



Pa'auilo Mauka Kalopa Community Association  
Photo courtesy of Karl Backus

## Monthly News & Updates

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### January 2021 Newsletter

# Kalōpā Park Today

## Helping to Maintain the Gardens & Trails

By the Kalōpā Park Committee



*Dave Anderson and grandson Tazman watch Shigeyo Ricci weed the Taro*

The Pa'auilo Mauka Kalōpā Community Association (PMKCA) Park Committee wants to let you know what is going on today in our beautiful Kalōpā State Park. We hope you learned more about the park's history last month.

High above Honoka'a Town sits Kalōpā State Park. At about the 2000-foot elevation, the park is filled with tall timber trees, native forest and marked hiking trails. A



horse trail starts near the entrance gate.

The Park is maintained by two employees who manage the visitor cabins and campground, clean and mow the extensive lawn area and maintain the roads. They also monitor the progress of Rapid 'Ohi'a Death (ROD) and maintain the peace in the park



*Rob Culbertson, Kristina Adams, Linda Gallano, Francis Higgins and Dave DeEsch watching Chuck Chimera planting a new Hō'awa along the Dryland Trail.*

The Park consists of 100 acres that include a campground, a pavilion with restrooms, two rental cabins with a community kitchen, an arboretum, 12 Hibiscus species, a Nature Trail, and a Polynesian Garden. An additional 500 acres of Forest Reserve includes forest planted for conservation and marked trails. The trails are constantly in need of clearing including cutting trees that have fallen across the trail. Most of the trail maintenance in forested areas falls to volunteers.

Many years ago, PMKCA established a supportive relationship with the Park. An agreement with the state allowed us to provide brochures and ask for a nominal donation (\$1) to pay for printing and upgrading materials. We provide two brochures: One covers the trail system (including a map) and has information about the plants in the entire park. The other brochure is a guide to the Nature Trail with a key to the numbered signs identifying various plants and other items of interest.

P. Quentin Tomich, who played a key role in forming the park, researched the plants and, according to our sources, developed the brochures in the 1970s. Mike Crosson updated the brochures in 2012 and a PMKCA trail group updated them again in 2018. Brochures are available at the kiosk near the cabins and Diana Nui replenishes the stock weekly.

PMKCA maintains the kiosk with pictures of the park founders, maps to the Polynesian Garden and a graphic display of native and non-native plants and animals found in the forest. Thanks to Chuck Chimera, Weed Risk Assessment Specialist with the Hawai'i Invasive Species Committee (HISC), for his help with this and other projects.



*Chuck Chimera talking to the trail gang about the 'Ohi'a test plots.*

When you visit Kalōpā Park, don't miss the Nature Trail! It is accessed from the kiosk area by walking toward the utility/storage buildings and following the signs. PMKCA volunteers work constantly on the Nature Trail to keep it clear of invasive species (wireweed, night blooming jasmine, thimble berries, and guava) and to make sure the signs are clean and in place. Thanks to Francis Higgins, Dave DeEsch and Henry Herrera for making and refurbishing signs along the trails and in the Polynesian Garden.

Recently our volunteers cleared



*Trail Gang near the Dryland Forest trail, Rob Culbertson, Francis Higgins, Kristina Adams, Linda Gallano, Mike Crosson, Chuck Chimera, and Dave DeEsch.*

and opened up the overgrown Dryland Forest Trail (near the Nature Trail) and are in the process of cleaning, replacing and removing signs identifying native plants. The Dryland Forest Trail is open through to the original Arboretum which contains native trees over 60 years old. The area is overrun by guava, ironwood, and eucalyptus planted as timber trees long ago.

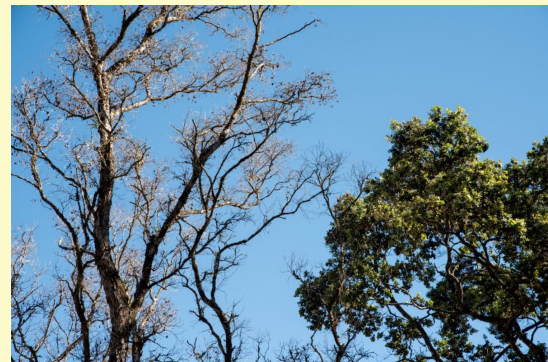
A trail gang of five women, Diana Nui, Linda Gallano, Henri Etta Schmitz, Shigeyo Ricci and Kristina Adams, work on the

trails at least once a month and would be grateful for additional volunteers. Mike Crosson, Rob Culbertson, and Chuck Chimera work with the trail gang and alongside groups eradicating strangler fig and other invasive species.

The trails in the large Forest Reserve area are used by hikers and mountain bikers and offer both quiet walks and vigorous trails. Horses are allowed in some areas. The PMKCA trail gang cannot keep up with all the maintenance on these rougher trails. Several other groups clear fallen trees and overgrown invasive plants. We are especially grateful to Grant Matsushige and his gang of mountain bikers (Grant Miller, Jeff McDevitt & Bruce Wacker of Kona; Brian Cook, Michaela Martin & Dave Nawahine of Waimea; Christian Englehardt and Julie Englehardt of Hilo; and Tyson Anderson of Volcano) who keep in touch with each other about trail issues and haul in big saws with their strong arms to keep the trails open for everyone, mountain bikers and casual hikers.

