

# Nēnē News<sup>®</sup>

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## A Look Ahead

### The Commitment Of Long-Term Management

In the coming decades the nēnē on Kaua'i, Maui and the Big Island will face new challenges as more natural resources are used to sustain a burgeoning human population. Accelerating development will destroy many of the habitat conditions necessary for the survival of the species. It will become increasingly important to find innovative ways to sustain the wild population while accommodating the needs of the community. The reintroduction of the nēnē to Moloka'i will face these challenges and discovering solutions will be an ongoing effort and part of the commitment of long-term management.

In formulating a management program for Moloka'i a number of annual and long-range objectives will be established. Objectives will be defined by assessing the ability of potential nēnē habitats to support a viable population and by determining the effects of human pressure upon this population. Nēnē O Moloka'i will assist landowners in the development of management strategies with sound conservation practices to ensure maximum sustainable benefits for the species.

The *Nēnē News*<sup>®</sup> is sent to over 400 corporations and 200 private individuals world-wide, and every private, public and home school in Hawai'i.

### Proposed Assessment of Reintroduced Nēnē

- *Determine dispersal of newly released nēnē on Moloka'i*
- *Plot locations on maps to evaluate movements*
- *Determine activities*
- *Identify nesting areas*
- *Carry-out banding operations*
- *Investigate mortalities*
- *Document survival rate*
- *Maintain individual life histories*
- *Establish census methods*
- *Identify permanent transect routes for seasonal monitoring*

Although increasing the numbers of nēnē in the wild through captive propagation has carried the species away from the threat of imminent extinction, it has not necessarily brought the nēnē to recovery. Since the beginning of the *Nēnē Recovery Plan* a lack of funding and manpower has prevented implementation of a comprehensive management program. Placing young inexperienced birds in remote release pens with only occasional follow-up as to their whereabouts, activities, or survival (*Continued on next page*)



### Wildlife Conservation Stamp Released

Hawai'i's first wildlife conservation stamp was released on May 11<sup>th</sup>, and features a nēnē with goslings in a Hanalei Valley wetland setting. Funds raised by the sale of the stamp will be used exclusively for enhancement of local wildlife projects that deal with hunting programs, game management, and recovery programs for endangered and native Hawaiian birds such as the nēnē and 'ālala. O'ahu artist Patrick Ching was selected as the artist to create the artwork. (*See inside story.*)

(Contd. from Pg. 1) was about all the species management that could be afforded. Unfortunately, many of the adverse conditions impacting the survival of the nēnē must be remedied to successfully restore the nēnē to Moloka'i. It is imperative that the Moloka'i community be informed about the nēnē, its needs, and management so that they will gain an appreciation of this species and add their efforts on its behalf.

### Methods Employed By Nēnē O Moloka'i For Public Education

- **Nēnē Hotline to report sightings**
- **Nēnē Net website**
- **Nēnē News quarterly newsletter**
- **"Don't feed the Nēnē" signs**
- **"Nēnē Flyway" and "Nēnē Crossing" signs**
- **Classroom talks and community meetings**
- **Field trips for Moloka'i students**
- **Volunteer workdays**
- **Annual Open House**

Good conservation practices encourage communication between the private sector and state and federal agencies. A cornerstone in the foundation of the Nēnē O Moloka'i management plan is well-guided community involvement combined with cooperative research. Often the flame of stewardship flickers the brightest at the grassroots level as volunteers trade sweat equity for visible results.

Don't want to receive the *Nēnē News*? Please call, fax, e-mail, or send us a postcard and we'll remove your name from our mailing list. Have interesting information on nēnē anywhere in the state? Drop us a line.

### Management Through Partnership

- **Maintain roads, trails, and access routes in serviceable condition**
- **Post boundary and instructional signs**
- **Maintain fences**
- **Develop food plots and water units**
- **Clear undesirable vegetation**
- **Plant beneficial plant species**
- **Intensive predator control**
- **Erosion control**
- **Safeguard watershed areas**

On Moloka'i the success of recovering the nēnē will rely on partnerships. What is learned about the nēnē through joint observation and management will benefit not only the nēnē, but the community and island as a whole. Partnerships can find simple solutions to complex problems of altered habitats and human encroachment, and each small victory forms a larger piece of the overall success.

### Measuring Success

- **A reproducing and self-sustaining wild nēnē population**
- **Control of the factors threatening the survival of the species**
- **The safeguarding of future nēnē ecosystems**
- **Increased awareness of the nēnē and the factors which led to its decline**
- **Communication and cooperation between the private sector and governing agencies**
- **Partnerships committed to long-term management**

Nēnē releases on Moloka'i will be unique by virtue of the fact that Moloka'i will be the first island

where a well-documented release program can be implemented. Radio telemetry and global positioning systems can track individual birds to note preferred habitats, locate nesting sites for the banding of goslings, locate injured or sick birds, retrieve carcasses for necropsy, and to locate poached birds.

