



**Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources
Division of Forestry and Wildlife
State Office Building
3060 Eiwa Street
Lihue, Kaua'i, HI 96766-1875**

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 29, 2006

**KAUAI RESIDENTS TACKLED LIGHT POLLUTION AND SAVED
SHEARWATERS AND PETRELS IN 2005**

Thanks to a variety of new efforts on Kauai to darken the night skies many young seabirds were able to migrate safely to sea in 2005. The Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) extend a warm thank you to the many agencies, organizations, and businesses that helped decrease outdoor light pollution between September 15 and December 15. Young Newell's shearwaters (A'o), Hawaiian petrels (Ua'u) and other seabirds are attracted to bright unshielded lights during migration and subsequently fall to the ground where they are highly vulnerable to injury and mortality.

To minimize this terrible impact, in 2005, Kauai residents voluntarily took action by turning off harmful lights, modifying existing lights, installing motion detectors, training employees, rescuing downed birds, and providing educational materials to the public. These outstanding efforts contributed to darker skies and attracted fewer birds to harmful situations. Kauai residents and visitors once again rescued many of these native and rare seabirds by turning them in to the Save Our Shearwaters program. As a result of efforts to decrease harmful lights and to increase search and rescue efforts, approximately 300 seabirds were rescued compared to over 400 in 2004. We are hopeful that this decrease is due to the island-wide efforts of Kauai's residents and businesses.

Mahalo to the following agencies: County of Kauai Fire Department, for hosting seabird aid stations; County of Kauai Dept. of Parks and Recreation for allowing us to place awareness signs at all parks, work on lighting "experiments", and for enabling us to increase awareness and search for downed birds at evening football games; Hawaii Dept. of Transportation at Nawiliwili Harbor for placing an aid station at their facility and training staff, and the Lihue Airport for increasing staff awareness.

Mahalo to Mayor Bryan Baptiste for featuring this topic on his show Kuleana and for facilitating interagency discussion of this issue.

Mahalo to State Representative Mina Morita for her interest in protecting rare native seabirds and facilitating discussions with business leaders.

Mahalo to: the Princeville Resort, The Marriott at Kalapaki Bay, and the Sheraton at Po'ipu for making excellent efforts to turn off lights, hosting shearwater aid stations and providing outreach to their staff and guests; the Grand Hyatt at Po'ipu for hosting an aid station and increasing staff awareness; the Aloha Beach Resort in Wailua for increasing staff and guest awareness, and beginning to assess and address problematic lights; resorts and condominiums in Kapa'a who provided SOS information to guests and employees; Chevron for turning off lights, hosting an aid station, and planning to renovate lights with "seabird safe" lighting styles; KIUC for improving and turning off outdoor lights at their power plant in Pt. Allen; Dollar/Thrifty Car Rental Company for modifying outdoor lights at their Lihue Airport location; Pioneer Seeds for shielding growing lights, turning off non-essential lights, and planning staff awareness training for 2006; Home Depot for turning off lights, modifying outdoor lights, and increasing staff awareness; Gaylord's at Kilohana for beginning to work with us towards decreasing light attraction at their facilities; the Bullshed Restaurant and Brennecke's Beachside Broiler for toning down floodlights; Kukui Grove Mall, Wailua Shopping Village and Princeville at Hanalei Corporation for beginning to assess and improve outdoor lights, and increasing staff awareness; Island Ace Hardware in Princeville for their eagerness to provide "seabird safe" lighting fixtures; Pahio Resorts for inquiring about seabird safe lights for existing and future facilities as well as remodeling projects; Norwegian Cruise Lines for their willingness to begin addressing light attraction on cruise ships and for committing to increase guest and staff awareness.

Special thanks to the Kauai Chamber of Commerce, the Po'ipu Resort Association, the Hawai'i Hotel and Lodging Association, the Kaua'i Architects Association, Princeville Community Association, and the Lihue and Hanalei Rotary Clubs for hosting our presentations and spreading the word to members and the public on this issue! We also thank Save Our Seas for their interest in joining forces with Save Our Shearwaters in 2005 and 2006.

Mahalo also to Dickie Chang and Bruce Smalling of Wala'au for putting together a great episode on Save Our Shearwaters and related conservation efforts; Jim Lucas of Ho'ike for providing footage and editing of a wonderful public service announcement; and all the radio stations who played public service announcements so regularly. Mahalo to KIUC and their staff for assisting DOFAW by successfully implementing an expanded Save Our Shearwaters program.

DOFAW and the USFWS encourage all businesses, agencies, and residents to permanently replace harmful lights with "seabird safe" lighting fixtures. Visit DOFAW's website at <http://www.state.hi.us/dlnr/dofaw/fbrp/sos.htm> for information on solutions to seabird light attraction or contact, Andrea Erichsen, Seabird Habitat Conservation Plan Coordinator with the Division of Forestry and Wildlife. P.O. Box 459 Waimea, HI 96796 (808) 346-3489. We hope that together we can make a bigger difference for seabirds in 2006.

Sincerely,

Andrea Erichsen, Division of Forestry and Wildlife
Thomas Kaiakapu, Division of Forestry and Wildlife
Keith Swindle, Special Agent, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Honolulu