

Invertebrate Conservation Strategy Meetings, June 2011 Meeting Minutes

Honolulu, HI

2 June 2011, 1-3pm at Bishop Museum

Attendees: Neal Evenhuis, Curtis Ewing, Frank Howarth, Michael San Jose, Jaynee Kim, Norine Yeung, Dylan Ressler, Kapua Kawelo, Adam Vorsino, Cory Campora, Stephan Lee, Stephanie Joe, Michael Richardson, Dan Polhemus, Cynthia King, Randall Kennedy

Hilo, HI

7 June 2011, 8-10am at Hilo DOFAW office

Attendees: Dan Gruner, Bob Peck, Page Else, Bill Gilmartin, Karl Magnacca, Jesse Eiben, Fred Stone, Cynthia King

At both meetings Cynthia King served as facilitator, and gave updates on the progress of ICS events/projects/action items from 2010:

AGENDA

1. 2010 Bioblitz – Pahole NAR

- Rapid bio-assessment of invertebrate fauna conducted in Pahole NAR on 28-31 March 2010.
- Positive feedback from the 30+ people who participated in the field collections and 1-day specimen sort. It was an excellent opportunity to collect in an area that many people had not been able to without a cumbersome permit application process, to meet new invertebrate folks, and spend some quality field time with those you may not see very often.
- It was also a productive learning experience which will inform future coordination and outlining objectives. We have a better understanding of how to streamline things to maximize information gathering while minimizing non-target take.
- A presentation on the ICS and Pahole Bioblitz was given at the 2010 HCC – presented by Betsy Gagne

2. Native Insect Symposium at the Pacific Branch Ent. Soc. Meeting, 28-30 March 2011

- Jim Liebherr (Cornell University) hosted an afternoon discussion section, we will distribute minutes to the entire group when they are available.
- General topics of discussion were not unlike subjects we have discussed in ICS meetings: finding productive funding sources (PICCC was mentioned), identifying potential strategies to further invertebrate conservation, including strategic listing proposals to FWS, and looking at conservation in the context of prioritizing landscapes/specific habitats of conservation value.
- Dan Polhemus explained that USFWS is currently drafting a Strategic Plan, which could incorporate priority landscapes (which may then be a source for funding research/conservation/management in those areas).

- Discussion of strategic listing of a rare invertebrate group or groups that 1) rely on native habitats/rare host plants, and would confer protection on important habitat, and that 2) may also be widely perceived as charismatic to open the public's hearts and minds to invertebrates.

3. Statewide Invertebrate Database update

- Preliminary funding received from NARS program in FY11 to begin development of the backend of our statewide invert database.

- In March a Request for Proposals was posted on the State of Hawaii Electronic Procurement system website, and 3 bids were received from vendors.

- Bishop Museum won the bid: Richard Pyle, Jim Parham, Tracie Mackenzie.

Work set to begin for planning and design of the backend of the database in June 2011.

- There is a great deal to discuss, and we are encouraged to come up with our "pie in the sky" wishes for such a database...which doesn't mean we can achieve everything...but gives database developers a concept of our wants/needs.

4. Invertebrate Educational Poster(s) / flagship species nominations

- Showed a poster from the Rare Plant – Plant Extinction Prevention program – which highlights rare and charismatic species. It was completed with the help of DOFAW education and outreach staff, and distributed to our partners and schools across the state.

- Proposed creating a poster for native invertebrate species, and opened the discussion as to what kind of theme or content to include. The layout will be consistent with PEP poster, as education staff is looking for consistency. Previous "flagship species nominations" could be used to decide content. Nominations were solicited in 2009 and some received, but some folks found the spreadsheet confusing. I'll solicit new and reference previous flagship species nominations to help select poster content.

5. 2011 Bioblitz – Big Island, site selection and potential dates

- Like last year, funding is being provided by the DOFAW-NARS program, so we are trying to select locations where updated species list information will benefit us as resource managers to understand the fauna in the area more comprehensively. In talking with our folks writing the management plans, they proposed: Kau FR or the new Kulani NAR. Management plans are slated to be written in the next 1-2 years for both areas. Both areas are large, and we would only be able to survey small parts of them in the 2-3 day bioblitz timeframe.

- Kulani NAR – has a lot of habitat variety in a smaller area: wet and mesic forest, has some bog habitat. Recent lava flows intermixed with older kipukas. No ungulates in this area so understory is more intact. Logistically: would be fairly easily accessible, in the same way Pahole was. We could camp at the site, or commute up from DOFAW cabins.

- Kau FR – is also excellent habitat. The area contains wet and mesic forest, with gulches and some ephemeral streams. Ungulates present, so it is slightly less intact understory. Logistically: slightly more difficult but there is the Kiolakaa cabin - DOFAW cabin in Waiohinu.