The importance of long-term management of Molokai's future wild nēnē population lies within previously unanswered questions. During the releases of the '60s, '70s, and '80s it was asked "How

of many nēnē do we need?" Today playing the 'numbers game' is far less meaningful than knowing how the nēnē population is evolving. The questions of the '90s are "How only the nēnē, but the community is the nēnē adapting to today's habitats? Where do the nēnē go can find simple solutions to after fledging [from remote release sites]... are they surviving? How many are reproductively successful? How long are the nēnē living?" Until there are answers it will not be possible to determine if "The nēnē has been saved!"

## Nēnē Hotline

**Report your nēnē sightings!**

**[www.nene.net](http://www.nene.net)**

Information requested at the web site includes the date, time and location of the sighting, the band number and color (please report if there was no band), if the bird(s) were in a pair, if there were any goslings with that pair and if so, how many, and the activity of the nēnē.

The reporting of these sightings will help improve nēnē habitat and releases in the future by identifying areas where nēnē frequent to forage or nest.

## Earth Day On Moloka‘i

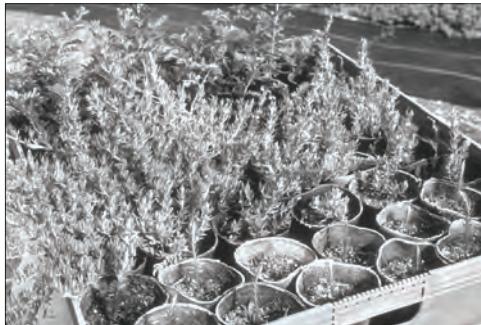
The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Moloka‘i Earth Day celebration took place April 20<sup>th</sup> at Kaunakakai’s Mitchell Pauoli Center with activities focusing on Moloka‘i’s environmental concerns. The event, spearheaded by the Moloka‘i branch of The Nature Conservancy of Hawai‘i and organized by the Moloka‘i Community Earth Day Committee, featured a contest with a grand prize drawing of a helicopter ride into the TNC Kamakou Preserve. Participants were given a ticket with six blank squares to be stamped by booth members. Ticket holders were asked a question by a booth member about their exhibit and when answered correctly a square on the ticket was stamped. Completed tickets were placed in a barrel for drawings of numerous doorprizes throughout the day.

Nēnē O Moloka‘i partnered with DOFAW to create a booth featuring a mounted nēnē, a nēnē facts and photo display, and prototype



*DOFAW's Peter Shannon answers questions about the future Moloka'i nēnē releases.*

*"Do Not Feed the Nēnē...Keep called... Why are nēnē Them Wild!" signs. DOFAW's endangered...What is a male nēnē nēnē posters and Hawai‘i's called...What is the No. 1 rule of Endangered Animals coloring the nēnē...and why?"* The most books were given away. Booth asked questions of booth members members included DOFAW's Peter were "What are you going to do Shannon and Greg Massey, about poaching?" and "What's D.V.M., Nēnē O Moloka‘i's that?" while pointing to the Arleone Dibben, and volunteer mounted nēnē. For many Moloka‘i veterinarian Dr. Lori Gaskins. residents this was the first Examples of questions asked opportunity to see a nēnē. contest participants are "What do nēnē eat...What is a baby nēnē



*Transplanted seedlings sprouted from nēnē droppings (seats) (above) are pūkiawe, (foreground), kūkaenēnē and ‘ōhelō (middle two rows), and ‘ūlei (back row). These native Hawaiian plant species produce berries with hard seeds ranging from the size of a grain of sand to that of a small pea. Non-berry producing plant species have also sprouted, such as a native sedge.*

*Introduced species that have sprouted include panini (cactus), pangola grass, and numerous weeds.*

