to express your concern for our environment not only through your writings, but also by encouraging your peers, families and friends to care for and protect our environment for future generations. We plan to run another contest next year and encourage more young people and schools to participate.

Takiora Ingram

The Pacific Writers' Connection

Christopher F. Puttock

Hawai'i Conservation Alliance

July 2, 2007

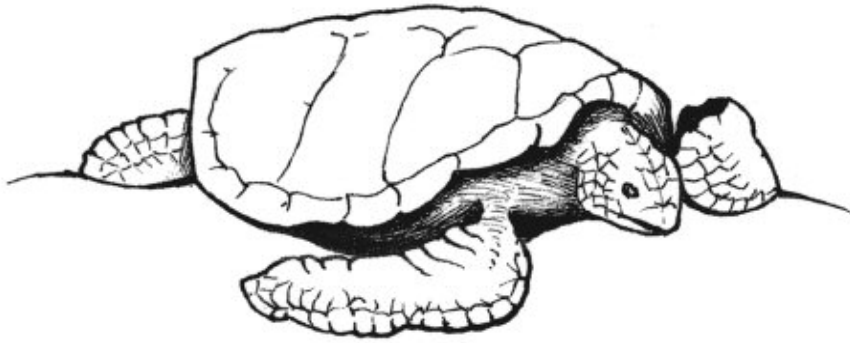
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Mahalo nui loa:

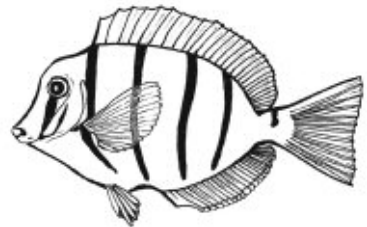
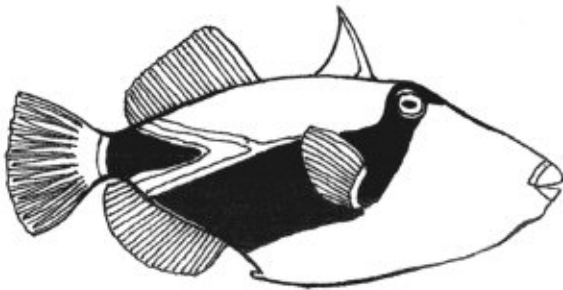
- a) to all 321 young people who submitted their writing to the *My Hawai'i* Story Project 2007. We hope you enjoyed the writing process, revising it, and filing your project electronically.
- b) to all the teachers from the 26 schools (Connections Public Charter School, Highlands Intermediate School, Iao Intermediate School, Iolani School, Kahuku Intermediate School, Kailua Intermediate School, Kalakaua Middle School, Kalama Intermediate School, Kamehameha Schools (Hawai'i), Kamehameha Middle School (Kapalama), Ka'u Intermediate School, Ke Kula 'O Nawahiokalani 'Opu'u, Kealakehe Intermediate School, Kona Christian Academy, Kula Intermediate School, La Pietra Hawai'i School for Girls, Le Jardin Academy, Myron B. Thompson Academy., Na'au, Prince David Kawanakoa Middle School, Sacred Hearts Academy, Saint Joseph Elementary School, Saint Joseph Junior and Senior High School, Samuel Enoka Kalama Intermediate School, Waimea Middle PCC School, Word of Life Academy), and home-schooling parents, that participated. Thank you for taking this on this project as part of the English and Science Standards. We truly appreciate your encouragement of our contestants.
- c) to the panel of 33 reviewers (A. Blackwell, J. Boynton, N. Bustos, K. Cassity, P. Chinn, C. Coleman, S.O. Gon III, P. Ha, J. Hawkins, B. Higa, T. Hutton, T. Ingram, C. Knutson, D. Kokubun, I. MacMillian, J. Mahi Erickson, B. McCreary, J.K. McCreary, K. O'Neil, A. Patel, A. Pickens, J. Piontek, C. Proctor, C.F. Puttock, P. Schatz, M. Soong, F. Stewart, J. Sturdivant, L. Taddonio, J. Teleia, J. Tenbruggencate, J. Wanger, and W. Wilkinson) for your hard work in assessing so many papers in such a timely fashion, for many of you struggling with a new computer system and its complications.
- d) to our sponsors and supporters in this student writing project:

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OUR MARINE ENVIRONMENT



Golden Lau'ipala Drifts

A young
yellow tang
gliding
over the lively reef
with his friends
searching
for some delicious algae
on the calm Kona Coast
of the Big Island of Hawai'i.

Many keiki
spot them from shore
as the yellow tang
wanders
along the reef
in its citrine glory
dancing
through the iridescent waters
finally finding
the treasure
he deserves!
A colony of algae!

Mmmm!
the crunchy,
salty,
savory,
taste
of the most
delicious
food in the world!
Believe me
I know.

He is too happy to beware.

Little tang,
watch out
for the giant
spotted
moray eel
who wants
to eat you!

by Jessica Amii
Na'au, a Place for Learning

Lea's Kōkua

Lea sat in the car, polluting as the little Volkswagon pattered along the Pali Highway.

"Why can't we adopt an animal at the Honolulu Zoo, like the next door Shuman family?" she asked again. Patiently, her mother kindly explained again to the little 8-year-old girl.

"Lea, not all our island people have enough money to adopt a lion, or a tiger, even if it is good for the animals, but everybody in Hawai'i can make a difference in the world, even the keiki," Mrs. Kamaka said.

It was very early in the morning, Mr. Kamaka's favorite time to go surfing. The family parked in the empty parking lot at San Souci and headed for the beach. Lea wandered toward the rock wall.

"Don't go too far," said her mother. Lea noticed something grey in the distance that didn't look like part of the wall. Having read about endangered animals, she became curious. It was a monk seal. Lea was in awe. She wanted a better look, but remembered there were certain rules that protected the endangered species. She knew that after the conservation officers had been alerted, a yellow caution tape would mark the distance she had to stay away from the extraordinary creature so it would not be disturbed. She stood back, hoping not to be in the seal's way. To her horror, Lea noticed the seal had deep cuts along the side of its tummy, as well as a plastic six-pack ring seemingly tangled around its left front flipper, Lea looked around, and noticed other litter, plastic bags and bits of wrappers lying on the beach. She saw a sea bird trip through a piece of old fishing net and wanted desperately to help it, but the bird stumbled and flew off when Lea drew near.

Lea looked deeply into the seal's beautiful sad eyes.

"Hey there, good morning. But it doesn't feel like a very good morning to you does it, poor thing."

The seal looked back sadly in agreement.

"I would like very much to help get that plastic ring off of your flipper, but you are

endangered, and I think it would be against the law for me to get too much closer, I hope you understand..."

Again, the seal seemed to understand in a sad manner.

Just in time, Lea's mother appeared.

"Lea, I've been looking all over for you. Who is your new friend? The poor thing! We must call the State Conservation Officers so they can properly care for this precious sea creature."

Lea was relieved. Soon the officials arrived, and the Kamakas joined a growing number of beachgoers as the officials carefully inspected the monk seal, cared for its wounds, and removed the plastic ring. Then, they marked an area around the seal with yellow tape, beyond which trespassers could not wander. At nightfall, Lea's family convinced her to go home despite her pleas to spend the night with her new friend.

As the family made its way back through the Pali tunnel, Lea began thinking about the day's events, especially about the seal. She thought about how gently the officers cared for the creature and about the sad look in the seal's eyes. She hoped the seal would never have to deal with anything like this again.

Suddenly an idea crossed her mind. Perhaps the cuts and the ring and the tripping bird could all have been prevented. If only people would not litter. Our land, our seas, and our creatures, endangered and human, would be so much healthier.

The following day at school Lea invited her friends to come to the beach with her every weekend to pick up debris and trash on the shores. She encouraged others to do the same. Lea realized that small and thoughtful actions have large and helpful effects, and that one person can help change the world. Her mother was right: "Everybody in Hawai'i can make a difference in the world, even the keiki."

*by Malia Brennan
Iolani School*

A Walk Through the Future

Walking along the beach with the fresh, cool, salty air blowing past my face and the cold sand oozing between my toes, I saw a honu lying on the beach. I knew not to disturb it so I backed away. It's black, beady eyes looked at me and the honu started talking to me.

