



# Hawai'i's Historic Sites Inventory

For Hawai'i the preservation of our historic and archaeological sites is a vital public concern. Hawaiian sites remind us of our Polynesian heritage, and as such, reinforce the identity and values of the Islands. The preservation of ancient sites keeps the memory of earlier lifestyles alive and before us.

The management of Hawai'i's archaeological resources encompasses all phases of research, registration, review and interpretation which contribute to the conservation of these resources. This includes not only the material remains but also the information they contain. The fundamental principle on which the management of an archaeological resource is based is its value. The known or estimated value of an archaeological resource in terms of its traditional, scientific, historical and interpretive significance determines in large part how that resource will be treated: whether it will be registered, protected, investigated, purchased, salvaged, stabilized or restored.

The data necessary for determination of archaeological value are collected through on-site archaeological surveys as well as support studies such as documentary research and, in some cases, informant interviews.

Archaeological surveys are undertaken for the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) by its staff and private consultants. To inventory archaeological resources on a land parcel requires a thorough on-foot search by a trained archaeologist. The results of such an intensive survey includes a description of each site in words, maps, and photographs, an overall map of the land parcel with site locations plotted, a discussion of the significance of each site, and a recommendation concerning further research and preservation potential. Only a small percentage of the State has been intensively surveyed. Thus, a common recommendation resulting from a review of a proposed development project is that a survey be conducted so that the area's archaeological resources can be recorded and evaluated.

The State's inventory contains materials on approximately 25,000 sites located within Hawai'i. It is the product of an on-going historic properties survey effort coordinated by the Division of State Parks. Through the inventory, professionals can place in perspective the amount, type and quality of archaeological properties in the Islands.

The inventory documents specific properties and from this data base decisions can be made as to which properties should be considered for placement in the Hawai'i and National Registers of Historic Places. Planners can consult the files to determine areas where historic preservation concerns exist; other people use the information to help develop education programs and promote the sites.

The scope of the archaeological management aspect of the DLNR historic preservation program extends far beyond maintaining a list of archaeological sites. In fact, most of the staff's efforts are expended on the review of proposed development and land use projects. Staff members also give lectures and undertake other public information efforts, and involve themselves in a wide range of planning projects.

For further information on the historic sites inventory, contact the State Historic Preservation Office at 548-7460 or write P.O. Box 621, Honolulu, HI 96809.

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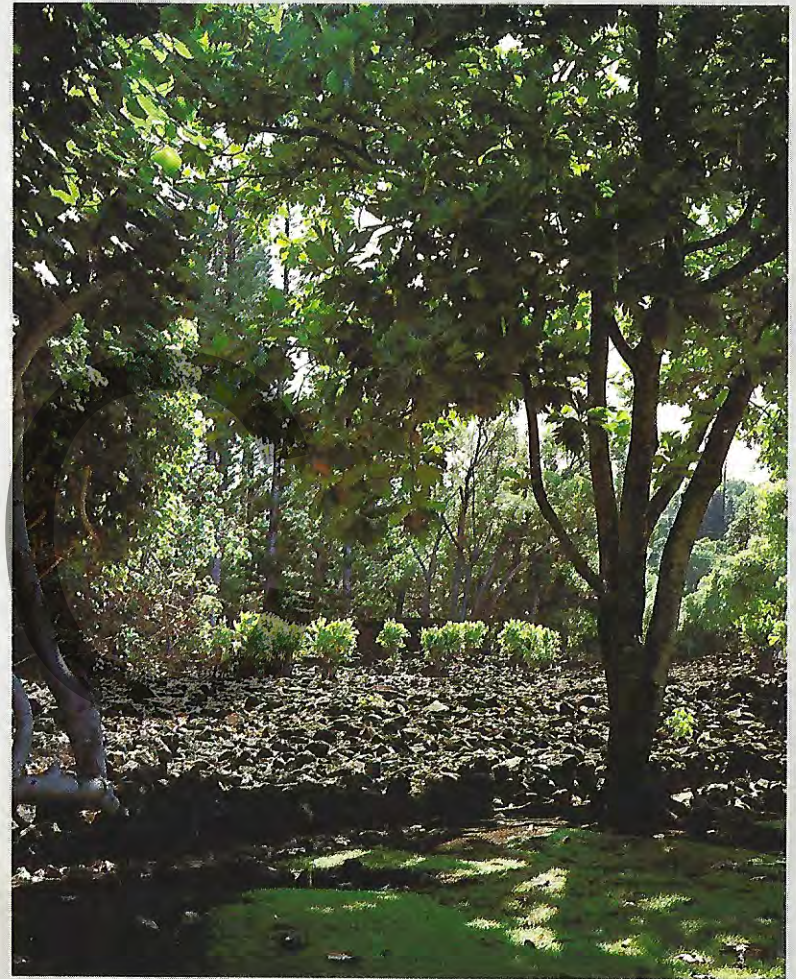
*Photographs by Augie Salbosa, Phil Spalding III and Robert Wenkam  
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*Designed by Terry Palumbo Reffell*

