

NATIVE HAWAIIAN PLANT SOCIETY
NEWSLETTER, JUNE 1989

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NIGHT MEETING JUNE 23

Our second night meeting of the year will be held at 6:30 pm on Friday, June 23 in the Maui Electric Community Service Room, corner of Kamehameha and Kane in Kahului. Art Medieros, Haleakala National Park research scientist, will give another of his great slide shows on "Montane Bogs and Hawaiian Rainforests". Our teeshirts and books will be on sale. Refreshments will be served.

NIGHT MEETING PLANT SALE

Plants grown by members working with project leader Lisa Raymond will be on sale at the night meeting, June 23. We'll have Ma'ohauhele (Hibiscus Brackenridgei), Ti (Cordyline terminalis), Ma'o (Gossypium sandwicense), Hibiscus cockii, Maile (Alyxia oliviformis) and more. For more information, call Lisa at 579-9787.

THE WEED WRENCH--IT REALLY WORKS!

In February 1989, Geary Mizuno, a NHPS member who lives in Washington D.C., sent me information on a weed pulling tool, the Weed Wrench. Geary offered to purchase a Weed Wrench and donated it to the Society if someone would keep records on its effectiveness and publish a report in our newsletter. After reading the product literature, I agreed to test the Weed Wrench and write the report.

The first field test was conducted on March 22 in the Hosmer Grove area of Haleakala National Park and targeted Pinus patula (Mexican Weeping Pine) and Eucalyptus globulus (Blue Gum). It was a sunny day, and the soil was dry. The pines ranged in size from the smallest seedling to saplings with 2" diameter stems. Most were overhead, 6 to 10 feet tall. Approximately 75 were pulled in 5 hours. I found that if the Weed Wrench could grasp the stem (maximum bite of 2"), the plant could be pulled up. The eucalyptus were also saplings with 2" diameter stems. These plants seemed easier than the pines to remove. About 15 were removed in less than one hour.

The second field test was conducted on March 26 on Ulex europaeus again in the Hosmer Grove area of Haleakala National Park. As with the pine and gum trees, I found that if the gorse plant could be grasped by the Weed Wrench, it could be pulled up. Almost all of the gorse in this experiment had been chopped off at ground level in previous alien plant control projects. With such plants, the stem often snapped off at ground level just above the previous cut. This left the roots and a large basal stem at ground level. With a little grubbing around the stem to give the Weed Wrench something to bite, the root could be removed. One such plant had a basal stem at ground level of 2" diameter and radial roots that extended 6'. It took 15 minutes to remove this plant by making repeated pulls.

Positive characteristics of the Weed Wrench:

1. It is very effective for the size of weed recommended as long as the weed has a woody stem.
2. It provides managers and volunteers with an option to chemical control.
3. The Weed Wrench does not disturb the ground as much as grubbing so nearby native plants can be spared.
4. It is safer than chemicals, chain saws, or chopping tools.
5. While I can't say that pulling weeds with the Weed Wrench is easy, it is certainly easier than grubbing with a pick & shovel.

The only negative characteristic I noticed was the weight. The heavy duty model weighs 21 lbs. However, it also comes in light and medium-duty models.

As a result of the above experiments in Haleakala National Park, the Division of Resources Management has ordered 3 each of all the models for use on alien plant control. As we gain experience with the light and medium-duty models, I will keep the Society membership informed. Thanks to Geary Mizuno for upping us in touch with this valuable tool.--Peter Connally

CAMPOUT AT GRESSIT RESERVE

We'll have our second annual campout at the Gressit Reserve above Kahana on Saturday, June 17. As with last year, we'll meet at Camp Pecusa in Olowalu at 4 p.m. and caravan from there. We'll need 4X4's because the access road is badly torn-up. That evening we'll share sunset potluck dinner, and do a bit of work in the morning. Call Linda Nelson at 661-4303 for details and to arrange transportation.

MAUI BOTANICAL GARDEN THREATENED

The time is nearing when the future of the Maui Zoo and adjacent Maui Botanical Garden will be decided. The area is slated for development of a county complex, including a county fair site, culture and arts complex, and park. We've already heard talk of moving the Zoo. The county regards the Garden as part of the Zoo. According to councilwoman Alice Lee's office, any action on the Maui Botanical Garden will be a part of their decision on the Zoo. If the Garden were moved, many of its extremely rare native plants and trees would not survive; in other words, a disaster. The NHPS started as a support group for the Garden and, as lovers of Hawaiian native plants, we should try to save it. Call the Mayor's office at 243-7855 (or your council people) to ask questions about the Garden's future and voice your opinion that it should be kept where it is. If enough of us call, the Garden will be saved.

579-9616 - Rene

MEMBERSHIP

Our 1989 dues remain a bargain, \$5. Just fill out the form below and mail it to us with your \$5 check.

MEMBERSHIP FORM--NATIVE HAWAIIAN PLANT SOCIETY

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ADDRESS _____ REGULAR ___\$5 ___\$10
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