

HAWAII'S COMPREHENSIVE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION STRATEGY

Effective October 1, 2005



reduce fishing effort to return these bottomfishes to a healthy state. Other fishes in the State also may be in a state of overfishing, but solid data is lacking to make these technical determinations.

Excessive extractive use constitutes a threat to other wildlife as well. Certain reef fishes are harvested for sale in the aquarium trade. Freshwater and marine fishes and invertebrates are collected for subsistence, recreation, and commercial purposes. Native plants and snails that may be important food sources or habitat for native birds and invertebrates are illegally collected for lei making, flower arrangements, jewelry, or herbal use. Logging of native koa (*Acacia koa*), 'ōhi'a (*Metrosideros polymorpha*), and hāpu'u tree ferns (*Cibotium* spp.) removes important components of a native forest. These activities are not sustainable on a large scale and impact native wildlife.

Management Constraints

While more than 31 percent of the land in Hawai'i has been set aside for protection by the State or Federal government or is managed as part of a watershed partnership, these lands are subjected to differing levels of conservation or management effort. Regardless of their jurisdiction and management goals, land managers face similar constraints, such as multiple use mandates, insufficient funds for day-to-day management, infrastructural challenges, regulatory hurdles, high numbers of visitors, and increasing demands for public access.

The Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), the State agency charged with managing the State's lands and waters, has multiple management responsibilities. For example, DLNR is charged with documenting and preventing illegal activities on public lands, conducting auctions to lease public lands, protecting and recovering indigenous wildlife and their habitats, preserving natural areas and protecting watershed resources, promoting public hunting, establishing and regulating public fishing areas, harvesting forest products, providing public lands for agricultural purposes, and generating revenue from the lease of State lands. While generally consistent, these multiple uses may not always facilitate strategic native wildlife conservation objectives. For example, a State lease for pasture use may degrade remnant native habitat or public hunting rules may not adequately control ungulate populations to meet the management needs for forest bird recovery and native plant protection. Efforts to identify inconsistencies in management guidelines and policies can be delayed by a lack of resources (technical, human, and financial) and the lack of effective working relationships with different resource user groups to jointly identify areas for dedicated conservation and areas for multiple use.

DLNR also is limited by infrastructural challenges; for example, the difficulty in filling existing vacant positions on a timely basis and the near impossibility of adding personnel to coordinate new conservation actions is a significant constraint on management. Procurement rules and contracting procedures can delay the State's ability to coordinate and carry out needed conservation actions. Other governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations face similar infrastructural challenges.

Unclear or lengthy regulatory processes constitute another management constraint. Research, response and control of invasive non-native species (particularly animal species) is delayed by the existing regulatory process. Current State and Federal regulations require more review and



Liopropoma aurora
Courtesy Keoki Stender

Marine Fishes

Sex Changing Reef Fishes

Serranidae

Liopropoma aurora

Pseudanthias thompsoni

Pseudogramma polyacanthum hawaiiensis



Anampses chrysocephalus male
Courtesy Keoki Stender

Labridae

Ammolabrus dicrus

Anampses chrysocephalus

Bodianus sp.

Coris flavovittata

Coris venusta

Cymolutes lecluse

Iniistius umbrilatus

SPECIES STATUS:

IUCN Red List - Not considered

Endemic

SPECIES INFORMATION: These fishes belong to the sea bass and wrasse families. These species are all carnivorous; Hawaiian anthias (*Pseudanthias*) more on zooplankton than the others, which feed in sand or on animals in the reef matrix. Most are less than 30 centimeters (one foot) long. It is likely that all are protogynous hermaphrodites. Many have males with harem territories. The species common names and Hawaiian names are: sunset basslet (*Liopropoma*), Hawaiian anthias (*Pseudanthias*), palespotted podge (*Pseudogramma*), sand wrasse (*Ammolabrus*), psychedelic wrasse (*Anampses chrysocephalus*), Hawaiian pigfish (*Bodianus*), yellowstripe coris (*Coris flavovittata*, hilu), elegant coris (*Coris venusta*), Hawaiian knifefish (*Cymolutes*), and blackside razorfish (*Iniistius*, lae-nihi).

DISTRIBUTION: Hawaiian anthias have been reported from Moloka'i throughout the rest of the chain to the northwest. Palespotted podge has been found from the island of Hawai'i to O'ahu. The sand wrasse has only been found off O'ahu. Lae-nihi have only been found from the island of Hawai'i to Necker Island. All the other species occur throughout the Hawaiian Islands.

ABUNDANCE: The shallow water species are surveyed for in surveys of coral reef fishes in the Main and Northwestern Hawaiian Islands, both by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Division of Aquatic Resources and data are available online.

LOCATION AND CONDITION OF KEY HABITAT: All species except the sunset basslet and the Hawaiian pigfish species can be found in shallow water depths. Sunset basslets occur in deeper water, usually over 60 meters (200 feet) but sometimes to SCUBA diving depths. The undescribed species of Hawaiian Pigfish has only been found in depths greater than 140 meters (450 feet). Psychedelic wrasse terminal phase males are usually only found in depths greater than 15 meters (50 feet). Hawaiian anthias can often be found around reef ledges and drop offs while palespotted podge are more common on coral and rubble substrates. Sand wrasses, Hawaiian knifefish, and blackside razorfish spend most of their time over sandy substrates and the last two can dive into the sand to avoid predators. The rest are found throughout coral reef habitats.

THREATS:

- These species are almost all prized by aquarists except for palespotted podge, sand wrasses, and Hawaiian knifefish. Many of these species have different color phases for each sex and also juveniles, and in particular the juvenile color phases are often targeted by collectors.

CONSERVATION ACTIONS: The goals of conservation actions are to not only protect current populations, but to also establish further populations to reduce the risk of extinction. Commercial licenses are required for aquarium collectors. In addition to common statewide and island conservation actions, specific actions include:

- Maintain healthy populations with appropriate fishing regulations and education.

MONITORING:

- Continue to survey for populations and distribution in known and likely habitats.

RESEARCH PRIORITIES:

- Improve understanding of factors affecting the species population size;
- Support aquacultural research to develop captive breeding for species used in the aquarium trade.

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