

# Kiwikiu news

## The Sly Mongoose

Many people appreciate that predators like cats and rats pose serious threats to wild birds. In Hawaii, these introduced mammals pose severe threats to the persistence of many native birds who are naïve to these predators. An often overlooked third predator in Hawaii is the Small Indian Mongoose (*Herpestes javanicus*). Many visitors may catch a glimpse of one of these small, squirrel-like critters as they scuttle across the road or rummage around parking lots. While they may appear benign, these vicious mammals are serious predators that eat just about anything in their path.

Mongoose are native to much of the Old World, particularly in tropical and warm environments. While similar in appearance to weasels, mongooses make up their own taxonomic family, *Herpestidae*. They are a generalist predators making them a significant threat to native fauna when they are introduced elsewhere. Introduced mongooses are implicated in many significant declines and extinctions of birds, mammals and reptiles globally and are considered one of the worst invasive species in the world.



Mongoose with native Apapane.  
Photo/Copyright by Jack Jeffrey Photography.

The Small Indian Mongoose was introduced to Hawaii Island in 1883 (and then further to Maui, Molokai and Oahu) to help control the growing rat population in sugar cane fields. While mongooses certainly eat rodents, they also will seek out any other prey available to them. What's more mongooses are primarily active during the day while rats are nocturnal, making them a poor match for controlling rats. Mongooses quickly spread from the sugar cane fields into the surrounding landscape including native forests. Mongooses prey on native forest birds at every level of the forest from the ground to the tops of ohia trees in search of birds and nests.

Disturbingly a few mongooses were recently trapped on Kauai where they had not been known to exist prior to 2012. It is still unknown whether a breeding population exists on Kauai but with all the other threats to native birds, the addition of a new invasive predator was very unwelcomed news. Mongooses pose a significant threat to ground nesting birds like Nene and many seabirds; Kauai is a major refuge for these species. Hopefully this new invasion can be stopped but this latest incident (as well as the Little Fire Ant invasions) highlights the continued need for increased biosecurity throughout the Hawaiian Islands.

## AKOHEKOHE FOR SALE!!

Help spread the word about Akohekohe through our new MFBRP exclusive plush toy.

Birds are for sale at \$15 each at [mauiforestbirds.org](http://mauiforestbirds.org).  
Want Akohekohe for your store or business?  
Birds are available at wholesale!



# Avian Research & Management *Update*

Spring 2015, MFBRP began monitoring avian demographics and composition in Nakula Natural Area Reserve. Variable circular plot (VCP) point counts were performed on three transects. Mist nets were set up in three different locations to band birds and take fecal and blood samples for diet and disease analysis. These baseline studies will help monitor the effects of forest restoration on the bird community in this area.

Nineteen bird species were detected during counts and nine species were caught during mist netting. Only 5 out of the 20 species found were native: Apapane, Hawaii Amakihi, Pueo, Kolea, and Nene. Next spring, we will continue these surveys in addition to re-sighting color banded individuals which will give us more information on adult and juvenile survival as well as habitat use in the area.

Thanks to our volunteers and banding assistants this year: Chalese Carlson, Heidi VanVliet, Michelle Hall, Rebecca Geelhood, Liza Olson, Keith Burnett, and Claudia Wierzbicki.

*Photos on right, top to bottom: Juvenile Apapane with color bands, Pueo (Hawaiian Short-eared Owl).*



Maui Bird Conservation Center (MBCC) is one of two facilities operated by San Diego Zoo Global in Hawaii as a part of the Hawaii Endangered Bird Conservation Program. They breed and raise endangered birds in captivity such as the Alala (Hawaiian Crow), Kiwikiu, and now Kauai honeycreepers, Akikiki and Akekee. The birds they raise in captivity will eventually be released in the wild, aiding these dwindling populations. It's not an easy job taking care of these endangered birds, but they have been fruitful. In the past, MBCC has successfully released Nene (Hawaiian Goose) and Puaiohi.

On November 7th and 8th, MBCC will be having their annual open house. The facility is otherwise closed to the public due to the

sensitivity of these birds. If you are interested in attending the open house, call 808-572-0690. Tour times are 8 am, 10am, 12pm, and 2pm.

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## New Publications

Visit [www.mauiforestbirds.org](http://www.mauiforestbirds.org) to access all MFBRP publications.

- Berthold LK, Warren CC, Mounce HL, Vetter JP. 2015. [Leeward East Maui Forest Bird Community: Surveys in Nakula Natural Area Reserve](#). Poster Presentation. Hawaii Conservation Conference, Hilo, HI.
- Burnett, K. 2015. [Potential Kiwikiu Habitat on Leeward Haleakala](#). Poster Presentation. University of Hawaii- Maui College.
- Davies, R. Growth Industry. Hana Hou Magazine of Hawaiian Airlines. Oct./Nov 2015.
- MFBRP Workplan 2015-2016. [This annual planning document outlines our research and management strategies](#).
- Steutermann-Rogers K. [Chasing Kiwikiu](#). Hawaii Magazine. 31 Aug. 2015.
- Wang AX. 2015. Movement patterns of adult and juvenile Akohekohe (*Palmeria dolei*). Presentation. Hawaii Conservation Conference, Hilo, HI.
- Check out page 3 for more!