- Funding is yet to be determined, but it's likely that like last year the DOFAW Native Invertebrate Program be able to provide limited funding for folks to fly to Big Island.

MEETING SPECIFIC DISCUSSIONS:

2. Native Insect Symposium (Pacific Branch Ent. Soc.) –

HONOLULU: Kapua Kawelo stated that the Army is restricted exclusively to conservation and management of species that are federally protected therefore additional listing of invertebrate species is the only mechanism that will cause Army to expand efforts.

HILO: It was mentioned that if strategic listings are pursued, it may be beneficial to look for species that are distributed on State/Federal/Army lands, and also in lands (state or otherwise) that may be in need of increased management (i.e. lands that are not NARS)

HONOLULU – Re: USFWS Strategic Plan, Dan P. and Mike Richardson went on to suggest we wait to review the first draft of the strategic planning document, which may be ready in 6 months, and confer again on the subject of prioritizing landscapes

3. Statewide Invertebrate Database update

HONOLULU and HILO -- Folks who expressed interest in the development of the invertebrate database were asked to join a working group: Neal Evenhuis, Stephanie Joe, Norine Yeung, Dan Polhemus, Dan Gruner, Page Else.

HONOLULU and HILO – There is a need to research all of the other databases currently in use, not just in Hawaii but on the mainland, which deal with ecological/specimen level data for taxa. Berkeley, American Museum of Natural History, HISC database, etc. all have databases that are achieving some of our goals, and may be emulated/borrowed from.

HONOLULU – Adam Vorsino mentioned the utility of geo-locating historical specimens where possible and contributing that information to the database to facilitate large scale comparisons of species distributions over time.

4. Invertebrate Educational Poster(s) / flagship species nominations

HILO – Suggestions: 1. taxa selected for the poster should have a good story; 2) photos should be of organism on host plants; 3) in the future we could direct different posters at multiple audiences, but for now we should focus on the environmental education (fourth grade?) level; 4) should help develop/recommend accompanying curriculum; 5) where possible include insects with Hawaiian cultural connections. There was consensus that the first poster should have only 1 of each order, to ensure invertebrate diversity is represented. Future posters can have some sort of theme, whether mesic forest, wet forest, ahupuaa, etc.

5. 2011 Bioblitz – Big Island, site selection and potential dates

HILO – While either Kau or Kulani will be the bioblitz location for 2011, Page Else suggested that Waikeleopuna be considered as a site in the future.

6. Open discussion

HONOLULU –

1) Is there a way to develop guidance or promote the need to not just restore plants, but to restore bugs on plants during conservation / restoration / enhancement projects? Is there a possibility of doing some sort of demonstration project to show how it could be done? Challenges: Encouraging, let alone requiring, folks to partake in such efforts is difficult because of the specialization and labor intensive nature of rearing invertebrates. Also, how to choose which

would be targeted? Demonstrating on a system like mamane and *Cydia* moths would be interesting...and may spark interest of more than just invertebrate folks.

2) Betsy Gagne and Neal Evenhuis noted that the increased growth of blackberry and pamakani is degrading areas of Mt. Kaala that are known to support unique species. Army no longer does anything but strategic control for those plants along trails and streams. It would be a difficult control program given the extent of infestation and lack of staff.

3) Neal Evenhuis raised the question as to what the distribution of the *Platydemas* flatworm is, and what kind of effects it's having on arthropods on Mt. Kaala. Snail folks said that *Platydemas* is documented to have an adverse effect on native snails, but had not yet been detected on Mt. Kaala. (Identification from photos made following the meeting determined that the specimens in question are not *Platydemas*, but another flatworm.)

4) Dan Polhemus shared that he had joined a DOFAW / Army survey at Kaluanui in May, and documented populations of *M. oceanicum*, *M. leptodemas* and *M. nigrolineatum* damselflies. The records were provided to DOFAW and USFWS.

HILO –

1) Page Else questioned how we might obtain additional funds for conservation of native invertebrates / quarantine measures, like a “1% for Ag, 1% for land” concept that was being pursued recently. Meeting participants did not have information on the logistics / source / outcome of that bill, but it was suggested that possibilities legislative strategy be looked into before the next legislative session.

2) The Invertebrate Conservation Strategy participants are not currently part of an official working group or advisory group. There was discussion as to whether it might be valuable to establish the ICS group more formally (as part of the Hawaii Conservation Alliance or Hawaiian Entomological Society), however there seemed to be consensus we currently have flexibility and autonomy as an unaffiliated group right now.

3) Bill Gilmartin mentioned Waiohinu Forest Reserve as a potential site for future surveys and/or a bioblitz on Big Island. The site contains remnant coastal strand habitat and has had few surveys conducted in the past.