It said, "Look at me, I am one of the few endangered sea turtles left. It has been hard for us to survive because of the trash you leave on the beaches. We get tangled and choked in it and are left to die. I am speaking to you because you are the only one that can help us. Please try to tell everyone you know to pick up their garbage, even if it's not theirs. We need your kōkua or we will not be here much longer."

It then crawled back in the water and disappeared back into the sea.

I continued walking as the tears started forming and I suddenly stopped. There was something that leaped out of the water with a shining grey body. It was coming closer and I realized it was a Hawaiian monk seal. It stopped a foot in front of me then looked up at me with eyes full of tears. I knew it was dying, but there was nothing I could do.

Afterwards I heard a voice say, "One more gone, not many left."

It was an elderly monk seal. He looked at me and said, "Do you know what killed this monk seal? HUMANS! You guys have been over fishing so there are no fish for us. Not only that, but you guys don't let us rest on the beaches. You take our pictures, crowd us so we have no room to have our pups. We thought moving was going to be a new beginning and it turns out it isn't. So now we are becoming endangered and so we will be gone. Ponder on these words and think what you can do about this problem."

I could not walk anymore for my knees were very weak. Lying on the beach with the blue sky over my head and the sun burning my face, I see an unusual cloud coming closer to me as if it was going to tell me something. A face formed in it and as it came closer I could recognize the face, it was my great great grandfather, Grandpa Joe Black.

He said, "You have taken this journey through the future and have seen only two of millions of our endangered Native Species. With these two native animals in mind think of what you are going to do with this problem and how are you going fix it. Make us proud and do your best to save them. I love you and hope you make the right choices. Aloha!"

After that being told to me I went and made a difference in the world by first taking care of the native species.

by Kiara Chong
Kamehameha Intermediate School



My Hawai'i

Sapphire blue and aquamarine fill my sight as I slip silently from the golden shores of O'ahu into my watery home. A darting school of menpachi flew by as I swim with my powerful tail leaving a trail of iridescent bubbles in my wake. Under my chestnut belly, multihued coral reefs sit majestically on a carpet of golden grains; bejeweled with undulating seaweed. As a green honu leisurely moseys by, my whiskers twitch with delight. This watery world is where I truly belong. Down under the crashing waves and the dappled shafts of lights filtering from above is where my body, lumbering and clumsy on land, can twist and twirl and play with the currents day after day. In this watery world, I find my peace. A peace that would last an eternity... or so I thought.

Twenty years later in the twenty-first century...

One day, in my frolics beneath the foaming surface, I found a new friend to play with. It was similar to the spider webs that draped across palm trees and glistened when dawn crept over the horizon. At first it was fun, I tugged at it and it pulled me back; but I soon got away.

Then, once, I couldn't leave its coarse embrace. The more I struggled, the more entangled I became. My once captivating friend was a net, discarded by unwary fisherman left to sit in my haven as an unintentional trap.

When my teeth and flippers could not fight the abrasive, entwined fibers any more, I stopped, exhausted, and looked around me. What I saw astonished and frightened me.

My home, once pristine and beautiful, had begun to change so drastically. Once what was a resplendent reef, home to various sea creatures, is now dying because of warmer water and pollution. Gradual changes had begun to creep into my haven. Bits of garbage, shiny cylinders with sharp edges and more dangerous nets seemed to have sprung up overnight. The menpachi have dwindled in number and the honus were almost no more. Absorbed in my own life, I had failed to notice the subtle changes occurring all around me... until now. The bobbing waves soon lulled me into a deep slumber...

Once again, I was soaring through the unobstructed lapis-lazuli waters of my pristine home. The honu and the menpachi have returned, and they swim without fear or threat of extinction. The jewels of Hawai'i have returned to the water and the peace has come again to my Hawai'i out of my nightmare...

by Sheena Choy

Prince David Kawananakoa Middle School

Polluted Waters

During the summertime, one mile south of Sandy Beach on the island of O‘ahu, there lived a humuhumunukunukuāpua‘a named Humu. Humu always loved swimming near the beaches of Hawai‘i. The waters looked so clean and crisp that almost every day, Humu would want to swim there. But one day that all changed.

“I hate living in the ocean these days. I remember when the Hawaiian waters were so clean that almost every fish in the ocean would want to swim in Hawai‘i. But now with all the pollution in the waters, many fish are dying,” said Humu.

Humu started swimming closer to the shores of O‘ahu to find food as summer was coming to an end. As the sandy beaches came into view, the water started to become dirtier. Humu started to see cans and wrappers floating everywhere.

“The waters have become so polluted that we can hardly breathe and find food any more,” said Humu. Just then, soda cans and food wrappers dropped into the water near where Humu was swimming.

“That’s it, if the people of Hawai‘i don’t care about keeping the water clean, then I’m going to swim to a place where people actually care about the fish and never come back,” said Humu. After saying that Humu swam away, never to return to Hawai‘i again.

A few minutes later, a tourist that was eating on the beach started to go snorkeling.

“Why aren’t there any fish in the water today?” said the tourist. The tourist stopped snorkeling and went to his hotel very disappointed. The next day the same tourist came back to the beach, eager to see some fish.

“The fish are still not here. I thought Hawai‘i was famous for having a lot of fish.” The tourist left the beach sadly. The same tourist came back to the beach the next day hoping once again to see fish, but sadly there were none to be found.

“Swimming in Hawai‘i sucks! I could see more fish on the mainland!” The tourist left Hawai‘i and never came back again.

An elderly native Hawaiian man that was walking on the beach saw this display by the tourist. He paused for several minutes and stared at the ocean waters. He fondly remembered net fishing and collecting 'opihi off the rocks many years ago with his grandfather. He remembered how blue and clear the waters were in the past, and he was ashamed at the disregard people now had for the 'āina. He thought, "If people keep polluting the Hawaiian waters, there will be no fish left! Fishing and swimming is what makes Hawai'i my favorite place to live!" He picked up some trash, threw it in the garbage can, and walked home where he looked forward to teaching his grandson about how important it is to keep the ocean clean.

*by Brandon Finger
Iolani School*



The Life of a 'Alo'ilo'i

The silvery jet-colored Hawaiian dascyllus
known as the 'alo'ilo'i
vanished in the depths of 'Ehukai Beach.

The radiant sun's rays falls
in the tide pools where
the 'alo'ilo'i feed on zooplankton.

Endemic silvery jet-colored dascyllus
'alo'ilo'i love
to hide among the coral reefs
where they may encounter
some scary moray eels
inside the rocky caves.

The silvery jet-colored 'alo'ilo'i
swims down to the deep
where the Hawaiian dascyllus
dwell among schools of yellow tang,
Hawaiian sergeant, and the manini
who roam the seas in schools.

The Hawaiian dascyllus population
is decreasing by the hundreds due
to people over fishing. If we stop over fishing
this wonderful species, just maybe there will be more
'alo'ilo'i in the future.

I hope this fish will not become extinct.

There must be life for the 'alo'ilo'i .

by Jamie Higa
Na'au, a Place for Learning

Turtle Tales

Hello! My name is Oki the sea turtle. I am no ordinary turtle. I am the Hawaiian green sea turtle. We are an endangered species. If I could talk to humans, I would tell them how much the garbage can hurt us. Many people pollute the water with garbage and other items. I have a story about how garbage kills the environment.

One day during high tide at the North Shore, my friend Koa and I were looking for some fish to eat. During high tide is when the humans come and fish on their motorized vehicles. Many of these vessels let out noxious gases that many turtles breathe when they come up for air. We get a sickness called the 'gas-itis.' It makes our lungs very dirty and gives us breathing problems later on. I ducked under the boat as it went over. Before all of these things came, we could see far out into the ocean. Now, the water looks like stink, dirty canal that just had an oil spill.

"Hey Oki!" says Koa. "Look at all of the jellyfish!"

There were grey jellyfish just floating in the water. As we swam closer to the fish, I noticed that the jellyfish were very peculiar looking. They weren't really moving, just floating. I stopped just to be safe, but Koa kept going on. I finally figured what the jellyfish were. It was actually a net! I called to Koa, but it was too late. The net wrapped around Koa like a boa constrictor and he screamed for help. I had to help him! I moved my fins as fast as I could. I was trying so hard, I felt sweat on the back of my shell. I saw Koa sink lower and lower into the ocean.

"Koa!!!" I yelled.

