



## 2019 Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death Newsletter

Volume 3, Issue 1

~ I ola 'oe, I ola mākou nei ~

**My life is dependent on yours; your life is dependent on mine**

**This is our quarterly newsletter that was designed to update the community on current Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death (ROD) issues. If you wish to UNSUBSCRIBE, scroll down to the bottom to do so.**

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## Research Updates

- In late 2018, *Ceratocystis lukuohia*, the more virulent of the two fungal pathogens causing Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death (ROD), was confirmed in trees on Department of Hawaiian Home Lands property behind Kalalea Mountain on the east side of Kaua'i. This first detection of *C. lukuohia* comes after the other pathogen resulting in ROD, *Ceratocystis huliohia*, had been detected on Kauai in three distinct locations since May 2018, including the north, south, and east sides.
- UH Lyon Arboretum is happy to announce phase two of the Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death Seed Banking Initiative, and a second series of 'Ōhi'a Seed Conservation Workshops in 2019, made possible by funding from Hawai'i Tourism Authority. The workshops aim to expand capacity for collection and banking of 'ōhi'a seeds across all islands in response to the ROD crisis. These free workshops are open to anyone who wants to learn how to properly collect, handle, and process 'ōhi'a seeds, without doing harm to trees or forests, using methods that protect seed viability and ensure conservation value for future restoration. Please share with anyone who may be interested. We are currently scheduling workshops

for all islands/locations in 2019, and you can register to be notified of future workshops [here](#).

- In an effort to get ahead of the potential spread of ROD to the three islands of Maui County and the island of O‘ahu, a Maui-based consulting company has been hired to create interagency response plans for those locations. Anders Lyons of Kapalaea Consultants LLC has over 20 years’ experience in environmental conservation work in Hawai‘i. Lyons has worked very closely with the ROD working groups on each island to compile available resources and to draft a coordinated response plan under the Incident Command System structure (ICS). These plans will allow conservation agencies to respond quickly, and in an organized coordinated way, to any sign of the spread of ROD to Maui County or O‘ahu. On Kaua‘i, Lyons is working with conservation agencies to support the development of longer-term management plans to contain the two types of ROD which have been detected there.
- Our partners at the Big Island Invasive Species Committee (BIISC) are offering a citizen science opportunity on ambrosia beetles and their role in the spread of Rapid ‘Ōhi‘a Death, targeted at grades 3-7. Ambrosia beetles are common decomposers in our forests, and they play an important role in releasing nutrients of dead and dying trees back into the ecosystem. However, some ambrosia beetles in Hawai‘i have also become inadvertent players in the spread of the fungus that causes ROD! To learn more, researchers are seeking to collect beetles from around Hawai‘i Island. Invite a guest presenter from BIISC to your classroom or student group, and get your kids involved with the fight against ROD. Students create their own beetle traps and learn how to collect data. This opportunity is open to classroom, home school groups, and after-school programs. Email [biisc@hawaii.edu](mailto:biisc@hawaii.edu), or call (808) 933-3340 for more information.

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## Management Tips

Blazing marks into trees to mark trails is a historically commonplace practice that is still used to help find a way out of a forest. This practice can unfortunately allow ROD-causing fungus to infect and kill 'ōhi'a trees. If you must leave a trail in the forest, mark invasive species such as strawberry guava or albizia. You could also stick a piece of paper on a branch that will eventually decompose. Let's use these alternative trail-marking methods to protect our 'ōhi'a and other native trees.



## Island Updates

### Kaua'i

Throughout the year, the Kaua'i Invasive Species Committee (KISC) included ROD materials and messaging at their various tabling and speaking events, including Kaua'i Garden Fair, Koke'e Banana Poka Festival, and Kaua'i County

Farm Bureau Fair. Three press releases were issued in 2018 announcing new ROD detections on Kaua'i. News stories aired on television and radio and published in local, state, and national news outlets, both in print and online. To view the latest press release, click [here](#).

