

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Areas of Interest: Travel; Wildlife; Conservation; Marine Protection**

# **Kaloko-Honokohau National Historical Park to Host Launch of Hawai'i Wildlife Viewing Guide at 10:00am on February 12**

**FEBRUARY 6, 2006 – HONOLULU.** Native Books/ Na Mea Hawai'i and the Hawai'i Watchable Wildlife Project are pleased to announce the publication of the **Hawai'i Wildlife Viewing Guide**, which will introduce residents and visitors to the amazing diversity of flora and fauna that inhabit the Hawaiian Islands.

Author Jeanne L. Clark will join members of the Hawai'i Watchable Wildlife Steering Committee and Jim Mallman, President of Watchable Wildlife, Inc., for the book launch of the Hawai'i Wildlife Viewing Guide during the week of February 12.

The first event will be held at **Kaloko-Honokohau National Historical Park** on Sunday, February 12 at 10:00am. This 1,161-acre Park was once the site of a thriving Hawaiian village built on lava flows from the imposing Hualalai volcano. Thousands of significant archeological and cultural features have been discovered throughout the site, and demonstrate the early residents' regard for the area's rich natural resources. Ancient Hawaiian engineering skills are evident in the construction of the massive seawall that defines Kaloko fishpond, the fish trap at 'Ai'opio and several heiau. 'Aimakapa Pond was used for fish aquaculture, underscoring the early Hawaiian's natural tendency to rely on their environment for sustenance and other resources.

In addition to the rich cultural features preserved at this Park, the ponds, wetlands, and tidal areas support a rich array of wildlife and offer a bonanza of viewing opportunities just a stone's throw from town. The 'Aimakapā and Kaloko fishponds provide essential resting, feeding, and breeding habitat for the endangered Hawaiian stilt (ae'o) and the Hawaiian coot ('alae ke'oke'o). The ponds and tidal areas are an important sanctuary for numerous migratory shorebirds and waterfowl between September and April. Serious birders revere 'Aimakapa Pond because it functions as a migrant bird trap, attracting a range of unusual and rare birds. You can often see green sea turtles (honu) basking on the sun-drenched sands or grazing on sea lettuce that grows profusely on these shelves. Offshore waters may produce views of spinner dolphins (nai'a) and during winter, passing humpback whales (kohola).

Please join park staff and representatives of the Hawai'i Watchable Wildlife Project on February 12 to discover the scenery, culture and wildlife of Kaloko-Honokohau National Historical Park and the other 30 wildlife viewing sites included in the Hawai'i Wildlife Viewing Guide. Copies will be available for sale and for signing by the author.

The Hawai'i Wildlife Viewing Guide is the result of the vision and hard work of a Steering Committee that includes representatives of the primary conservation organizations and governmental agencies involved in wildlife and wildlands conservation, education and tourism in Hawai'i. Principal sponsors are the Hawai'i Tourism Authority and NOAA Fisheries and NOAA National Ocean Service.

Hawai'i is the 44<sup>th</sup> state to join Watchable Wildlife, Inc., a nonprofit organization that has supported state wildlife viewing programs nationwide since 1990. The Watchable Wildlife Viewing Guide series is published by Adventure Publications under the direction of Watchable Wildlife, Inc.

## **CONTACTS**

Hawai'i Watchable Wildlife Project: Ray Tabata [ray@hawaiiwildlife.org](mailto:ray@hawaiiwildlife.org)

For author interviews and review copies contact: Karen Killebrew, Nature Media Network, (530) 878-1330, [karen@NatureMedia.net](mailto:karen@NatureMedia.net)

**BOOK SUMMARY:**

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Author: Jeanne L. Clark

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For excerpts, photos and cover image see: [www.HawaiiWildlife.org](http://www.HawaiiWildlife.org).

**SIDEBAR IDEA** (Sample of species-specific Viewing Tips contained in the introductory chapters of the Hawai'i Wildlife Viewing Guide)

**Sea Turtle Viewing Tips**

Green sea turtles are fairly common throughout the Hawaiian Islands. They are attracted to shallow shelves of lava or coral reefs, where they feed on algae or limu. From shore, watch the nearshore waters for the turtles as they surface to breathe, swim in the surf, and feed on the bottom. Green turtles also regularly come ashore to warm in the sun (a phenomenon known as basking), making them vulnerable to disturbance both in the water and on land.

Sea turtles are protected by the Endangered Species Act, so it is illegal to disturb them. Do not touch, ride, feed, or otherwise disturb sea turtles on land or in the water. Please keep your distance from sea turtles resting on land or if you are in a vessel, paddling, swimming, snorkeling, or diving near a swimming turtle. Back off further if your presence is disturbing the turtle. Limit your viewing time to 30 minutes.