Since I didn't go to my swimming lessons this week, I was not as fast as I used to be, so I dialed 911 on my shell phone. Soon, there was a big crowd watching the muscular turtles rip apart the net. They were as big as Bubbles Schwarzenegger. Two hours passed by before Koa got out. He was dazed and his eyes seemed to drift into space. Everyone asked him questions.

"What happened? What did you feel?" some asked.

Koa was too unconscious to answer their questions. After that day, more turtles got caught in plastic and other trash in the ocean. Every day on the

television there would be a report on how one turtle died or got seriously injured by trash. One of the most lethal pieces of trash was the six holed contraption. It chokes us to death. The humans should live by the Ocean Rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

If humans kept our waters clean, there would be more turtles than there are today. I hope that one day; humans will respect the ocean and treat it like their own home.

*by Kienen Koga
Iolani School*

My Hawai'i

The gentle wind blew through her ebony hair. She knelt next to the soothing water, feeling the ice-cold touch that had shivered her greatly. The cold didn't bother her; that was why she appreciated the ocean so much. She looked at the bottle of fresh water in her smooth hands, taking a nice long sip from it. There was no other place that was as charming to her, not even her birth place...

Her mind shifted to Vietnam and to her last day there before leaving for Hawai'i. She had sadly stood on the grey, sandy beach which made her feel even gloomier. No matter how much the sun shone that day or how warm the water was, it did not make her feel safe and cheery. She memorized how the dreary sea had a depression spread over it. It was murky and filled with rubbish she had never noticed until then. Trash disseminated along the Vietnam beach, causing one step in the grainy sand to pierce her skin. People threw things without a care, and sometimes it led to harm. She remembered thinking that was normal, but she couldn't help but wonder if it truly was coming. She recalled glancing at the sepia mountains, which were practically lifeless because of the lack of rain. The sky also gave no peaceful feeling, as it seemed to be the same dull color as the sea. A lot of smoke was near the water, since bikes, factories, and ships were congested in this area.

She then remembered getting sick the other day, and her brother had told her that the drinking water was polluted, possibly by the rubbish and waste. On that day of her awful sickness, she stared at her window and grimaced how an accident of a single chunk of trash could matter to her welfare. She knew of many others whose faces cried in pain and grief caused by intentional pollution. The look of helplessness and horror were stained across her face as she realized she couldn't change any of it. Her mind was filled with disgusting images until a familiar voice called to her; it was her mother's. *"...Finally, an escape from these thoughts. Will everything be okay for me in Hawai'i?"* She asked herself that time before running to join her family for their departure from Vietnam...

She remembered her thoughtful query as she stood staring knowingly at her lovely Hawaiian vista. Everything in Hawai'i was different from Vietnam. The sea was

beautiful tones of blue, the mountains shone a sign of life, and the area was not as filled with litter. Looking at the bright, azure sky, she felt secure living here, where the things she loved weren't such a threat. People made an effort to recycle; the government had laws to stop pollution. She wondered why the Vietnamese couldn't also make an attempt to recycle. She saw others in Hawai'i trying to recycle to help the environment and decided that she would lend a helping hand.

Drinking the last drops from the small bottle, she thought, *"This is my Hawai'i, too. I want to prevent my environment from being destroyed; I don't want my new home to be like Vietnam. For everything that surrounds me, I want to be able to grasp it with my body. I want to be smothered in it without any harm to my life. Hawai'i is just what I'm seeking. It's difficult to believe that some want to see this place filled with garbage and pollution. I won't make the same mistake as them. I'll do something, and I'll start now."*

She deliberately tossed her empty plastic water bottle into the trashcan with a "tunk!" and a pleased grin widened across her delighted face as she thought about her scenic Hawai'i.

by Evon Le

Prince David Kawanakoa Middle School

My Hawai'i

There it was, less than five inches away from me, as my Mom called it “belly to belly.” They were huge; six to seven feet was my guess, the magnificent manta rays right in front of me. Somersaulting all around, gently gliding up and down. One glanced at me, almost as if he winked, as if I was the only one there and these magnificent creatures were all around me, and only me. The columns of fish were just floating around, like they had nothing better to do. Watching how the fish move: they will swim around in circles in their columns. Watching how the manta rays move: they glide around, do flips, and then swoop down in front of you. Their flesh shining with the gleaming lights was heavenly. Wow! There it was again, it had just swooped down in front of me, as if the other manta ray had told him to do that. There was some special connection between me and those manta rays (Timbuktu & Sugar Ray), the clusters of fish, and the dark, mysterious waters of the deep.

I woke up the next morning and saw the white, puffy clouds and the clear blue sky, just thinking how wonderful Hawai'i is. I started to day dream.

I was lying under a coconut tree and I slowly opened my eyes to see, the green tall trees, the small pink flowers on a hill, and soft misty rain falling in the shining sun. I got up and looked around; I saw a small rainbow over Hualalai. I wanted to explore the wonders of this magical place. I had started to skip when I saw a small gecko that had got himself trapped under a pebble. I walked over; reached for the pebble and set him free. Then I continued to skip around. I then saw a waterfall falling into a small pond. I ran over to it. I noticed how the water looked powerful as it was falling, but when it hit the water it gently flowed into the clear pond. The waterfall was on levels, three levels, all leading up to the pond. I jumped in; and grabbed hold of a large, mossy rock. I made my way carefully climbing up to the top. I slowly reached the top and threw my arms in the air, looking to the lower levels; I was so happy I just let out a loud “WooHoo!” I started to run off the edge skipping to all the levels. I was flying through the air waving and yelling at the top of my lungs. I flew into the water, with a giant splash water flying, everywhere.

I swam up to the surface and started to float in the pond. When I looked above me I saw long, tall tree; branches coming out of everywhere. They were different shades of green and very different textures, from the look. There were also some blossoms in the trees; purple, different shades of pink, and some yellow. There was something understanding and caring about this place. Something that needed to be acknowledged, for some reason this place had been hiding.

I left to go exploring, and all I found was more beauty. I heard some kind of noise, I followed it. It led me to a series of Mango trees. There were forty to fifty parrots. All of them were flying around in all different directions or eating. I started to sing: it became quiet and all the parrots turned their heads, when I stopped singing the parrots squawked and made lots of noise. They were applauding. As I walked away I couldn't help but feel a sense of accomplishment and pride. I felt like my feet weren't on the ground. I felt like I was walking on sunshine!

I continued to walk around. I saw all kinds of trees with all types of flowers. There were a couple of children behind a tree. They grabbed me by the arm and sat me down. All of the sudden I found myself with flowers in my hair, I had flowers everywhere. On little girl came up to me and gave me a bowl of all kinds of fruit. I immediately thanked her and grabbed a guava. They soon sent me on my way.

As I was walking around, I thought of how amazing all these experiences were. I suddenly felt a soft touch on my right hand, and then I heard a "meow." I opened my eyes and saw my cat, Tigs. I found myself under a coconut tree with all these familiar drawings; I realized that they were all drawings of what I dreamt about. I also noticed I had plumerias all around me, not to mention I was a bit damp. I looked around and saw soft, misty rain in the shining sun. Then a small rainbow over Hualalai, I started to sing "I'm walking on sunshine." I started to laugh and see all the beauty of my Hawai'i.

*by Keelee Martin
Kona Christian Academy*

A Life Unknown

Under the sea, there is a world even humans marvel over. Ideal lives where fishes roam free and live a life quiet and carefree. Well, that's how it would be if we weren't constantly disturbing them.

"Mommy," cried Momi in a sickly voice, "I don't feel so good."

"Oh not you too! All your brothers and sisters have the flu. It's just my luck that you have it too. Wait here, I'll call the doctor," Momi's mom Pili replied exhausted. Pili then went into another room and dialed the doctor.

"Hello, this is Hōkū. How may I help you?"

"Oh hello, Hōkū. This is Pili, I was just calling to ask if you could come and check on my youngest child, Momi. It seems to me that she has the flu too. I'm beginning to think I might catch the flu; my whole family has it. Do you have any tips for me on how I might be able to prevent it?"

"I'm sorry, Pili. I haven't found a way to keep the germ from spreading. Many elderly and young fishes are getting sick. All I can say is to be extra careful of what you eat and be extremely cautious of germs."

"Hōkū, you're the wisest turtle in all the sea. I'm sure there's something that you could do to prevent this," Pili told Hōkū desperately.