# Nakula Forest Restoration *Update*

Over 20,000 seedlings have been planted since 2013 and overall survival is high at the 18 month monitoring period (87% survival). Over 3600 field hours were put in by volunteers and MFBRP crew so far this year. We have three additional large planting trips this winter and will continue planting throughout bird monitoring trips in the spring.

Additionally, we are performing adult and larval mosquito surveys, monitoring plants and plots, and collecting seeds.

MFBRP gave three scientific presentations this year about the Nakula restoration work that we are doing and some of the preliminary results from monitoring. [Planning for Kiwikiu reintroduction: Habitat restoration in Nakula Natural Area Reserve, Maui](#) was given at the Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation (ATBC) Conference in Honolulu in July, Hawaii Conservation Conference in Hilo in August, and the Maui Weed Forum in Kahului in October.



MFBRP assistants Diana Sciambi and Heather Mackey in a two-year planting plot.

## MFBRP IN THE NEWS WITH AUDUBON



Check it out: [How Scientists are Racing to Save a Rare Hawaiian Bird from Extinction](#) by Brooke Jarvis in the Sept/Oct Audubon Magazine (photo on left from article).

Additionally, MFBRP was awarded the 2015 Organizational Conservation Award from the Hawaii Audubon Society on Oahu in October.

## THANK YOU!

Everyone can be a part of restoration on Maui!

We've had many seedlings sponsored by supporters of native forest restoration.

To sponsor a tree to be planted in Nakula, or to dedicate a tree to a loved one, please visit [www.mauiforestbirds.org/articles/100](http://www.mauiforestbirds.org/articles/100).

Thank you to our volunteers who have helped us in Nakula since July: Ian Vogel, German Gordo, Barry Borell, Carmen Antaky, Sloan Hill-Lindsay, Lawrence Warnock, Russell Reinertson, Maria Costantini, Diana Sciambi, John Meckel, Ben Davis, Sarah Anderson, and Bryan Berkowitz.



# Project Support & Partnerships

## Adopt-A-Kiwikiu Sponsorship Program



Consider becoming more involved with Kiwikiu conservation and habitat restoration by participating in our Adopt-a-Kiwikiu Program. By adopting a Kiwikiu, you'll be helping us to protect this endangered species and the recovery efforts to save them.

When you ADOPT-A-KIWIKIU, you will receive gifts and information about your bird:

- **Regular Level (\$25 donation):** Adoption certificate.
- **Individual Level (\$50 donation):** Sponsors 1 Kiwikiu. Receive 1 plush Kiwikiu and an adoption certificate with information about your bird.
- **Breeding Pair Level (\$100 donation):** Sponsors 2 Kiwikius. Receive 2 plush Kiwikius and an adoption certificate with information about your birds.
- **Family Group Level (\$250 donation):** Sponsors 10 native trees and 2 Kiwikius. Receive 2 plush Kiwikiu, Kiwikiu and tree sticker, adoption and tree sponsorship certificate with information about your birds and trees.

Adoption details are on our website [www.mauiforestbirds.org](http://www.mauiforestbirds.org).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- ▶ **PINT NIGHT FOR THE BIRDS at Maui Brewing Company. Friday, November 27th, 6-10pm.** Half the nights' pub profits go towards protecting native birds.
- ▶ **KAHALA MALL VERY MERRY EVENT on Oahu. Friday-Sunday, December 4-6, 2015.** Buy tickets to this [shopping event](#) to raise funds for native birds. At the event, participating stores and restaurants are providing exclusive offers, savings, and gifts with purchases to pass holders. VIP passes are \$5. Purchase through MFBRP by November 30th.
- ▶ **#GIVING TUESDAY.** How will you give this December 1st? Whether you choose to give monetarily, through social media, or through volunteering your time, remember to give back to your community. Join us for a volunteer day at our office on December 1st. To sign up, email [laura@mauiforestbirds.org](mailto:laura@mauiforestbirds.org).
- ▶ **HYUNDAI GOLF TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS. January 6-10, 2016.** Purchase tickets to this [PGA tour](#) and 100% of the net proceeds will benefit bird conservation. Passes range from \$22-\$60. Purchase through MFBRP by January 3rd.
- ▶ **Give HAWAIIAN AIRLINES Miles to MFBRP.** [Hawaiian Airlines](#) matches up to a half a million miles.

**Aloha to Teia Schweizer, 2014-2015 KUPU-AmeriCorps.**

**E Komo Mai to new KUPU-AmeriCorps intern, Ariana Loehr and new restoration assistants, Bob Taylor, Heather Mackey, and Aarin Sengsirirak.**

**Mahalo to those who participated in September's Foodland Give Aloha and May's Charity Walk.**

