



# I Ho'ōla I Ka Nahele: *To Heal A Forest*

## *A Mesic Forest Restoration Guide for Hawaii*

By Dan Sailer



## Preface

Globally unique...a storehouse of endemism ... evolutionary laboratory. Most individuals familiar with the natural history of Hawaiian forests are well acquainted with these phrases characterizing the biological heritage of our islands. Individuals from the Hawaiian community offer a different phrase for upland areas, emphasizing the living link between their cultural and natural heritage: *Wao akua*...realm of the gods. Others from the hunting community offer their own metaphor: Icebox in the mountains. While equated with solitude, our forests are a community gathering place; a worksite for some, sacred ground for many, and a playground for many others. Despite the value placed on our forests, many native forest areas are in need of healing.

The idea for this book first began six years ago when I was a student at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. Creating my own course of study in natural resource management, I realized there were no technical manuals for the restoration of any of our disappearing island native ecosystems; only much research on the environmental problems of Hawaii and even fewer published reports on the practical management of those problems. With interest in the field of ecological restoration growing in Hawaii, this book is an effort to satisfy the growing need for information on the basic principles, methods, and techniques of managing mesic forests in particular and terrestrial native Hawaiian ecosystems in general. Many of the technical recommendations in this manual stem from five years of mesic forest restoration work at The Nature Conservancy's Honouliuli Preserve on Oahu. Most of the resource management recommendations are gleaned from the published works and personal communications of those who have worked for over twenty years in the field of conservation biology.

While specifically geared toward resource managers, field biologists, and private landowners, this book is intended to be used by all those who care for our forests for the benefit of our island communities. Two centuries of forest conversion, plant invasion, and ungulate damage have indeed wreaked a devastating toll. I remain hopeful that even two decades of hard work, perseverance, and commitment will go far in restoring our role as stewards of Hawaiian forests.

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