

News Release

Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife Office
300 Ala Moana Boulevard, Room 5-122
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96850
808.792.9400
<http://www.fws.gov/pacificislands>



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Contact: Ken Foote, 808 792 9535 or 282 9442

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Service Announces Endangered Species Act Protection for 15 Species in Hawai'i

Fifteen species found on the island of Hawai'i will be protected as endangered species under the Endangered Species Act, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced today. The species include 13 plants, a picture-wing fly and an anchialine pool shrimp.

The Service will work cooperatively with state, federal and native Hawaiian partners, conservation organizations and private landowners to recover these species and conserve their habitat.

“The Service is implementing a landscape-based approach in Hawai'i to better prioritize and focus conservation and recovery actions,” said Loyal Mehrhoff, the Service’s field supervisor for the Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife Office. “The health of threatened and endangered species is linked to our own well-being. We can ensure a healthy future for our community and protect treasured landscapes for future generations by protecting our imperiled native fish, wildlife and plants.”

The 15 species listed today are found in 10 ecosystem types on the island of Hawai'i: anchialine pool (landlocked pool with a subterranean connection to the ocean), coastal, lowland dry, lowland mesic, lowland wet, montane dry, montane mesic, montane wet, dry cliff and wet cliff.

“This final listing rule is unique because it will be the first time in history an anchialine pool shrimp is included on the List of Endangered and Threatened Plants and Animals,” said Mehrhoff. “This species of shrimp is extremely rare, and until recently, the species had not been observed in the wild for more than 20 years. Currently, the species is known to occur in only five anchialine pools located along the coast of South Kona and Kau.”

Threats to these plants and animals include habitat destruction and modification caused by invasive nonnative plants and animals, agricultural and urban development, and consumption of rare species by nonnative feral pigs, sheep and goats, and other introduced species such as rats, nonnative fish, and nonnative invertebrates. Dumping trash and the introduction of nonnative fish also pose threats to the anchialine pool shrimp. Native habitat is threatened by the effects of climate change, which may intensify existing natural threats such as fire,

hurricanes, landslides and flooding. Prior to the endangered species listing, other regulatory mechanisms were inadequate to protect the species.

The 13 plant species receiving endangered species status on Hawai'i Island are *Bidens hillebrandiana* ssp. *hillebrandiana* and *Bidens micrantha* ssp. *ctenophylla* (aka ko'oko'olau), *Cyanea marksii* (hāhā), *Cyanea tritomantha* (aku), *Cyrtandra nanawaleensis* and *Cyrtandra wagneri* (ha'iwale), *Phyllostegia floribunda*, *Pittosporum hawaiiense* (hoawa), *Platydesma remyi*, *Pritchardia lanigera* (loulu), *Schiedea diffusa* ssp. *macraei*, *Schiedea hawaiiensis* and *Stenogyne cranwelliae*. The two animal species receiving endangered species status are *Drosophila digressa* (picture-wing fly) and *Vetericaris chaceorum* (anchialine pool shrimp).

In addition, the Service formally recognized the taxonomic name change for the listed endangered plant *Caesalpinia kawaiense* (uhiuhi) to *Mezoneuron kawaiense*.

The Service has proposed critical habitat for one of the 13 plant species (*Bidens micrantha* ssp. *ctenophylla*), as well as for two previously listed plant species (*Isodendron pyrifolium* and *Mezoneuron kawaiense*) that do not have designated critical habitat and occur in the same ecosystem as *Bidens micrantha* ssp. *ctenophylla*. The Service will publish the final critical habitat determination subsequent to this final listing determination.

The final rule was published in the *Federal Register* on October 29, 2013. Copies of the final rule may be downloaded from the Service's website at <http://www.fws.gov/pacificislands/>. For more further information contact: Loyal Mehrhoff, Field Supervisor, Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 300 Ala Moana Boulevard, Room 3-122, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96850; telephone (808)792-9400 or fax (808) 792-9581.

The Endangered Species Act provides a critical safety net for America's native fish, wildlife and plants. This landmark conservation law has prevented the extinction of hundreds of imperiled species across the nation and promoted the recovery of many others.

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. Connect with our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/usfws, follow our tweets at www.twitter.com/usfwshq, watch our YouTube Channel at <http://www.youtube.com/usfws> and download photos from our Flickr page at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/usfwshq>

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