"I'm sorry, I've tried and nothing seems to be working. I've been pondering this situation for many days now. The currents are bringing change. I seem to have just lost hope," Hōkū replied in a terrified and helpless way.

"So you mean we did nothing wrong and that it was the..." Pili started too terrified to go on.

"Yes, it must be something with the humans. If you really want to find out what's going on, I suggest you go talk to them," Hōkū finished then said goodbye.

Before he could hang up Pili said, "If that's what it takes to bring my family back to health, then that's exactly what I'm going to do. Are you going to help me or not?"

"I don't think I can. I'm getting weaker and weaker," Hōkū carried on breathlessly.

"You have to help me. I couldn't do this without you," Pili said now pleading.

"All right fine, but first we have to think back to when this all started."

"Well, I believe it was just after the heavy rains, and from what I've heard from relatives, the water off the Waikīkī coast is really dirty."

"Good, now that's where we must go." And so, Pili and Hōkū traveled past many reefs, and sand bars, enduring terrible weather. All that time they were focused on reaching their goal of making everyone at home healthy again. Some say the only reason they survived the trip was because their hearts were not focused on their own well-being but on that of others.

Many reefs later, Pili and Hōkū arrived at Waikīkī beach. However, something was wrong. There were hardly any people in the water. It was going to be really hard to find someone to talk to, but Pili and Hōkū were now more determined than ever.

"Ok, which person do you think looks the friendliest?" Pili asked, worried about predators.

"What about that kid over there, the one by the other fishes?" Hōkū replied intelligently. Hōkū and Pili slowly swam over to where the girl was.

"Hello, what's your name? I'm Pili and this is my friend Hōkū," Pili said in a sweet motherly voice.

"Hi, I'm Piper. My daddy works on that big boat over there. I just jumped in the water to look at the reef. What are you doing here?"

"Well, my friend and I came to investigate why the waters are getting so many of the fish sick. Do you know anything about this?" Hōkū asked now excited that he might be able to help his family back home.

"Yes, unfortunately after the heavy rains, dirty water from the mountains got swept into the ocean by runoffs. In addition, the pollution on the streets was carried into the water. Not to mention, a sewage spill lead human waste into the ocean," The little girl explained to us.

"Wow! How did you figure all that out?" Pili asked amazed at what was going on.

“Oh, my dad’s an environmentalist. He’s trying to make the water cleaner for the environment and promote ocean awareness.”

“So some people do want to help us,” Hōkū said relieved that he was not the only one fighting the battle against pollution.

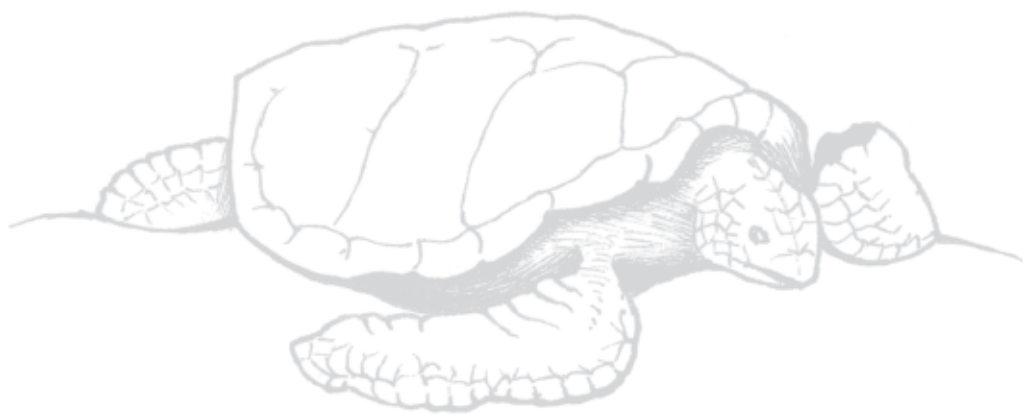
“Of course, some of us are trying to help. But Daddy says that with all the pollution the majority of the population makes, the world we call our home will be constantly getting dirtier. He also says that as long as some people care about the environment then it can’t be completely destroyed,” Piper said in a passionate voice.

“Ok, so how long will the water be polluted, and is there anything we can do to make it become cleaner?” Pili questioned anxiously.

“I’m not exactly sure how long the water will be like this, but Daddy says that it is continuously getting better and should be back to normal in a couple months or so. But I’m sad to say that there is simply nothing you fishes can do except take care of yourselves as best you can and hope for the best. However, we humans can start by picking up trash along the beaches and streams and making sure that we are not throwing anything into the environment that could be a potential threat.”

And so Pili and Hōkū went back to their families with happy hearts, knowing that things would be getting better soon and that there are some people who are trying to help the environment. They only wished there were more.

*by Anela Minuth
Iolani School*



A Life at Risk

The sea, a sacred place, the most beautiful thing we might ever gaze at, has so many creatures lurking beneath. What a beautiful day it was, at Bellows beach on O'ahu, while Hōkū, the turtle, and his friends played beneath the clear, untouched surface of the ocean.

"Tag, you're it!" shouted Hōkū at Flip, the dolphin.

"You're next, Squish!" yelled Flip to Squish, the jellyfish.

"Let's take a break, I'm pooped!" replied Squish.

"Alright," Hōkū and Flip said in unison.

The three friends swam happily in the depths of the sea looking for a nice resting spot, not worried about what was lying above the surface of their peaceful home. Hōkū plopped down onto a rock while Flip and Squish floated happily underwater like an inner tube would do on the surface. Staring up into the glistening clear water, Flip noticed something closer to the surface.

"Ooh! Follow me! I want to see what that is!" exclaimed Flip sprinting to the surface as fast as a racecar. Flip was always a curious dolphin, not afraid of anything. Sometimes, though, she was too curious; sometimes she should think before she acts.

"Careful, Flip!" yelled Hōkū after her. "You don't know what that is! Last time you got cut!"

Flip stopped a moment, looking at the scar on her left flipper remembering the incident. One warm day, like today, something shiny had caught her eye; being curious, she swam to it. Hōkū and Squish had tried to warn her, but she had her mind set and wanted to find out what it was. She had her nose close to it, unsure of what it was, and tried to pick it up. A sharp end of it jabbed into her flipper. It turned out it was a knife that a human had dropped off the edge of a boat by accident. Even after this incident, Flip hadn't learned her lesson. She still didn't think before her actions.

"Flip, I really don't think you should go so close to it like that! What if it's dangerous?" warned Squish. Squish was just like Hōkū, very protective. She and Hōkū were always on the lookout for Flip like being her conscience.

"It can't be dangerous, see loo- -" Flip seemed to have her snout stuck in a circular plastic ring while five more rings dangled by the right side of her face.

"FLIP! WHAT HAPPENED!" exclaimed Hōkū and Squish like a worried mother.

"Eh gut meh snut stk!" she replied frantically shaking her head side to side and swimming in all directions.

"You got your snout stuck?" Squish asked worried, moving forward in a pulsing motion.

Flip nodded, tears starting to stream down her face as she tried to get words out, "Eh shlda lsnd teh yeh!"

Squish and Hōkū were silent trying to figure out what to do. Suddenly a boy dove into the water breaking the silent surface, his sister following close behind. Both kicked frantically playing around with each other with their snorkels. Suddenly the girl, spotted Flip.

"Micah! Isn't that the plastic rings from the six pack that you threw off the boat?!" Emily asked, bubbles flowing out of her mouth while trying her best to talk to her brother.

"No, couldn't be! That's not my fault! You never cut it!" replied Micah shaking his head.

"Yes it is! You hurt a dolphin!"

Meanwhile Hōkū and Squish were listening. They both swam towards the two kids.

"Excuse me," Hōkū said, "Did you throw those... those rings off of your boat? You really hurt our friend! Polluting the ocean is not the right thing to do; throw your trash into the trash can! Creatures of your kind have already hurt our friend, Flip, once before with a sharp pointed silver thing!"

"It's not my fault," replied Emily slightly frightened and quivering pointing at her brother. "It's his!"

"I didn't mean to hurt anything. It wasn't supposed to hurt any animals. I'm sorry," Micah said apologizing with his hands clasped together as if in prayer.

"Please help us then! We don't want anything to happen to Flip. Can you please help us take the rings off?" Squish asked tears swelling up in her eyes, ready to rain down her cheeks.