Along the Nature Trail and other trails, you may notice several areas in which plants are marked with orange flags. A sign in the area reads in part, *"We have planted 'ohi'a seedlings at this site to test whether they can survive in forest sites with active ROD infections."*

*Example of a stately victim of Rapid 'Ohi'a Death*



These are test plots managed by a collaboration of the US Geological Survey, UH Hilo Hawaii Cooperative Study Unit, the Big Island Invasive Species Committee (BIISC) and the US Forest Service. Chuck Chimera, in his HISC role, is leading the monthly monitoring of the plots. We can direct you to reference material if you are interested.

Before the first of each month an email is generated by Linda Gallano that reminds us to meet at the kiosk near the cabins and to bring sickles or a machete and be ready to clear trails. Or the email might tell us to meet at the Polynesian Garden to work on weed control, watering and clean-up there.

*An 'Ohi'a seedling in one of the test plots.*



Have you visited the Polynesian Garden? It's a site in the park often missed. Follow the road past the pavilion to its end, a gravel parking area. The garden is a short walk downhill across the lawn. It's a great place to visit for the less sure-footed who want to go a bit beyond the grass and enjoy the natural environment.

Plants in the Polynesian Garden are called "Canoe Plants" because the early Polynesian settlers of Hawai'i brought along (in their voyaging canoes) plants that they would need as they settled in new lands. Canoe plants were (and are) important to Hawaiian culture, providing food, medicine, and material for clothing and building. Many of these plants are considered kīno lau (variant forms) of Hawaiian deities and are used in cultural rites.

Our garden has 12 of the 24-29 plant species introduced by Polynesian settlers, the plants were sourced locally. There are signs identifying plants in the garden. Plants used for food are Mai'a, 'Uala, Kalo, Ohia'ai, Hoi, and Ko. Medicinal plants here are 'Olena, 'Awapuhi, 'Awa, and Kukui. Wauke and Ki were used to make clothing and footwear.



*Diana Nui, Henri Etta Schmitz, and Shigeyo Ricci in the Polynesian Garden*

We always appreciate anyone who would like to help out in the gardens or trails. Please contact us through the website [www.PMKCA.org](http://www.PMKCA.org) (use the search bar to find "Contacts").

We will be happy to have you join us in our maintenance efforts for an hour now and then, or as a permanent member of our team. Kalōpā State Park and the Forest Reserve have a lot to offer and we encourage you to come and enjoy it.

Kalōpā State Park and the Forest Reserve are invaluable resources for our community. We want you to share in the experiences of the park beyond the pavilion, lawns, campground and cabins. The Nature Trail, Polynesian Garden and forested areas are rare examples of what once was here. The trails in the Forest Reserve are rough and fun. You will see trees planted in the 1930s and the understory that has crept in among them and understand the fertility and abundance of Kalōpā.

We close again this month remembering P. Quentin Tomich, "Community Matters".

*(Photos by Sarah Anderson. Thank you!)*

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## ***PLEASE READ AND CONSIDER:***

### **Volunteer for one of PMKCA's Open Board & Officer Positions!**

***If you have an interest in the welfare of our communities, appreciate what PMKCA does, and want to join a great group of similarly motivated folks, please consider volunteering for one of these two positions on the PMKCA Board:***

#### **Secretary:**

Our current Secretary, Diana Nui, will be resigning her position at the end of 2020. Diana will continue to be active in our association, in particular, by working on the Kalōpā Park Committee. We will miss her insightful participation

on the Board and are very grateful for her contributions over the years.

The Secretary is an officer position in PMKCA and involves taking minutes at General Membership and Board meetings, maintaining the records of PMKCA and handling a small number of other communications on behalf of our association.

### **Water, Health & Utilities Committee chair:**

Jami Sales, our Water, Health and Utilities committee chair, has resigned from the Board after many years of service. Jami has been very active in support of our community in many ways and we will miss her contributions to PMKCA board activities. Thank you, Jami, for all your hard work.

The Water, Health & Utilities Committee keeps in touch with county and other utility providers to address problems or provide information to our Pa'auilo Mauka and Kalōpā communities when changes are planned. The committee also maintains maps of utility services in our Pa'auilo Mauka and Kalōpā communities (water lines, in particular).

***If you are interested in volunteering for either position, please contact any of our Board members by phone or email. Contact information can be found at [www.PMKCA.org](http://www.PMKCA.org).***

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### ***Next PMKCA Meeting***

**Thursday, Jan 14, 2021, 7PM PMKCA Board of Directors Meeting**  
(By Zoom Videoconference. Contact a Board member for details.)

### ***Our PMKCA Annual Meeting WILL BE CANCELLED due to continuing COVID-19 restrictions.***

We continue to work at the Board and committee level on behalf of our communities. If you have any interests or concerns, we encourage you to email any Board member and to attend the Jan 14 Board meeting.

### ***IT'S TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN PMKCA!***

In these trying times, PMKCA continues to support our communities by funding projects and making contributions to other local groups that serve our communities. Your dues (\$20 per calendar year) are our primary source of these necessary funds.

***Please renew your membership in January for 2021.*** You can find payment options, including an easy PayPal link, on our website, [www.PMKCA.org](http://www.PMKCA.org). Under "Home", click on "Membership/Dues".

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