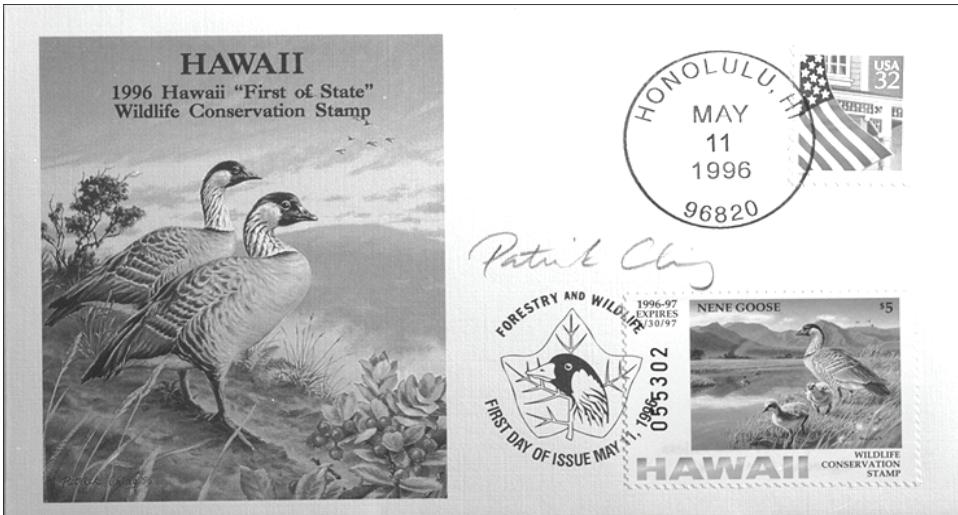
*Photo: Arleone Dibben*

### Plant Some Poop Project Receives DOFAW Grant

The State of Hawaii, Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) kahakai (*Scaevola taccada*) have has awarded \$2,000 to Nēnē O not been previously noted as a plant Moloka‘i for their Plant Some Poop species preferred to be eaten by Project. The focus of the nēnē. More ‘ūlei seedlings have educational program is for students sprouted than any other plant to learn what nēnē are eating in the species.

wild (See *Nēnē News* April 1996). Several surprise non-native plant The funds will be used to purchase species have also sprouted from the potting supplies and to publish an droppings gathered by Drs. Helen educational brochure about the and Paul Baker on a lava flow nēnē. between Hōlua cabin and the grass

The native Hawaiian plant species flats of Waikau in the Ko‘olau Gap to appear in abundance in the sterile in Haleakalā National Park: One soil potting mix have been marijuana plant, one oregano, a predominately berry producing California pepper tree (*Schinus* plants. They are kūkaenēnē molle), and one yet unidentified (*Coprosma ernodeoides*), ‘ōhelō plant.



Patrick Ching's nēnē in a Hanalei Valley wetlands (stamp on right) graces a "First Day Cover." His "First of State" with a goose and gander by an 'ōheo bush is on the left.

## Nēnē Featured On Hunting Stamp

The first Hawai'i wildlife conservation stamp featuring an 1,500 were produced), and "First adult nēnē and two goslings is sold Day Cover" signed by the artist, to hunters as part of Hawai'i's Patrick Ching, and canceled on the hunting license requirements. The first day of issue with both postage \$5.00 stamp is required for hunting and the Hawai'i stamp. Prints and wild pigs, goats, pheasants, and other collector's items are also other species. State officials expect available. Patrick Ching is well-known for his cartoon surfing collectors to generate \$1,000,000 manual and children's coloring over the first three years, with the books about Hawai'i's endangered funds going to hunting programs species. For more information and wildlife and wetlands contact the artist directly at preservation.

The new stamp is expected to quickly become a collector's item. Naturally Hawaiian Gallery & Gifts, 1025 Kalaniana'ole Highway, Waimānalo, HI 96795 (808) 259-5354.

### Did You Know...?

— A gander hatched by Mr. F.E. Blaauw of the Netherlands, lived to be the oldest nēnē recorded. Upon the death of Mr. Blaauw in 1936, the nēnē was given to Dr. Jean Delacour for his private collection at Cleres, France. At the time of the German invasion of France in 1940, the gander was the last nēnē specimen in Europe and was reported to be 42 years of age. The gander was believed to have been eaten by the invading soldiers.

— Haleakalā National Park boasts a Slimbridge gander still alive from one of the early crater releases. Two years ago this gander lost his mate and has since remated with a much younger female.

— Several pairs of nēnē that have previously mated and breed off-spring have "divorced" and chosen new mates, indicating that not all nēnē mate for life.

## Nēnē Records Project Continues

The first phase of documentation of the historic captive propagation nēnē flock which was responsible for restoring the wild nēnē population to its current status is nearing completion. Linda Robledo of the New Orleans Zoo began the data compilation phase in 1994. The DOFAW sponsored project, funded through Section 6 of the Endangered Species Act\*, compiles the Pōhakuloa and Olinda records. The goal of the final phase of the project is to determine how mate selection affects breeding success. The project is expected to be completed in 1997.

The study was prompted by the theory that nēnē allowed to select their own partners are probably more productive than birds that are arbitrarily placed with a mate. Adult birds have traditionally been placed together with the goal of forming breeding pairs. However, many times males will show aggressiveness towards the female, with the end result being that no offspring are produced. The process of forced mate selection could potentially be eliminated if the information extracted from the newly correlated data proves that nēnē who are permitted to choose their own partners produce more goslings.

