

Expanding the
Viewshed of
Nomenclature:
Aligning
Paradigm
Needs of
Conservation
and Culturally
Vibrant
Communities

Abstract

Communities around the world depend on flora, fauna and minerals for contemporary subsistence and cultural perpetuation. The Hawaiian Islands case study reviewed here seeks to answer: 1) what are the current gathering practices of Native Hawaiians? 2) what proportion of plants gathered is native, Polynesian Introduced and introduced?, as well as 3) what implications do contemporary gathering practice interests have for conservation in Hawaii? From 2008-2010 participant observation and semi-structured interviews recorded over 44 plant species to be gathered, with most being introduced after the arrival of 1778 (n=21), followed by Polynesian-introduced (n=14) and then Native (n=9). In comparative semi-structured interviews (n=20) conducted between Oahu and Hawaii Island, which focused on plants used in traditional underground cooking techniques or imu, in 2011 illustrates how resources (human, environmental) influence availability and species preference for firewood. Mesquite (*Prosopis pallida*), like many other introduced species, has been given a Hawaiian name Kiawe, a measure of its significance in Hawaii. Kiawe is a dryland plant species introduced to Hawaii in the 1880s as fodder for cattle. Today kiawe has been identified by users as the most commonly gathered and valued resource for firewood (85%) but is also identified as a "pest plant" by conservation managers. It is imperative to know what kinds of plants people use and their understanding of what "native" means. To provide insight to conservation efforts and place-based partnerships in Hawaii a paradigm expansion to align management needs with local cultures' needs must include integrating this understanding into extension and management.