## **O'ahu**

During 2018, ROD staff has participated in 24 events on O'ahu which included tabling events, presentations, workshops and more. Staff has also been hosting documentary showings of the new ROD documentary entitled: Saving 'Ōhi'a – Hawaii's Sacred Tree. In August and September, we aired the documentary across the 5 major networks in Hawaii and we reached over 750,000 people. We will be hosting the documentary on YouTube soon, stay tuned for details. Since October 2018, the O'ahu Invasive Species Committee (OISC) has fielded reports of suspect 'ōhi'a trees and collected 11 samples...all were negative for ROD. OISC presented invasive species information to DoD employees for Pesticide Re-certification training. OISC participated in the ROD Biosanitation Training for O'ahu tour operators and an educational hike with Punahou students.

## **Maui**

The Maui Invasive Species Committee (MISC) has a table devoted to ROD information at all tabling events. In 2018, at least 9 community events had information about ROD reaching an estimated 1,410 people. MISC and Kamehameha Schools Maui partnered to present the "Saving 'Ōhi'a" documentary. MISC incorporates ROD as part of their workshops for tourism professionals presented as part of the Maui Mauka Conservation Awareness Trainings. Additionally, the ROD outreach team had their Biosanitation Training for Tour Operators on Maui. MISC authored 2 articles for the Maui News related to ROD in 2018, one was an update on the disease on Hawai'i Island, the other was about the efforts to pass a ban on plants in the Myrtaceae family.

## **Hawai'i Island**

In 2018, the ROD outreach team on Hawai'i Island continued to offer and attend community events and workshops, reaching more than 5,400 residents and visitors. Some of our highlights included the 2nd Annual Hawai'i Island ROD Symposia, 3rd year of outreach during Merrie Monarch Festival, 2nd Annual 'Ōhi'a Love Fest, and Statewide Biosanitation Training for Tour Operators.

RAPIDOHIADATH.ORG

# RAPID 'ŌHI'A DEATH SYMPOSIA

MARCH 2019  
9AM-12PM

**EAST HAWAI'I MARCH 9**

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I AT HILO, UCB 100

**WEST HAWAI'I MARCH 30**

WEST HAWAI'I CIVIC CENTER, COUNCIL CHAMBERS



**FREE EVENTS!**

PLEASE REGISTER AT

[RAPIDOHIADATH.ORG](http://RAPIDOHIADATH.ORG)

**HOSTED BY  
THE RAPID  
'ŌHI'A DEATH  
WORKING GROUP**

**THE LATEST IN ROD RESEARCH  
MANAGEMENT & OUTREACH  
SNACKS AND REFRESHMENTS  
FREE ROD DECONTAMINATION KIT!**

## Upcoming Events

Please join us in our 3rd annual Hawaii Island Symposia, which will be held in Hilo and Kona in March 2019. To RSVP to attend please visit [www.rapidohiadeath.org](http://www.rapidohiadeath.org)

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### Meet Our People

Brian Tucker

ROD Data Manager

I joined the 'Ōhi'a Love 'ohana in November 2018 as the ROD Data Manager . In this position I am here to weave my love for the forests with my passion for good, solid data. I grew up in the Northwoods of Wisconsin and earned a degree in Natural Resources Conservation and Management through the School of Forestry at the University of Wisconsin – Madison. I arrived on Hawai'i Island in 2003 with knowledge and purpose to pursue a career in conservation. Throughout the next 15 years of managing natural and cultural resources at Pōhakuloa, I learned just how important it is for organizational success to prioritize data management. I found that my ability to support many hands and feet in the forest and in the

office achieves more than my own could. From planning to implementation through reporting of any given project, good data presented clearly makes every part of the process more efficient and effective. I specialize in GIS, spatial database management and cartography. I combine that with many other technical skills and a positive attitude to co-create success with this amazing team. To be able do this for our dear 'ōhi'a forests is such an honor and gift.

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