*Edited by Sharlene Robter*

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*Medicinal heiau, Keaiwa Heiau State Recreational Area, 'Aiea, O'ahu, Hawai'i and National Registers of Historic Places. This type of heiau was dedicated to the healing arts and/or to the training of experts (kahuna) in medicine. Keaiwa means "the mystery," said to be the name of an early priest and to refer to his mysterious healing powers.*

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# Discovering the Hawaiian Past

A major function of the state historic preservation program is the management of archaeological resources throughout the State.

Hawaiian archaeology studies the past culture of the Islands by investigating sites and other physical remains.

Most of the activities of ancient Hawaiians left material traces. These remains are not scattered randomly across the landscape, but rather form patterns. It is from the study of these patterns that archaeologists build their picture of past history and culture.

Archaeologists have begun to decipher or translate the "code" represented by archaeological remains into coherent accounts of the lifeways of the ancient Hawaiians. Thus, in a sense, each archaeological site is a fragment of unwritten history. Some sites offer entire chapters on early Hawai'i, while others represent a few tattered sentences blurred and eroded by time. Together, the archaeological resources of these islands constitute a silent library, containing the story of some 60 generations of the Hawaiian people.

Evidence presently available indicates that the first Polynesian settlers arrived in Hawai'i around A.D. 300-500. By the end of the 18th century the population of the islands had increased to between 200,000 and 300,000. The Hawaiian chiefdoms, which had achieved a high degree of social and political complexity before contact with Western civilization in 1778, were supported by an economic system that depended on a wide variety of maritime and terrestrial resources, extending from sea level to the upper slopes of 13,796-foot Mauna Kea.

Although ancient population tended to be concentrated within a few hundred yards of the coast, archaeological remains are often found to be densely distributed throughout the length of major valleys and on slopes to at least a 2,500-foot elevation. The Western settlement patterns of the past 200 years have had a similar geographic distribution, with the result that major portions of the archaeological record have been obliterated.

The last few years have seen an intensification of archaeological research in Hawai'i and a broadening of its focus as well. Until recently, the only sites that received attention were certain heiau (places of worship), fishponds and other sites that were highly visible and/or well-known for traditional or historical reasons. It is becoming increasingly clear now that smaller, relatively humble sites contain a wealth of information concerning the culture and history of pre-Contact Hawai'i. In addition, the study of whole districts, often including hundreds of related features, has been found to provide significant information.

On occasion modest or buried sites are only discovered when disturbed. If such a site is accidentally uncovered, it is important not to remove anything from the ground as the location of material can sometimes be more important than the material itself.



Trail, Māmakī Heiau to Kaunolū Village National Historic Landmark, Lāna'i Paved trails were constructed of water worn beach rocks or flat pāhoehoe lava.



Historic house, Nu'uana, O'ahu. Some ruins date from Hawai'i's historic period (after 1778), such as Kamehameha III's Summer Palace, "Kaniakapūpū."



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*Cave shelter, Honomalimo, Hawai'i.* Natural retreats such as lava tubes were often used as dwellings or temporary camp sites. The first scientific excavations conducted in Hawai'i were in cave shelters.



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*Agricultural fields, Lapakahi, Hawai'i.* The rock wall remains of the Kohala Field System extend for miles. Dryland fields were skillfully adapted to take advantage of varying altitudes and moisture levels to grow a variety of crops.



Bishop Museum

*Sled run, Pu'u Hinahina, Kapu'a, Hawai'i.* A popular Hawaiian sport was sliding on wooden sleds down specially constructed runways (kahua hōlua) covered with grasses.



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*Activity area, Kaho'olawe Island Archaeological District, Hawai'i and National Registers of Historic Places.* Hundreds of sites in the now-barren uplands show evidence of human activity in non-architectural remains such as fireplaces, stone artifacts and midden (food remains and other debris of everyday life).