"We'll do anything to help. It's our fault," said Micah.

Micah and Emily swam to the surface, bringing back scissors with them. They carefully cut the ring off of Flip's snout and cut up the ring so it wouldn't harm anything else. Flip was free again, but she had learned a lesson and so had Micah and Emily.

"We're sorry. We didn't mean to hurt you," Emily apologized stroking Flip, "We'll never throw any more rubbish into the ocean again! We promise!"

"And I've learned a lesson too, to think before my actions!" exclaimed Flip.

"And so will I," said Micah, feeling guilty about what he had done.

"Just promise us one thing: never pollute the ocean anymore. Pollution hurts so many living animals and makes everyone unhappy. When an animal is hurt down here, everything goes dark, nothing glistens or is blue anymore, everyone is gray. So please, organize beach cleanups for us sometimes, for all of us animals down here," said Hōkū like a mother giving a lecture.

"Done!" said Micah and Emily smiling and giving a thumbs-up.

A smile spread across Hōkū's, Flip's, and Squish's faces. The ocean could be at peace again. Micah and Emily swam to the surface, kicking bubbles behind them as they disappeared into the different world above, where so much more pollution was happening. It was time to make a difference, starting with two everyday kids.

*by Sarah Murayama
Iolani School*



Problem in Paradise

Once upon a time on the island of O’ahu in the waters near Waikīkī Beach, lived a dolphin, Leia. Leia loved to watch surfers, swimmers, and kids, either playing in the sand or just having fun in the water.

Every day, she would wake up early to watch the sun rise. At night she would watch it set. Then she would fall into a deep sleep and dream about how life would be if she lived on land. She dreamed of eating the shave ice and seeing lovely flowers, like the hibiscus that tourists and locals picked. Leia always slept well, until one day...

Instead of waking up to the clear blue waters, Leia found that trash was floating in the water around her. That day, no one was in sight. The surfers, swimmers, and kids weren't at the beach today. So she went to visit her friend, Pua, the honu. Leia said, "Pua, what happened? Where are the kids, surfers, and swimmers?"

In reply, Pua said, "I dunno. Maybe they all went on vacation."

"Well, can I stay with you? My part of the sea is as dirt as the boars' pen," Leia said.

"Sure, as long as you don't bother me too much," Pua said.

That night Leia thought of all that happened that day. She wondered where everyone was and no matter how she floated in the water, she couldn't sleep.

The next morning, she thanked honu and left to visit Hōkū, the monk seal. Hōkū was very wise, and knew almost everything about the sea. Leia thought, "He should know what's gone wrong."

Hōkū lived quite far away from Leia and Pua. He lived close to shore because everyday, he would go to shore to rest. Since Leia couldn't go on land, she shouted, "Hōkū, it's me Leia. You got a minute?"

Hōkū turned around and slowly made his way into the water. He said, "What do you need?"

Leia told Hōkū about her problem and had many questions. "What happened to the beach? One day everyone was playing at the beach, and the next day no one was there. Why is there so much trash in my part of the sea?" Leia asked.

He told her, "Pollution. That's what is keeping the people from the water and that's why the water is so dirty. Pollution comes from factories, cars, and more. People don't throw away their trash, so it all flies into the waters where we live."

"How do we get rid of all the trash?" Leia asked.

In reply, Hōkū said, "People just have to pollute less and keep our waters clean. People need to kōkua, help to clean up. They can do this by picking up their trash, instead of throwing it on the streets and letting it fall into drains that lead to the sea."

"So you can't really stop people from polluting our waters, they just need to help," Leia said.

"If they did this there wouldn't be a problem."

To help stop this problem, Hōkū got his friend the poi dog, Lani. Lani's job was to get people to stop littering. Lani walked through cities and streets searching for dogs that were willing to help with the problem. Once the dogs gathered together, they spent their day making posters that said: Kōkua, Keep our waters clean. In the process of making posters, each dog used their own talents. Lani was creative and thought of different ways to catch peoples' eyes. Others were good at decorating or scrounging around in the trash for items people didn't want.

A few days later, a little trash still could be found in the sand at the beach, but there wasn't as much as before. People were helping by picking up their trash. To all the dogs' surprise, people were actually looking at their posters. They all did their part in helping to prevent pollution.

Leia found that the beach was back to normal. The water returned clear and blue. Leia could see the sand beneath her. Surfers, swimmers, and kids returned to the beach. They seemed to enjoy the beach. Their smiles spread across their faces as they had fun. Leia was smiling, too. She knew she helped by letting everyone know the problem and wanted to help it stop. Lani and Hōkū were happy that their idea worked and they also learned to help one another. Your ideas could touch others who may follow your example. All the animals that helped this problem were happy to be one step closer to helping to prevent pollution.

*by Cadie Shimabukuro
Iolani School*

Pudge the Puffer Fish

Off the coast of O'ahu, in a small reef by Hanauma Bay, lived a young puffer fish named Pudge. Pudge was very adventurous and loved finding new places to explore.

"You know, I've always wanted to explore O'ahu from every rock to crevice," Said Pudge. "I want to go everywhere no matter how far away it is."

"Do you remember the stories I told you when you were younger?" asked Grandpa Fudge. "About my adventurous days, swimming through rivers and streams all around O'ahu? Well, I think that maybe you might be ready to go somewhere, too. I was thinking one place I visited when I was your age called the Ala Wai Canal. It right next to this school where humans send keiki to get an education! It's very interesting to watch the keiki from the canal. Are you up to the challenge?" Pudge had already been ready to go as soon as Grandpa Fudge even mentioned going exploring.

"Of course, Grandpa! I can't wait to go see the Ala Wai for myself! Was it really pretty? As pretty as Hanauma Bay?"

"Oh yes, Pudge. It was probably one of the most beautiful canals I had ever seen, with clear blue water, colorful exotic fish, and the softest seaweed you will ever see! My, Pudge, you are going to love it." Pudge looked at grandpa. Reminiscing about the Ala Wai, Grandpa Fudge looked so happy; it had to be the best place in the world! And he, Pudge, was actually going to see this place for himself! He was too happy for words.

"That settles it then," said Pudge. "I'm going to the Ala Wai Canal!" He started off, racing towards shore. For days Pudge wandered, asking for directions to the Ala Wai Canal. Everyone seemed to know where it was! It must be a wonderful place then, thought Pudge. Finally, after probably a week of swimming and asking for directions, Pudge was almost there.

"Down the stream, take a left. It'll be right there," Said the yellow tang he was taking directions from. "Don't worry, you won't miss it. Trust me, It's the hardest thing to miss." I'm almost there! thought Pudge. He raced off down the stream,

when suddenly, what?

The whole river got darker, as if it had magically turned to night. And the water...murky, filled with...mud? Am I really going in the right direction? thought Pudge. As he swam on, the water just got thicker. Pudge started coughing.

"What is this place?" he thought. "Why would grandpa want me here?" Suddenly, it was as if he were swimming through mud. He could hardly see where he was going...and the water...so cold. Wait, what was that? Pudge immediately blew up to full size, needles sharp for extra protection. He quickly looked down, only to realize that what he had brushed against was not seaweed, as he had suspected, but a piece of fabric.

Then like a typhoon, the current picked up speed, and all sorts of debris came to him like two magnets coming together. Dodge right, dodge left! Soda cans, a wheel from a shopping cart, a shoe! Pudge swam on, hoping to find someone who could help him get out. Then he saw it. A flash of yellow. Pudge went full speed ahead, never losing sight of the yellow tail. Pretty soon the currents died down, and with it, the fish. Pudge saw that it was an angel fish.

"Um, excuse me? Angelfish? Would you mind telling me where the Ala Wai Canal is?" the fish turned around and...wow! The fish had three eyes! Oh my gosh... thought Pudge. But the angelfish didn't look the least bit embarrassed. In fact, he was smiling!

"Aye, mate," Said the angelfish. "You just passed it! Did you realize that you had just swum through it?" Pudge was confused. Through it? He thought. That couldn't have been it. I mean, it was nothing like what grandpa had described! No, the angelfish had to have made a mistake!

"Are you sure?" asked Pudge. "My grandfather said that the Ala Wai used to be one of the prettiest places in the sea!" With that remark, the angelfish chuckled.

