

# THE KUKUI LEAF

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University of Hawai'i-Mānoa  
Harold L. Lyon Arboretum

## Looking Ahead: Education Programs in 2009

The new Education Center, a hub of construction activity for the last several months, is tantalizingly close to completion. We have watched with anxious anticipation as the new building arose from the footprint of the old "Cottage A." The new Education Center will have several features that will significantly improve the Arboretum's education facilities, including a new classroom/multipurpose room, additional office space, meeting space, and covered walkways. Perhaps the most notable improvements from the 1920's vintage Cottage A will be the addition of multiple bathrooms for our K-12 school programs, new electrical wiring and cable access. We will now be able to fully utilize available technology while providing a safe, accessible learning environment for all of our education programs. The Arboretum's Adult Education program is back on track with many

new classes starting up in January, along with a new series of classes for our guides training program. Information on upcoming classes is available on our website. The Arboretum's Children's Garden and the Marilyn Mueller Goss Children's Learning Center will reopen with the new Education Center, providing a unique outdoor classroom experience for thousands of young children and their families. Staff and volunteers have been busy preparing the garden for the reopening, if you'd like to help us make this an extraordinary place, give us a call at 988-0461...we'd love to have your help and keep it thriving! It seems especially relevant to be opening the Arboretum's new Education Center in 2009, 'The Year of Science', and also the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Charles Darwin! Plans are underway for a birthday celebration, and Biodiversity Day / Endangered Species Day this spring. We also have several new projects starting up, in-

cluding an exciting organic gardening and culinary outreach program with Kalani High School and Kapiolani Community College. We are also partnering with the College of Engineering on a web-based informational portal for Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM). The STEM inter-community portal (SIP) site is a user-driven meeting place, providing public access to resources and expertise to connect with people interested in organic gardening, native Hawaiian plant conservation, and other related topics. You can join this educational community by logging on to the SIP site: [www.sip-hawaii.org](http://www.sip-hawaii.org) We look forward to a great new year...and we hope you join us at the Arboretum! Come for classes, workshops, take a tour with friends or family, or just stop in and check out the all the activity!

*-Jill Laughlin*



## New staff at the Arboretum

The Arboretum is delighted to include new staff: (left to right) Destin Shigano (Administrative Officer), Clarence Ako (Maintenance), Poco Compehos (Ethnobotanist assistant), and Kalani Matsumura (Botanical Support Technician). Please welcome them with aloha!

### WISH LIST:

New Stihl backpack blower, large office wall clock, pitchforks, Black & Decker dust buster, wall-mounted coat rack, mondo grass

*We acknowledge, with gratitude, the following donors:*

*Louise Miehl, John Chang, Mark Service, Ele Potts, Matsuko Beaslie, Ann Uyeda, Howard Grant, Ronald Nakagawa*

## From the Director's Desk



Conservation is central to the mission of most botanic gardens and arboreta. This makes perfect sense, as we must be stewards of plants if we are to display, study, and teach about their importance.

In Hawai'i, the imperative conservation is particularly compelling when we consider that more than one third of all threatened and endangered (T&E) plants in the United States occur here. To put it another way, there are more T&E plants per square mile here than anywhere else on the face of the earth. By some estimates, we risk losing close to 50% of native plants within the next 100 years.

What on earth, so to speak, can we do? There is very little that any one organization can do alone to make a difference. But there is hope. We are enormously proud of the work Nellie Sugii and her staff have done to save and restore the rare plants of Hawai'i. Jill Laughlin and her staff have developed superior education programs to engage people of all ages in learning about our natural heritage. And how about our outstanding and creative gardeners who care for the plants themselves and offer visi-

tors a stunning array of plants from all corners of the tropical world?!

But that is not enough. We need more gardens, conservation organizations, government agencies, and individuals like you to tackle the serious crisis we are facing. And we need more funding for plant conservation. There are more than twice the number of rare plants than animals, but less than 10% of the federal money for rare species protection goes to plants! To redress this imbalance, Lyon Arboretum partnered with the National Tropical Botanical Gardens (Kaua'i), Waimea Valley, Bishop Museum, The Nature Conservancy, various state and federal agencies, and the native Hawaiian community to form the Hawai'i Plant Conservation Initiative (HiPCI). It is our goal not to duplicate the work of other partnerships, but to increase awareness of, and funding for, plant conservation efforts. It is a monumental task, but one that we must undertake and, thanks to our talented staff and our supporters, one that we do have the capacity to achieve.