Phil Spalding III

*Rock mound, Southwest Moloka'i Archaeological District, Kaluako'i, Moloka'i, Hawai'i Register of Historic Places.* Hawaiians built rock cairns and mounds called ahu to mark boundaries, trails, graves, religious shrines and other special places.



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*Sand dune site, Bellows Field Archaeological Area, Waimānalo, O'ahu, National Register of Historic Places.* In this sand dune can be seen darkish charcoal-stained layers containing artifacts, midden and graves. The lowest layer dates from A.D. 300-500, making this the earliest known habitation site in Hawai'i.



*Village and house sites, Lapakahi State Historical Park, Hawaii's Hawaii and National Registers of Historic Places.*  
The thatched roofs and walls are gone, leaving the rock-walled foundations of the houses at Lapakahi, site of a typical pre-Contact Hawaiian fishing settlement. Located in North Kohala, the village has been partially restored and opened to the public.



Robert Wenkam

*Agricultural terraces, Nā Pali Coast Archaeological District, Nā Pali, Kana'i, Hawai'i and National Registers of Historic Places.*  
Once a common sight, terraced walls of volcanic rock retained the irrigated pondfields needed for growing taro, a staple food crop in old Hawai'i. These abandoned terraces in the isolated valley of Awa'awapuhi are a silent monument to the engineering skills of the Hawaiians.



*Kaloko'eli Fishpond, Kamiloloa, Moloka'i, Hawai'i Register of Historic Places.*  
More than 300 fishponds, small and large, once lined the Islands' coastlines. They were built for the chiefs (ali'i) with walls of coral, stone or both. Gates with grills kept fish in and allowed circulation of fresh seawater. This type of aquaculture was unique to Hawai'i.



*Quarry site, Mauna Kea Adz Quarry, Mauna Kea, Hawai'i. Hawai'i Register of Historic Places and National Historic Landmark.*

High quality, fine-grained basalt, a type of volcanic rock, was quarried from special locations, such as the top of Mauna Kea, to make stone adzes. Adzes (ko'i) were important woodworking tools used in making canoes, bowls and sacred images. As in other professions, adz-makers worshipped a patron diety. Here a small shrine stands amid piles of discarded stones and broken adz blanks.





Angie Salbosa

*Salt pans, Lapakahi State Historical Park, Hawai'i. Hawai'i and National Registers of Historic Places.*

Salt pans were man-made or natural depressions used for evaporating seawater to obtain salt. Salt was used widely in all aspects of everyday life. Some uses included preserving fish, seasoning foods, religious ceremonies, medicinal preparations and embalming.



*Canoe shed, Lapakahi State Historical Park, Hawai'i. Hawai'i and National Registers of Historic Places.*  
A canoe shed was a long, narrow covered structure especially designed for storing canoes. It was called a hālau wa'a.

