

Title: Aquatic Invasive Species Outreach
Organization: Division of Aquatic Resources
Award: \$4,000



Introduction: The Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) program focused on the control and prevention of aquatic invaders throughout the Hawaiian Islands. Outreach is an essential aspect of controlling and preventing aquatic invasive species. The AIS program currently has a project underway to control invasive algae in Kaneohe Bay, Oahu through mechanical removal via the Super Sucker barge and by replenishment of native herbivores (collector sea urchins, *Tripneustes gratilla*) onto affected reefs. Outreach efforts have focused on topics related to this project in an effort to gain public support and community involvement. With support from HISC, the AIS program has increased outreach through education programs and public events to inform and involve local communities on invasive species issues. \$4,000 of the requested \$11,500 was granted for FY12.

Achievements in FY12

Interactions with general public: In total, ten outreach events were conducted to help raise awareness on the harmful effects of alien invasive seaweed. They were as followed:

- **Invasive Species Awareness Week:** The AIS team set up a booth at the He'eia Kea Small Boat Harbor that displayed the various types of invasive algae and a small tank with native collector sea urchins, which are used as biocontrol agents against the invasive algae. He'eia Kea is the main boat harbor in Kaneohe Bay with the most boat traffic from recreational and commercial fisherman, tourists, and divers, and serves as an important point to prevent the spread of invasive algae. Information bulletins and brochures about invasive algae were provided to the public. Additionally, the AIS team gave a presentation at Hanauma Bay education center to educate participants on aquatic invasive species and their threats to our waters.
- **1st Kookaa Kaneohe Bay Invasive Species Community Clean Up:** In March 2012, the AIS team hosted an invasive algae community clean up event, where over sixty volunteers participated in the event, including Hui Wa'a Kaukahi Kayak Club. The volunteers removed invasive algae from a fringing reef outside Paepae o He'eia fish pond. Over 16,000 pounds of invasive algae was removed. Notification of the event was posted on Green Magazine's webpage and an article about the event was printed in the magazine.
- **Benjamin Parker Elementary School:** The AIS team participated in an in-class, hands-on presentation on invasive algae and the native sea urchins. The students were able to touch the algae and urchins and learn the connectivity between the two. Additionally, the team



Volunteers removed invasive seaweed from the fringing reef outside He'eia Fish Pond.

returned for Science Night which enabled more students and their parents to learn of the invasive algae project in Kaneohe Bay. Information bulletins and brochures about invasive algae were provided.

- Expos and Conventions: The AIS team participated in both the Hawaii Ocean Expo and the Hawaii Conservation Conference. At both events, an exhibitor booth was set up to display the efforts in Kaneohe Bay as well as having invasive algae and urchin displays for the participants to see and touch. Information bulletins and brochures about invasive algae were provided.



Field/outreach technician, Tristan Walker, at the 2012 Ocean Expo where she presented information on alien invasive seaweed and the use of native

- Field Demonstrations: Students from the University of Hawaii, Native Hawaiian Science & Engineering Mentorship Program participated in in-field demonstrations of the Kaneohe Bay Super Sucker project. This opportunity allowed the students to enter the water and have a firsthand experience removing the invasive algae. In addition, students from the Mililani 'Ike robotics class created a "Submarine Bot" that was designed to remove invasive algae. This class and their parents came out to the field for a hands-on demonstration of the Super Sucker and helped transplant native sea urchins to the affected reef.
- Television Opportunity: Aqua Kids children's television show attended a field operation day and filmed an episode of the Super Sucker and what is being done to protect the coral reefs. Aqua Kids is a children's television program which seeks to educate young people about the importance of protecting marine environments and the animals that live there. This show is projected to reach thousands of children and their parents every year.

Due to limited resources, no other outreach deliverables were met.

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