*-Dr. Christopher Dunn*

## Volunteer of the Quarter

This quarter we recognize Kay Davies for her hard work and the positive energy she brings to Lyon Arboretum. Kay can be found each week, rain or shine, in the gardens, whether it's weeding with the grounds crew, or leading a group of visitors on a hike for our Docent Program. After spending much of her life in Alaska, Kay found a sunny home in Hawai'i, and she didn't waste any time in finding Lyon Arboretum. Her first volunteer experience at the Arboretum was actually part of her initial visit to the island!

"We stayed at a hostel in Mānoa, and the woman who worked there would bring visitors up to the Arboretum for the first Saturday work parties," Kay remembers, "I still remember my first day working with Ray. We cut heliconias."

When asked about her favorite way to spend her

volunteer hours, she answered, "[I like] leading visitor tours. It is so nice to meet and interact with visitors, and share the gardens with them." As a retired teacher and secretary,



Kay has many talents, and she is no stranger to the plant world. Before leaving Alaska, she completed the Master Gardener Program.

When she's not wearing her hiking boots and garden gloves, Kay enjoys music - she herself plays the piano and stand up bass!

Next time you see Kay out in the garden, let her know how much we appreciate her dedication to making the Arboretum a special place to work and visit!

*-James Krolkowski*

## Branching Out



Trees provide us with an amazing range of benefits. So many of us have sought refuge under the

shade of a large tree during a hot sunny day, or enjoyed one of the many delectable edibles which trees produce. However, when we go to care for the trees that have cared for us it is easy to do more harm than good. I would like to provide our readers with insight into proper tree care practices so that we can protect and maintain these valuable assets to our landscape.

One major disservice people have done to their trees is topping, which is the indiscriminate cutting of tree

branches. This practice is often performed to open up a view from one's property or to mitigate hazards associated with tall trees looming over buildings and houses. While topping solves these problems on a short term basis, it subsequently creates a monster in the long term. The large open wounds created by topping expose a tree to insect and fungal pests leading to extensive decay in the remaining trunk. Topping removes a significant portion of a tree where energy is created, which may compromise a tree's ability to defend itself against these invaders. Growth that occurs following topping is weakly attached to the main stem,

leading to future branch failure.

A tree topped today may create a very serious (and costly) safety issue a few years down the road. Aside from the negative impacts topping may cause to a tree, it is also unsightly and permanently alters the aesthetic beauty a tree may provide. There are many viable alternatives to tree topping such as crown reduction or removal of the current tree and replacement with a more appropriate species that matures at a shorter height. For more information on this subject you can visit [www.treesaregood.org](http://www.treesaregood.org) or consult a qualified arborist.

*-Steve Connolly*

## Construction Update

The first phase of construction at Lyon Arboretum included renovations to the Main Building and rebuilding Cottage A (for the Education Department) and Cottage G (for the Horticulture Department), which should all be completed by the end of this year.

The contractors are in the final stages of the cosmetic phase of the work on Cottages A and G, with only the electrical hook-up and Cottage A's wheelchair lift installations left to finish. Both cottages are already painted a eucalyptus green and feature new ma-

hogany trim windows, tile flooring, covered walkways, and plenty of much needed storage space for tools and equipment.

A completely new water system will also be installed for the cottages, which should be finished early next year. The existing galvanized piping has almost rusted through in numerous places, and is in constant need of repair, so the new water system will be much appreciated by all. The contractors will use high density

polyethylene (HDPE) pipes on the new line, which should last much longer than the galvanized pipes.

After months of patience and planning, there is much excitement and anticipation about moving into the new buildings, and the reopening of the Children's Garden and the Marilyn Mueller Goss Children's Learning Center with the new Children's Center in early 2009.

*-Ken Seamon*



*(Left) East view of Cottage A where the wheelchair lift will be installed to ease access into the upstairs meeting rooms and offices.*

*(Right) East view of Cottage G. The Grounds and Living Collections Dept. will have their offices upstairs and the downstairs will include a shower, a covered lanai and a small garage.*



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## Holiday Craft and Plant Sale

Plant enthusiasts and holiday shoppers braved the gusty winds and drenching rain to come to the annual holiday craft and plant sale at the Arboretum on Nov. 22, 2008. Thank you to all our dedicated volunteers and devoted patrons for your support.

