

## *Ecology Camp 2009*



This year's High School Hikers (HSH) Ecology Camp was held during spring break at Marine Corps Base Hawai'i (MCBH) and it was a smashing success! It all began with a "Welcome Aboard" by Major David Hudock, Officer in Charge of the Environmental Department. After that, we headed out to our campsite to set up our tents at Hale Koa Beach located on the shores of Kāne'ōhe Bay.

After setting up camp, students were transported to Anderson Hall for dinner and then proceeded to the Environmental Department training classroom for an official welcome by Dr. Diane Drigot, MCBH senior natural resources management specialist and her staff. This was followed by other presentations describing the cultural and natural history of Mōkapu Peninsula and the significance of the planned service projects. Robert Harris, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Chapter of Sierra Club, also gave an official Sierra Club welcome message. A star party was to be presented by the Hawai'i Amateur Astronomical Society but it was a cloudy night. Fortunately, a late night snack around the campfire turned out to be a crowd pleaser.



Saturday morning was spent on various service projects coordinated by Dr. Drigot that included the rehabilitation of bird nesting sites, the removal of alien invasive plants from wetlands located on the base, and maintenance of streamside riparian native plant sites that have been established as part of MCBH's Watershed Restoration Program. The afternoon afforded students the opportunity to select a workshop or field study that would further enhance their understanding of this unique environment and the importance of preserving this natural and cultural resource.



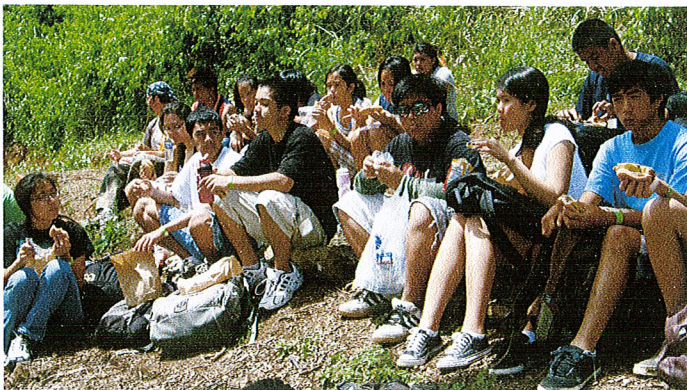


The workshops included a geology tour of the Ulupa'u Crater with a discussion of the evidence of the rise and fall of sea levels in that area. A second tour took students up to the top of the crater to observe the massive booby colony that has made this firing range their home. A third tour took students on a walk through the Mōkapu Watershed project and culminated with a *laubala* weaving demonstration by native Hawaiian practitioners of this ancient art. The final tour was led by the base archeologists who showed students the significant archeological and cultural site at Mōkapu.

That evening, Ati Jeffers-Fabro, Wetland Coordinator with the Department of Land and Natural Resources Forestry and Wildlife Division, discussed the history of the area and the projects that the Natural Area Reserve System is working on to restore wetland and coastal areas on O'ahu. Ati also presented an excellent Powerpoint presentation showing the degradation of many of the wetland areas surrounding Mōkapu and the work that still needs to be done to save the endangered native water birds that may go extinct if something is not done to restore their natural habitat.

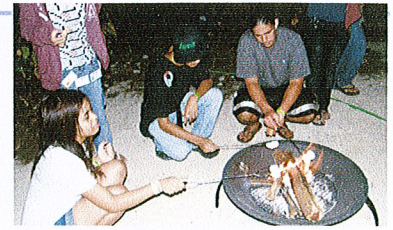


Sunday was spent at Kawainui Marsh working with Dr. Charles Burrows and his staff of volunteers. The students learned about the restoration of this culturally significant site by Dr. Burrows, who gave a guided tour of the work area so students would understand the importance of the work projects. The students were split into two groups. One group weeded invasive plants out of a newly planted native Hawaiian section while the second group removed alien species of trees and carried logs to a site where they will be used to make a path to provide access to a new section of the marsh.





The evening was a time for students to mingle and socialize with a fun competition of Wii video games. Following the competition, the students headed back to base camp for a campfire, late snack, and a time for sharing their experiences at camp.



Monday morning arrived and camp was almost over. The time was provided an opportunity for a more formal evaluation of the camp as well as a time for staff to reinforce the importance of maintaining a healthy ecosystem on our coastal areas. Ecology Camp was a big success this year, thanks to all the students, club advisers, kōkua, and resource people. A special mahalo to Dr. Diane Drigot for her coordination efforts between HSH and MCBH.

*Article by Bob Keane & Photos by Fred Nakaguma*

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★ **EDITOR'S NOTE: A big MAHALO to Ecology Camp Co-Chairs Fred Nakaguma and Bob Keane for all their hard work!** ★  
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## Ecology Camp 2009 Through the Eyes of Our Students

Through the generosity of two former High School Hikers alumni Edwin Lee and Geary Mizuno, selected students from each school who attended Ecology Camp received scholarships to attend camp for free. Below are excerpts from thank you letters to our generous HSH sponsors.

I want to thank you for allowing me to go to camp. I learned that our native plants are almost gone because of invasive plants. But at the marsh, there are more native plants now because people who care about the environment cut out the non-native plants so only the native plants can remain. We actually got to work in the marsh to remove these invasive plants and trees that were stopping the growth of the native plants. I met a lot of new people and learned how to keep our environment clean. —*Andrew Deuz, Farrington High School*



Through my experience at camp, I gained a broader and sympathetic view on the environment. I also gained a love for nature and learned more about myself. The community service that we did was very tiring but fun at the same time. The feeling of sweating because you're helping the community and the environment was worth it and it felt awesome. Ecology Camp was fun and educational. Any student who wants to experience camp or has an interest in environmental science should attend camp because it's an experience you'll never forget. —*Razzelle Rono, Roosevelt High School*



On one of our outings, I was assigned to the rock group. This group went to a restricted area on base, a once in a lifetime opportunity. The three geologists explained that just by looking at the sides of the cliff, you could see each one of the layers that the lava had made. You could also tell that the sea levels were once much higher because there were giant dead clams on the sides of the walls of the cliff. It was because of global warming where the glaciers melted and froze again. It was very interesting! All in all, Ecology Camp was an awesome experience. It was hands-on, exhilarating, educational and eye-opening. Thank you so much for making this possible. —*Cassandra Suzuki, Roosevelt High School*





# Ecology Camp 2009

## Our Mission

HSH provides support for hiking activities in various high schools in the State of Hawai'i. HSH/Sierra Club approved hike leaders work in cooperation with an advisor of a high school to provide leadership knowledgeable in hiking skills and environmental subjects.

## Active High School Hikers Clubs and Advisors

### Campbell High School

James Huyck, Kelly Quinn,  
Fred Nakaguma

### Farrington High School

Vanessa Escajeda, Patrick Vieira  
John M. Cummings III, Adaline Kam

### Leilehua High School

Jeannette Keane, Bob Keane

### Moanalua High School

Erron Yoshioka, Mark Lee

### Roosevelt High School

Joan Matsuzaki, Tomonori Hayamichi



## Coming Up Next Year!

September 26, 2009  
Fall Hikers Workshop



October 24-25, 2009  
Halloween Camp

January 16-18, 2010  
Ecology Camp



March 14-18, 2010  
Advanced Ecology Camp on Maui

May 1, 2010  
End of the Year Picnic