

Papers Presented at a Joint U.S./Japan Symposium on
"The Ecology and Evolutionary Biology of Islands
with Implications for Conservation Research"

PREFACE

THE PAPERS in this special issue of *Pacific Science* were presented at a Joint U.S./Japan Symposium on "The Ecology and Evolutionary Biology of Islands with Implications for Conservation Research" held at the University of Hawai'i, 7-9 January 1993. The symposium was cosponsored by the Center for Conservation Research and Training in the Pacific Biomedical Research Center and the Ecology, Evolution, and Conservation Biology Graduate Specialization administered by the College of Natural Sciences at the University of Hawai'i.

Oceanic islands, particularly the Hawaiian and Galápagos archipelagoes, continue to attract the attention of evolutionary biologists. The richness of island biota is often described as one of the most spectacular examples of explosive adaptive evolution. However, many of the species that inhabit these islands are highly specialized and have very restricted population sizes and distributions. The endemic species are highly susceptible to perturbation of their environment and may be in danger of extinction if adequate measures for the protection of their habitats are not taken.

The objectives of the joint seminar were as

follows: (1) to foster cooperation and interaction between scientists from the United States and Japan with expertise in island biology, (2) to learn from the basic biological research each country is undertaking on island ecosystems, (3) to discuss the application of research results to the development of effective conservation programs, and (4) to help bridge the gap between basic scientists and natural resource managers.

This meeting of scientists from the two nations established partnerships that can be developed into major collaborative research projects on islands throughout the Pacific Basin. The interaction among resource managers and biologists during the conference helped pose specific conservation-related questions that scientists can address during their research activities on islands. These research results will not only influence land-use decisions for island ecosystems but may also contribute to the solution of global environmental problems.

Kenneth Y. Kaneshiro
Colin Basset
Sheila Conant