*\*Section 6 (d) of the Endangered Species Act of December 28, 1973 Cooperation With The States - Allocation Of Funds authorizes the Secretary to provide financial assistance to any State, through its respective State agency, to assist in development of programs for the conservation of endangered and threatened species.*



Boy Scouts volunteered to carry nēnē into Haleakala Crater for the first Maui release in 1962. The remote release site near Paliku ranger cabin was 8.5 miles across the volcano. These photos were taken by Jerry Chong while on assignment for National Geographic Magazine.



### Archive Update

Records state that 31 nēnē were raised at the Mōkapu Fish and Game Farm, and that a total of 42 birds were shipped out across the state.

The Mōkapu facility also raised guinea fowl and pheasants for release into the wild in an effort to make Hawai‘i “the hunting capital of the Pacific” expounded Mr. Frank H. Loey, however this early endeavor to increase tourism never caught on.

## NĒNĒ ARCHIVES

By 1960, Sir Peter Scott felt that enough nēnē had been reared from the breeding stock given to The Waterfowl Trust in Slimbridge, England, to make it feasible to return some nēnē to Hawai‘i. It took nearly two years to plan the first nēnē release in Haleakalā National Park. The Palikū area of the crater was chosen based on a) that the area was excellent nēnē habitat and contained year-round feed, b) the remoteness would insure a minimum of disturbance, and c) “...the excellent accommodations available at the Palikū ranger cabin...”

In late June of 1962 thirty nēnē were shipped via airfreight from England to New York and taken directly to the U.S. Federal Quarantine Station at Clinton, New Jersey. After a 21-day quarantine period they were shipped to the Honolulu Zoo for banding and a 3-day rest. On July 26, the Slimbridge birds were flown to Kahului, Maui, where they were joined by five nēnē hatched at Pōhakuloa. The trip to the rim of the crater was made by truck in cardboard vegetable, fruit, and Coca-Cola® boxes with holes cut in them. At the top of the crater 23 volunteer Boy Scouts tied the boxes onto their backs and hiked the 8.5 miles down and across the volcano to the one-half acre release enclosure near Palikū. By late afternoon all 35 nēnē had been placed in the release pen. Two weeks later several of the birds began making short flights in and out of the release site.



### Nēnē O Moloka'i

T-Shirts  
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White shirt with blue sky,  
green island, black design

Natural shirt with  
brown design



Available in child L, and adult M, L, XL, and XXL. Add \$3 shipping for orders of up to three shirts. Add \$1 more for each additional shirt. Send check or money order to address on back.

(Sorry, no credit cards accepted.)

## The Nēnē Net®

[www.nene.net](http://www.nene.net)

Nēnē O Moloka'i has started the Nēnē Net® on the World Wide Web (<http://www.aloha.net/~nenen>) with the goal of centralizing and disseminating information about nēnē. Currently available is the Nēnē Hotline® for reporting statewide nēnē sightings, the Nēnē Registry® for world-wide registration of nēnē in the nēnē studbook being compiled by Ken Reininger, Nēnē Notes® an educational page with facts and fiction about nēnē, the Nēnē Exchange® to foster communication between individuals and institutions researching nēnē and avoid duplication of research, and a request form to receive the Nēnē News® by mail. Still under construction is Nā Nēnē® a library

containing research reports, *Nēnē: Integrating The Nēnē Into Today's Altered Habitats Through Public Education And Community Involvement*, Kathy Smith, refuge manager, Keālia Pond National Wildlife Refuge, will talk about Hawai'i's endangered waterbirds and public involvement in projects on the refuge, and Cathleen Hodges of Haleakalā National Park, who will discuss their endangered species management program. There will be a charge for several of the eco-activities, while admission to the eco-trade show is free. For more information call the marketing division of the Kapalua Nature Society at (808) 669-0244.

## Earth Maui Nature Summit

The First Annual Earth Maui Nature Summit, organized by the Kapalua Nature Society, will take place August 23 - 25 at the Ritz-Carlton, Kapalua, featuring an eco-trade show, astronomy night, keiki activities, and guided nature hikes and snorkeling. The theme for this year's seminar on Saturday is "On The Brink" which will focus on increasing awareness of Maui's unique environment and protection of its natural resources. Scheduled speakers include Arleone Dibben of Nēnē O Moloka'i, with a slide show presentation about *The Urban*

The Nēnē News® is a quarterly newsletter to educate the general public about Hawai'i's nēnē. The Nēnē News® is published by Nēnē O Moloka'i, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

# Nēnē News®

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