

News Release



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KĪLAUEA POINT NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE TO OFFER FREE ADMISSION SEPTEMBER 25

Kīlauea Point National Wildlife Refuge will celebrate both National Public Lands Day and Nēnē Awareness Day on Saturday, September 25. Free admission will be offered from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.

National Public Lands Day is a celebration of the 655 million acres of forests, parks, refuges, and open spaces that all of us own. To celebrate the day, people from across the mainland as well as Alaska and Hawai`i will be getting out hiking in the forest, fishing in the streams, and enjoying the wild places we all share.

It's easy to celebrate Public Lands Day at Kīlauea Point National Wildlife Refuge: come on out and enjoy it. Bring your `ohana. Discover maritime history and check out the Kīlauea Lighthouse restoration project. Learn about native coastal plants and migratory seabirds. This is an excellent opportunity to demonstrate community support for the continued ownership, protection, and restoration of our public lands.

Nēnē Awareness Day was officially declared by Governor Linda Lingle in 2003 for the purpose of educating residents and visitors alike about Hawai`i's state bird. "The nēnē is an icon of Hawai`i's past, holding their own on fragments of their original habitat," said Shannon Smith, Refuge Manager for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Kaua`i National Wildlife Refuge Complex. "We're working with a cadre of committed partners to restore habitat and give this species a real chance to make a comeback."

Designated Hawai`i's State Bird on May 7, 1957, the nēnē has endured a long struggle against extinction. Conservationists began breeding the birds in captivity in hopes of preserving a remnant of the declining population and, someday, successfully re-establishing them in their native habitat. Recent efforts have been successful. Today on Kaua`i, biologists from Kaua`i National Wildlife Refuge Complex and the State Division of Forestry and Wildlife work together to preserve our rare and unique Hawai`i State Bird. There are more than 800 nēnē on Kaua`i and approximately 1,950 nēnē statewide.

Please join us as we honor our State Bird. Highlights will include interpretive tours, exhibits, and ranger-led activities throughout the day. The State Division of Forestry and Wildlife will be on-site to provide valuable nēnē banding information.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov

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