



Native Plants of Lē'ahi

Pōhinahina

Scan this QR code to access these signs and a plant brochure to assist you in identifying these native plants as you explore Lē'ahi.



Restoration efforts have reintroduced native plants to Lē'ahi. Unfortunately, the introduced and invasive species can out compete these native plants, making it difficult for them to get established and spread. Park staff and volunteers are working hard to keep invasive weeds under control so the native species have a chance of grow and thrive.



A'ali'i
Dodonaea viscosa
Indigenous
Kento & William

Description: A'ali'i grows as a shrub to a small tree. Its flowers have red, oval petals. The glossy green leaves have a red rib and are slightly sticky. It is found on all major Hawaiian islands.

Uses: The wood was favored for making spears and house posts. The flower are used in lei and as a dye for kapa. Medicinal plant for skin rashes.

Fun Facts: The long tap root enables it to stand strong and not break in the wind.



Iliahi
Santalum freycinetianum
Endemic
Hikaru, Max & Luna

Description: Iliahi is the Hawaiian sandalwood. It ranges from a 3-foot shrub to a 40-foot tree. The flower buds are red to yellow. It is found mainly in coastal regions on all major Hawaiian islands.

Uses: Due to its fragrance, it is used for perfume and soap. Wood is used for musical instruments. Also used for religious and cultural purposes.

Fun Facts: Leaves and wood from this species were sold to China to make carved items.



Akulikuli
Sesuvium portulacastrum
Indigenous
Lily & Ozzie

Description: Akulikuli is a sprawling succulent with white to purple flowers and small green fleshy leaves. It is found on sunny, windy, sandy beaches on all the Hawaiian islands.

Uses: It is edible with a salty flavor. The flowers are used for lei but too tiny to string an akulikuli lei. Used as medicine for its anti-bacterial property.

Fun Facts: Good ground cover but prone to slug and snail attacks.



Ko'oloa'ula
Abutilon menziesii
Endemic
Rylie & Elyse

Description: Ko'oloa'ula is a shrub with small hibiscus shaped flowers that can be medium to dark red and yellow. It can reach 10 feet in height and lives in dry forests.

Uses: Used for medicine. The flowers are used to make lei.

Fun Facts: Ula means red and refers to the color of the flower. This plant is critically endangered.



Ilima papa
Sida fallax
Indigenous
Theo & Kayi

Description: Ilima papa is a shrub with yellow flowers that have 5 petals and bloom year round. It is found from the dry mesic forests to the shoreline where it can tolerate the harsh sun and salt spray.

Uses: The flowers are used to string lei and often used as a lei for the ali'i. Medicinal uses include soothing injuries and healing dry skin.

Fun Facts: Ilima is in the hibiscus family and is the lei flower of O'ahu.



Koa
Koa acacia
Endemic
Louise & Leinani

Description: Koa is a tree with crescent shaped leaves that are silver to dark green in color. The flowers are small fluffy yellow pom poms. It can reach a height of 115 feet (35 meters).

Uses: The wood was used to make weapons, canoes, surfboards, and wooden beds. It remains a favored wood for calabashes and bowls.

Fun Facts: Koa is the largest native tree and found on all major islands except Kaho'olawe and Ni'ihau.



Ma'o
Gossypium tomentosum
Endemic
Reef & Gianluca

Description: Ma'o is a shrub with silvery green leaves and yellow flowers that produce black seeds inside a cottony covering. Known as Hawaiian cotton, it is found in hot, dry, windy habitats.

Uses: The flowers and leaves are used to make a green dye for kapa.

Fun Facts: Caterpillars are not attracted to ma'o. Ma'o was bred with other cotton plants in the U.S. to make them resistant to caterpillars.



Kukui
Aleurites moluccana
Indigenous/Canoe Plant
Carter, Nazeem, & Erixton

Description: Kukui is a common tree that grows up to 80 feet tall in Hawai'i's forests. Its leaves have silver accents and the small white flowers are in clusters. The nut is within the green fruit.

Uses: The oil from the nut was lit and used as a candle. The meat of the nut is mashed to season food. Charcoal dust was used for tattoos and dyes.

Fun Facts: Kukui is the state tree and is known as the candlenut tree.



Ma'o hau hele
Hibiscus brackenridgei
Indigenous/Canoe Plant
Maia & Andy

Description: Ma'o hau hele is a small tree that grows 3-15 feet high. It has bright yellow flowers with a bit of red at the center. In the hibiscus family, the pollen on the stem attracts pollinators.

Uses: The petals are used to treat stomach issues. They can boost appetite and put an end to common cold symptoms.

Fun Facts: Ma'o hau hele is the official state flower. The flowers only last a day and turn green.



Wiliwili
Erythrina sandwincensis
Endemic
Chappell & Reillynn

Description: Wiliwili is a large tree measuring 35-45 feet tall. It drops its leaves and hibernates during the hot, dry summer. Flowers are claw shaped and yellow, orange, light green, or white.

Uses: The wood was used to make canoes, fishing gear, containers, and surfboards. The red or orange seeds are used to make lei.

Fun Facts: Wiliwili means repeatedly twisted and refers to the twisted seed pods.

Waikiki School sits at the base of this iconic landmark. Lē'ahi, also known as Diamond Head, is part of who we are. Students and staff learn and play in its shadow. We are extremely grateful to have been given the opportunity to partner with Hawai'i State Parks which allowed us to immerse our students in the history, culture, and biological diversity of Lē'ahi. Please enjoy these signs and artwork produced by the children of Waikiki School, "The Mindful School", and hopefully you will walk away with a sense of awe and wonder befitting such a beautiful site.



Waikiki School wants to say **mahalo nui loa** to all the people who guided, supported, and gave of their time to help create this exhibit for Lē'ahi. Scan this QR code to see our partners and supporters who were willing to share their knowledge about the important resources and rich history of this very special place.

Special **mahalo** to Courtney Carpenter for coordinating this project with State Parks and the student's work used in this exhibit. Courtney is the Partnerships and Place-Based Education Coordinator at Waikiki School.



Lē'ahi / Diamond Head State Monument

STATE OF HAWAII / Department of Land and Natural Resources / Division of State Parks



Plant artwork and text prepared by the 4th grade students of Waikiki School under teachers Lory Peroff and Eileen Carr.