"Aye it used to be a few years back... but things have changed. The humans don't take care of the water around here anymore. They use this here canal as their dumpster, dumping anything you could possibly imagine here! Did you notice that the water had become murky, and harder to swim through? That's because of all of the things they're dumping. The objects loosened up the soil, and the chemicals

killed all of the plants that used to thrive on the banks. The Ala Wai has probably become the dirtiest part of the sea!" Pudge was shocked.

"Humans? Humans did this? But how did they cause so much damage?"

"Well like I said, humans dumped all sorts of things in here, including sewage! The bacteria in the sewage was so great, it's even causing physical changes to us fish that call this our home. I'm guessing you noticed that I have an extra eye?" Pudge shifted uncomfortably.

"Well yes, I did" said Pudge. "I'm sorry. I know it's not polite to ask, but how did that happen?"

"Again, sewage. All of us sea critters living around these parts are abnormal in someway. Me, I have an extra eye, Bill, he's got a humongous tail, and Mary? Wow ...well, she's gotten to become an almost florescent color of yellow. Yes sir, things have really changed around here. It's too bad. This used to be one of the prettiest parts of the ocean, too."

Pudge was sad. He had wanted so bad to see this wonderful canal, which had sounded like it had been too good to be true! But that was just a dream. And Pudge knew that some dreams were impossible to reach. If only humans could have taken care of their environment a little more, that one dream may have come true.

*by Tiffany Takeda
Iolani School*



'ĀINA, FLORA AND BIRDS OF HAWAI'I





Mālama the 'Āina

"Keo! Hurry up and put dis trash out!"

Keo sat up from his hammock outside. He hated taking the trash out because he had to walk eight blocks to the huge garbage bins at the local school. His family had never had their garbage picked up by the trucks, so the task of disposing of the junk was left on his shoulders. However today there was significantly less garbage and Keo grinned at his slight reprieve. He was still bitter about the long walk in the scorching hot sun though. However, through all his years of doing the task, he had found a shortcut to make his trip easier.

After walking for about ten minutes, he reached a fence. A small metal sign read in bold red letters, "STOP! DO NOT CROSS. PROTECTED RAINFOREST. VIOLATORS WILL BE PROSECUTED!" Keo ignored the rusty sign as he had before, threw his bag over, and hopped the fence.

He walked slowly through the humid forest, the soil still moist from the previous night's rain. Above, he saw the familiar I'iwi. He had seen it nearly every week when he went to dump his garbage. It seemed to float around its nest. Its bright red feathers made it stand out amongst the green foliage. He walked further and jumped over a small stream that was connected to the storm drain behind his house upstream. He trampled carelessly through the forest leaving a clear-cut path behind him. He didn't care. No one else ever went in there. He spotted a small speckled object on the ground in front of him. Upon closer inspection, he determined that it was an egg of some kind. Not caring, he kicked it in front of him as he walked. After about ten kicks, it broke and its contents drained out in front of the large roots of a banyan tree.

Finally, Keo reached the edge of the forest and spotted the main road. He checked his phone and smiled, knowing that he had shaved about fifteen minutes off of his trip. He walked home the way he came and took a shower. He put on some clean clothes and resumed his nap in his beloved hammock.

Within twenty minutes, he heard his mother screech, "Eh, Keo, you wash da kah yet, boy?" Groaning, he got up to do the next annoying task at hand. His father

parked the car in front of the storm drain and gave Keo a bucket, a sponge, and soap.

Keo got to work scrubbing the car with the sponge. Three times he washed, rinsed, and wiped, until it was clean. Keo looked up and noticed that it was nearly sundown. He was furious that he didn't get to finish his relaxing nap. He spotted the bottle, filled with pink soap and kicked it down the storm drain in anger. Now he wouldn't have to wash the car again for a while.

The next day Keo went to school. On the way he spotted a group of golden brown Kōleas. He shooed them away with a rock he picked up. As he walked he anticipated the afternoon. He was so excited to go surfing with his friends while there was a decent sized swell. When he got to class his teacher made an announcement.

"Ok, class, settle down. Now today I'm assigning you to a research report," she said as if they were supposed to be excited. "Your job is to watch the local news and write a four pager paper on what you learned. It'll be due at 3:30 pm tomorrow."

"Crud!" Keo thought. "Now I'll be too swamped with work to take the afternoon off for surfing. Why did she pick today of all days?!" Keo was disgruntled the rest of the day, having no fun to look forward to after his dismal school day.

Keo got home and flipped on the TV. He changed it to channel 8, KITV4 news. Most of the stories were boring and politics based, but one stood out to him. The reporter spoke about pollution affecting the rainforest near his home. He showed clips of the dirty stream water and litter all over the banks. One video clip put a knot in Keo's stomach. Bubbly stream water flowed and seemed to be sudsy and filled with soap. In the background the very same bottle of carwash fluid he had kicked down the storm drain. The cracked bottle had washed up against a hāpu'u fern. Its contents oozed out onto the roots of the fern. The reporter also showed how "people were trampling the forest plants and killing animals." Keo saw his well-beaten path that lead to the dumpsters, and the egg he had kicked. The reporter identified it later to be his friend the l'ivi.

For a minute Keo just took it all in. It wasn't that he didn't know that he affected the environment that much, but he had just never cared. But now seeing the

destruction and damage he caused in the spotlight, his actions made him sick. He began writing feverishly. The words flowed out. He wrote of conservation and the environment. How humans can have an effect on wildlife without even realizing it. When he was finished he entitled his peace “Mālama the ‘Āina.” translated as “Take care of the Land.” He turned it in the next day and was asked to read it out loud. Keo ignored the praise from his teacher and thought about his actions.

A week later Keo’s mom told him to take out the trash. Picturing the news segment, he took the long route and savored every moment. He didn’t care about the extra twenty minutes of his trip because he knew that every step he took was helping to mālama the ‘āina.

*by Zalman Bernstein
Iolani School*





A Selection of Haikus on Hawai'i...

A gentle breeze blows
Some birds call in the distance
And the sun shines bright

•

Hawai'i is lush
Every color is in sight
But green most of all

•

Sun's last rays are gone
And Hawaiian night sets in
As the stars emerge

•

The sun is a lamp
Lighting the Islands by day
Giving peace at night

Thundering waves crash down
Like the ocean is angry
All day and all night

•

Guava, papaya
By far the best of all fruits
So abundant here

•

Fierce rains thunder down
As tropical storms arrive
And cleanse the Islands

•

Trade winds blow gently
Cooling hot and humid air
Like a giant fan.

*by Colin Berton
Kula High and Intermediate School*

My Hawai'i

In my backyard there sits a tree. It is a lonely tree with a few little plants to surround it and give it some company. My tree gives off yummy, juicy fruit once a year during the summer. It means so much to me because it is where I can come when I have many things on my mind. This tree is my lychee tree.

My lychee tree is tall; it's the size of my house. It has a thick, fat, sepia stump, and bright verdant leaves that are being supported by its long stick like branches. Whenever the wind blows, the leaves sway back and forth like a butterfly's wings.

The tree sits there and gives me shade. It has a swing for me to pretend I'm flying back and forward. It's also a place for me to stand under whenever it rains. It provides not only a shady place for me, but also a protective home for other birds and creatures that want to stay there. This is my shelter.

This tree is my Hawai'i, a place where I can come to, to look for a never ending adventure or a place where I can be alone. My Hawai'i is not only a place to reflect, but it is where I feel protected in the comfort of my own backyard. It is my protection.

The tree is where I play with my friends, and where I can hide from someone who is seeking me. It's the place where I can hide, when I don't want to see my brother and sister. It is my hideaway.

This tree is my adventure. There is a swing for me to swing on so I can pretend I am a Hawaiian eagle. The tree is my jungle gym, for me to climb up on, so I can swing like a monkey in a jungle. This is my adventure.

As you can see, my Hawai'i is many things to me, my shelter, my protection, my hideaway, and my adventure. This is a place where I go when I want "me" for company. It is special because it is in my family's backyard. This lychee tree is my Hawai'i.

by Amber Burgess

Prince David Kawananaokoa Middle School



Stay With Us Forever

Ae'o, Hawaiian Stilt, you step
through shallow brackish ponds
where you find nourishment eating
soft, delectable, squirmy worms
and fresh water insects.