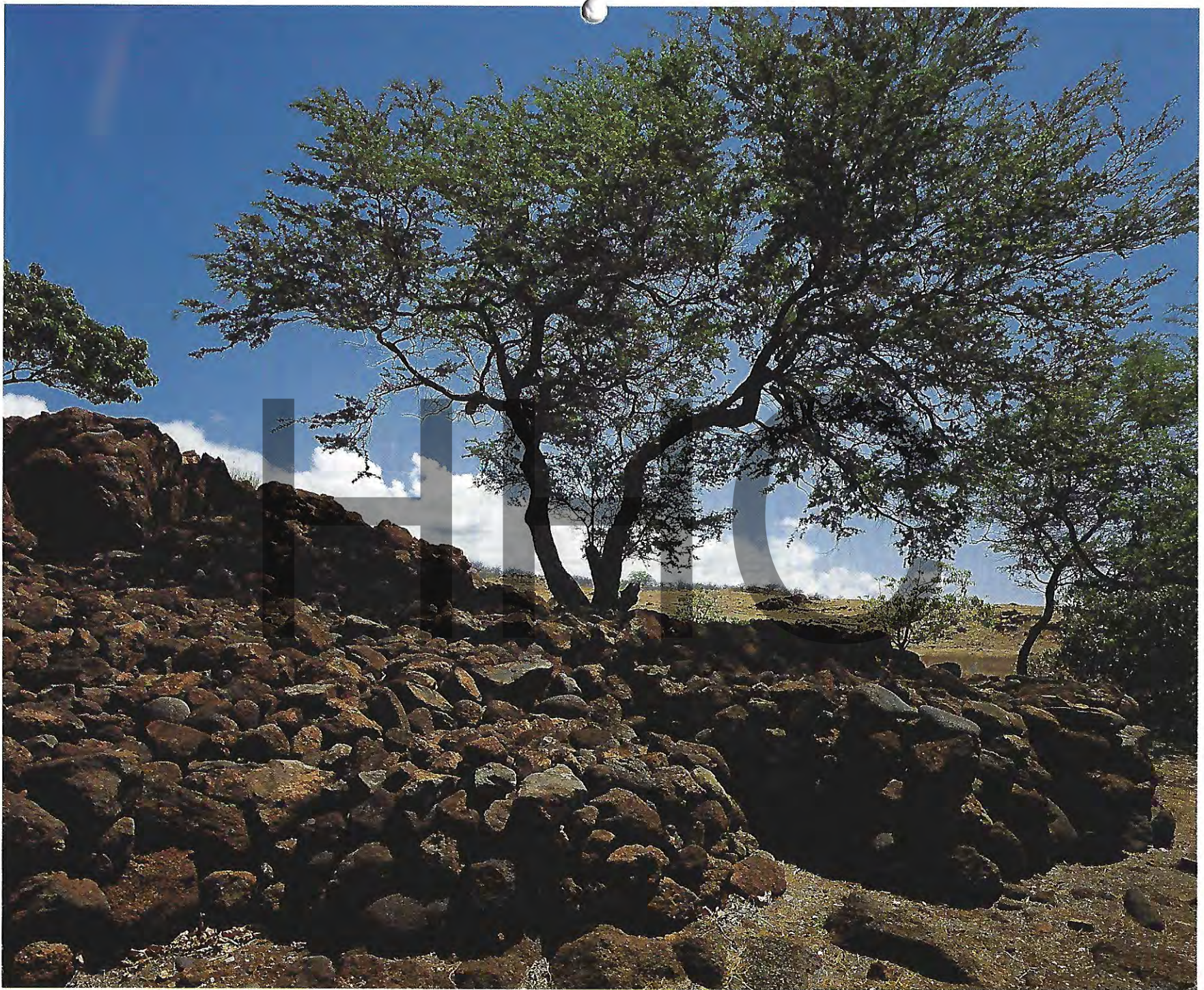


*Heiau, Abu'ena Heiau, Kamakabonu, Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i. National Historic Landmark.*

The Hawaiian people worshipped many gods, and there were many kinds of heiau, or places of worship. This was Kamehameha I's personal temple at his family residence. The thatched houses, altar and wooden god images were reconstructed by the King Kamehameha Hotel in 1975-76 based on archaeological research, historical drawings and other evidence uncovered by Bishop Museum.



*Fishing shrine, Southwest Moloka'i Archaeological District, Kaluako'i, Moloka'i. Hawai'i Register of Historic Places.*  
Local fishing shrines (ko'a) are smaller, less formal heiau. Here offerings and prayers were made for success in fishing. It is thought by some that the upright stone (kū'ula) is the fish god, named for Kū'ula, the legendary god of fishermen and patron diety of fishing.



*Burial platforms, Lapakahi State Historical Park, Lapakahi, Hawai'i. Hawai'i and National Registers of Historic Places.*  
There were many customs relating to the dead. Sometimes stone platforms such as these were built over the grave sites, but often the dead were buried in unmarked graves or placed in burial caves.



*Birthstones, Kūkaniloko, Wabiauā, O'ahu. National Register of Historic Places.*

Certain locations were believed especially favorable for giving birth. This is one of two known sites reserved for the highest royalty, the other being at Wailua on Kaua'i. Both feature clusters of unusually shaped lava rock boulders whose function has been lost in antiquity.



*Heiau, Pi'ilanihale Heiau, Hāna, Maui. National Historic Landmark.*

This elaborately constructed stone platform is Hawai'i's largest. Only a ruling chief could build and use a luakini, a very formal heiau of state where rituals took place that pertained to the welfare of the entire kingdom. The luakini was consecrated annually to maintain the spiritual power of the major gods and was the type of temple where human sacrifice was practiced.



*Petroglyphs, Puna-Kaʻū Historic District, Volcanoes National Park, Puʻuloa, Hawaiʻi. National Register of Historic Places.*  
Petroglyphs are rock carvings and drawings made with a stone. Human figures and dogs are the most common motifs, although this exceptional one is believed to depict a figure of the god Lono with sails, while the dots and circles record births of children.