Endangered Ae'o, Hawaiian Stilt
you move to where shelter is provided
even to your inconvenience in order to survive -
you cast your endangered spell upon us telling
mankind about your near extinction.

Imperiled Ae'o, Hawaiian Stilt,
you spread your wings grandly, over
lakes made by nature or man.
You make your entrance over the wide beautiful waters,
to find your perfect mate to nest with,
and in doing so,
you extend your species.

Precious Ae'ō, Hawaiian Stilt
in your stories, you speak of predators
such as cats, rats, mongoose, and bullfrogs.
Quick, run, and hide!

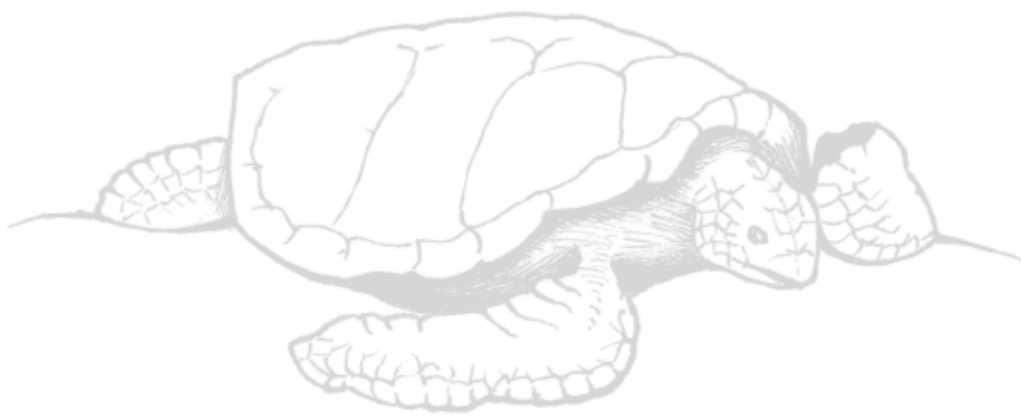
Endangered Ae'ō, Hawaiian Stilt,
although you are close to extinction,
you persevere to teach man
about your species.
You are close to leaving us forever.
We must persevere to save you.

by Casie Gaza
Na'au, a Place for Learning

The Scarlet 'Ōhi'a Slowly Yawns

The scarlet 'ōhi'a slowly yawns
then goes into a deep sleep
as the cold hare lava field
visualizes a colorful
future filled with bright
indigenous plants that illustrate
an eternity of preservation
and untold stories
of tūtū wahine and tūtū kāne praying
for yawning 'ōhi'a
that grow beside the trellis
where maile and maunaloa vines
blend with the ageless
lokelani and 'ohelo berries
in the enormous lava fields
that encircle the dark
craters, deep
in the sacred land
where the ancient goddess Pele
sleeps

*by Matthew Hino
Na'au, a Place for Learning*



Beautiful Paradise

My Hawai'i

Where the sandy beach palm trees sway
and the waves roll to greet the new day.
Where the sand crabs crawl and tickle my toes
and the white sand washes up then goes.

My Hawai'i

Where the coral reefs teem with life and color
and the animals respect one another.
Where the sea turtles are free to roam
and the wide, clear, blue sea is their own home.

My Hawai'i

Where native animals are disappearing fast
and if we don't care for them they won't last.
Where our clear blue beaches are turning brown
and soon people will look upon it with a frown.

My Hawai'i a beautiful place to live and stay
and if we care for our land it can stay that way.

My Hawai'i,
the most beautiful paradise on Earth.

*by Caitlin Hooker
Kailua Intermediate School*



An Endangered Poem

Somewhere, the silversword
is waiting to be saved:
on the vacant slopes
of Mauna Kea and Haleakalā,
the silversword grows
on rocky volcanic surfaces.

They wait years and years
for delicate citrine flowers
to finally bloom,
their long, light colored silvery leaves
pointing upward towards
the heavenly Hawaiian sky,

hoping non-native sheep
and other herbivores
will not come and eat
their sweet, delicate leaves.

With only a few left
and a small chance of reproducing,
they look dimly into the future.

In my dreams
you will find a mountain
covered with silverswords
that shine in the peaceful sky.

My words all gather like raindrops
that float down from the sky
into the cup-shaped silversword.

The silversword is a poem.

They have become a poem
that has made mankind
around the world hear their cry
to preserve their species.

by Sara Ann Ishii
Na'au, a Place for Learning

The “Big Yellow Thing”

“Chugga, chugga...BOOM!” I woke up with a jolt. It was morning and the sun was just beginning to rise. I looked outside of my hole and fluttered sleepily to the top branch. I didn’t see anything. Then I heard it again “Chugga, chugga...BOOM!” I could hear it coming closer. Then it stopped. On the front of the yellow metal thing, I could make out a sort of sign: a tree with a cross through it. The two men stepped out of the “big yellow thing” and walked over to the tree, inspected it, and then walked back and headed out west. What were they looking for? Everything was rushing through my head. How could I tell all the other birds? What do I tell my family? They will never believe me.

I flew back into the tree and lay in my nest. Jacob, little Ernie and Mary were already sound asleep in the nest. I would wait until they woke up to share the news. I decided to fly over to my best pal, Old Pete’s, house. Old Pete was the wisest of all of the I’iwi birds. I flew across the forest all the way to the north side by the old creek. Nobody dared to pass over the creek since it was told that those who went across the river never came back. Old Pete was the only bird to have crossed the river and made it back alive. He would tell all the young birds stories of his adventure across the creek. I flew in and Pete welcomed me inside his nest.

“Jack, how nice it is to see you,” said Old Pete.

“What was it?” I asked Pete.

Old Pete sighed. He knew what I was talking about. He wouldn’t answer. I asked once again. “Old Pete...can you please tell me what that was?” I continued. “Where did it come from?”

Old Pete didn’t answer. Then Old Pete walked over and put his wing on my shoulder. “Son, that was a bulldozer. One of the many machines that destroy our rain forests and our homes” Old Pete said.

“But why was it here?” I asked.

“Never mind, I don’t want to talk about it. It’s too horrifying,” replied Pete.

“No, please tell me. I need to know. I have to protect my family.” Old Pete walked

away, "Jack, a long time ago there was a big tragedy." He stopped, shivered and cried. "A long time ago, everyone was killed. All the birds, the pigs, the trees, and everything was gone. The huge bulldozers came and wiped everything out. When I crossed the river, it was no fun adventure. It was frightening. All the trees and birds were gone. There was smoke and gas where I could hardly breathe. But that night, they came and destroyed everything in its path. There was no warning. Since then, the rain forest has grown back. But I lost my best friend and my wife Julia."

Old Pete began to sob but continued. "It was a-a night mare. Every time I blank out I get flashbacks. Horrible memories. I can hear Julia screaming for help, but I can never help her."

I flew out of the room in silence and headed back home.

"Where were you?" Mary asked. "I was so worried."

I sighed, and then said "A monster came through the forest this morning." Jacob gasped and little Ernie cried.

"Oh my Jack, are you hurt?" asked Mary.

"I'm fine, I'm fine, Mary." I walked slowly to the opening of the hole and I told her in private, "Mary, something bad will happen. Old Pete said the huge machines, called bulldozers, will sooner or later destroy everyone's homes and we will all have to flee."

"Oh Jack, please tell me this isn't true. I just began to like it here. What will happen to our family?" Mary asked. I shrugged. I had to find out more. How could these people destroy our homes? I walked over to the mirror. How could a small black and red bird like me save the rain forest? I had to do something.

The news spread like wild fire. Everyone was going to pitch in to stop the bulldozers. I had a proposition to get rid of the bulldozers forever. First, everyone will meet first thing in the morning at the entrance of the forest by the creek.

The next morning everyone was there. The mongooses, birds, owls, pigs, frogs, rats, ground hogs everyone, even Old Pete came. We were ready. Then all of a sudden the ground began to shake.

"No, don't go," I said. I have a plan.

Everyone stopped in their tracks. Everyone looked at me for hope. "We will unite here at the beginning of our forest, making a line that no machine can penetrate."

They linked their wings, legs, arms and tails. It was an amazing sight.

When the bulldozer arrived, it stopped suddenly. Two men got out and stepped forward toward the animals.

"Where did all these animals come from, Bob?" John asked.

"Maybe we shouldn't chop down all the trees. I mean, dis is their home," Bob sighed.

"You're right, Bob" said John.

"But how are we gonna report this back to the bosses, John?" Bob whined.

"I don't know, but anything's betta den destroying all these poor animals home" John replied.

The two men got back into the bulldozer and retreated back to the entrance.

"Yeah" everyone cried in unison.

The forest was saved. I guess you would say it was because of my courage. But without all of my friends working together, I couldn't have saved the rain forest.

*by Monique Ishikawa
Iolani School*



Song of the 'Ālala

I sing of the Hawaiian crow or 'Alalā
with ebony feathers
and bronze-colored wings.

I sing of the dark 'ōhi'a-koa forest,
scrub, and rangelands
where the 'Alalā wanders in the darkness.

I sing about the delicate
months of March through July,
the breeding season,
for these endangered crows.

Out of the five
emerald and sapphire eggs,
only about two survive.

I sing what's left
of the 'Alalā
in the Kona Forest Unit
of Hakalau National Wild Life.

The refuge unit
will help the 'Alalā habitat
remain in pristine condition.

I sing of the 'Alalā Recovery Plan,
the plan that will hopefully

increase the number of 'Alalā
before they all become extinct,
dreaming that this will
increase the number of this rare bird
from six to infinity.

*by Jacie Okamoto
Na'au, a Place for Learning*

Silent Wāwae'iole

Gentle wāwae'iole spreads
like serene music
of the remarkable Pueo
that blends in the silent forest of Kaua'i.

Wāwae'iole inhabits
the pure Wai'ale'ale forest,
that inspires
the white-tailed tropic birds
gliding beneath the radiant sun
that shades
legendary pepper trees
whose drowsy branches
flow through
the delicate sky.

The brave wāwae'iole
loves its home and sleeps
in the natural fragrance
of the ruby and pearly plumeria
where the quick mongoose
burst throughout the strong copper brush.

The expressive wāwae'iole
tangles its branches
to dance with the divine wind.

Sweet wāwae'iole
drinks the sapphire water that falls
from the dark, stormy sky
and hums to lovely songs of the divine
Wai'ale'ale forest of Kaua'i.

by Dylan Pavao
Na'au, a Place for Learning

The Plants of My Hawai'i

Like freckles on the face of the earth, the native plants give Hawai'i character. They are the perfume of Hawai'i, and are very important because scent is the closest sense tied to memory. These plants are what will make me remember Kaua'i and all the other islands for the rest of my life. When I have long forgotten what the mountains are called, I will always remember how delicate the 'ilima flower is or how useful the kukui nut is.

These plants can fill you with knowledge. Who would know that the tree with the crescent moon shaped leaves, called a koa tree, would be the plant to make the canoes that carried the ancient Hawaiians across the rough ocean? And where would we be without the tale of the two lovers that were made into plants because of their forbidden love? They became the ocean naupaka and the mountain naupaka, which each have half of a flower on them. When these half flowers are put together, they form one single flower.

When I see ferns, I think of the kupukupu fern. I see them tied around the Hawaiian's legs, arms and head as they dance, and the rich culture surrounding them. I hear the steady drum beat, the rhythm of these ferns. When I see kokio ke'oke'o (the white hibiscus) lining the edges of the forest and everywhere else in between, I think of snow.

These flowers speak their own tale, each as unique as the rest. So go out into the forest and listen, because they have a lot to say.

by Amelia Scoyni

Kula High and Intermediate School



Crimson Flowers

Endangered uhiuhi -
you are so close to being extinct
because of alien plants and animals
that invade our 'āina.

Endangered uhiuhi -
your delicate crimson flowers
waver in the gentle tradewinds.

Endangered uhiuhi -
your wood was used for making tools
for fishing like spears
to catch the elusive octopus
that made a Hawaiian dinner yummy.

Endangered uhiuhi -
your bold pewter bark
looms out of the rainforests
of Waimea Canyon,
the Wai'anae mountains, and Hualalai.

Endangered uhiuhi -
if we do not protect you
it will spell the end of your existence
in Hawai'i's rainforests.
Hawai'i will forever mourn the loss
of the ancient indigenous uhiuhi.

by Derin Young
Na'au, a Place for Learning

GLOSSARY OF HAWAIIAN WORDS

Ae’o - the endangered endemic Hawaiian Stilt (*Himantopus mexicanus knudseni*)

‘āina - land, earth

‘Alalā - the endangered endemic Hawaiian Crow (*Corvus hawaiiensis*)

‘ālo’ilo’i - the white-spotted or Hawaiian damselfish (*Dascyllus albisell*)

aloha - love, affection, welcome, hello, goodbye

Haleakalā - tallest mountain on Maui

hāpu’u - an endemic genus of treeferns (*Cibotium*) in the family Dicksoniaceae

hōkū - star

honu - the native green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*)

humuhumunukunukuāpua’a - a native reef triggerfish (*Rhinecanthus* spp.)

‘iwi - the endemic Hawaiian Honeycreeper (*Vestiaria coccinea*)

‘ilima - common native shrub with yellow, orange or reddish flowers (*Sida fallax*)

kāne - male, man

keiki - child, offspring

koa - a large endemic forest tree (*Acacia koa*) in the Pea family

kokio ke’oke’o - an endemic white hibiscus (*Hibiscus arnottianus*)

kōkua - help, aid, assistance

Kōlea - the native Pacific Golden-Plover (*Pluvius fulva*)

kukui - candlenut tree (*Aleurites moluccana*) introduced to Hawai’i by Polynesians

kupukupu - the endemic subspecies of the widespread fern *Nephrolepis exaltata*

lani - sky

lau’ pala - a native yellow tang fish (*Zebrasoma flavescens*)

lokelani - an introduced rose species known locally as the Maui rose (*Rosa damascena*)

maile - an endemic twining shrub (*Alyxia oliviformis*) in the Dogbane family

mālama - to take care of, to tend

manini - a native reef surgeonfish (*Acanthurus lineatus*)

Mauna Kea - the highest mountain on Hawai'i

maunaloa - several vine species in the Pea family

naupaka - a native genus (*Scaevola*) with white half flowers

'ohelo - small endemic shrubs of the blueberry genus *Vaccinium*

'ōhi'a - an endemic tree (*Metrosideros polymorpha*) in the Myrtle family

'opihī - limpet

pali - cliff, steep hill

Pele - goddess of the volcano

pili - a native grass (*Heteropogon contortus*)

poi dog - mixed breed of domestic dog (*Canis lupus familiaris*)

pua - an endemic species (*Nestegis sandwicensis*) in the Olive family

Pueo - Hawaiian Short-Eared Owl (*Asio flammeus sandwichensis*) an endemic subspecies

tūtū - grandparent

uhiuhi - an endangered species (*Caesalpinea kawaiensis*) in the Pea family

wahine - female, woman

Wai'ale'ale - the highest mountain range on Kaua'i

wāwae'iole - a native creeping fern in the Club-moss family

The Hawai'i Conservation Alliance (HCA) is a cooperative partnership of fifteen government, education and non-profit organizations that are strongly committed to environmental conservation in the Hawaiian Islands through land management, scholarly research and financial incentives.

The HCA is dedicated to promoting effective, long-term management of Hawai'i's native ecosystems through collaborative research, training and outreach among land managers, scientists, educators and the general public.

In July each year HCA and the HCA Foundation bring together the largest gathering of people actively involved in the protection and management of Hawai'i's natural environment.

Visit our website, your portal for Conservation News in Hawai'i.

www.hawaiiiconservation.org

The Pacific Writers' Connection (PWC) is a Hawai'i-based non-profit organization dedicated to encouraging creative writing and writers, and strengthening a network of global citizens who share concerns about their environments, local communities, people and cultures. Our mission is to encourage and support nature, environment and place-based creative writing programs, and youth writing and reading programs that inspire writers. We engage and promote writing, cultural and arts communities in Hawai'i and the Pacific to ensure their voices and issues are heard.

Established in 2001, PWCs programs include writing programs for young people, annual writing workshops for local Hawai'i communities, public readings, literary lectures, cultural exchanges and book launches.

PWCs Vision: We believe in the power of writing to change people's lives and recognize that writers help make the Pacific region a place of creativity and peace

Visit our website at www.pacificwriters.org for more information.



Hawai'i Conservation Alliance
Leaders in Environmental Management, Research and Education



ROTARY CLUB OF
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