

# Kaua'i Mongoose Monitor



[www.kauaiisc.org/mongoose](http://www.kauaiisc.org/mongoose)

October 2013

## October yields unusual mongoose report

As summer turns into fall in Hawai'i, it hardly gets any notice. Only wetter days, more spectacular moon-rises, and the small but perceptible increase in strange occurrences indicate that October has crept up behind us.

This month's most unusual mongoose report came from the North Shore of Kaua'i in Wainiha. KISC has received several credible reports from this part of the island, but this call was definitely the weirdest. The observer lives upstream of Wainiha River and she often goes to the water to bathe.

She had even made a small "pool" on the bank of the river so that her son could safely swim.

On the day in question, she went to the river, as usual, but discovered something floating in her little pool. Without realizing what it was, she lifted it up to examine it. To her surprise, she claims, it was a dead mongoose. Not realizing that mongooses were not supposed to be on Kaua'i, she threw it into the river so that it could finish its journey downstream.

She mentioned this encounter to her neighbor, who informed her that she should report it which led her to call KISC to relay the details. A week had already passed so a timely response opportunity had already passed.

KISC crew-members did don waders and search the banks of the river, but no carcass was recovered.

Definite proof of mongooses on the north shore of Kaua'i would paint a very different and scary picture regarding the threats to our native and abundant ground-nesting birds that live in that area.



Photo: Jamie Harris Bullfrog finds a comfy spot on a cat food tin

## October 2013 Mongoose Sightings

- **October 10** - Niumalu. Observer saw the animal while driving by the park. Was 100% sure it was a mongoose. (*Questionable*)
- **October 15** - Wainiha. Found dead mongoose in the stream. Didn't know they aren't supposed to be here, so she threw it back in the stream and reported it a week later. Stream bank search could not locate carcass. (*Questionable*)
- **October 21** - Hanalei. Saw a mongoose run in front of her car near the liquor store and run toward taro patch. 3 kids in car also saw it. (*Credible*)
- **October 21** - Hanalei. Observer spotted a "baby mongoose" running across the road just north of Hanalei bridge. (*Questionable. Six attempts to interview observer were not successful.*)
- **October 29** - Līhue. Observer spotted mongoose as it ran across the parking lot at the Līhue Airport and run down a storm drain. (*Credible- USDA-WS was contacted and they are running a trap line in this area.*)

## Is it safe to make assumptions about mongooses on Kaua'i?

At the last KISC meeting, held in October 2013, a summary of mongoose work was given outlining reports, work hours expended, areas trapped, and the results of all of these efforts. As far as hard-core evidence of mongooses on Kaua'i goes, we only know that three mongoose can be confirmed; a road-kill in 1976, and two live captures in 2012.

Looking at the collected data, however, may tell us that there may be more mongooses than we can confirm. The graph at the right paints an interesting picture. Sighting data collected from 1968 to 2002 (represented in blue bars) was not screened for credibility, whereas sighting data from 2003 to the present (represented by red line) was screened for credibility and only represents those reports deemed credible.

**What is interesting** is that there are correlating peaks and valleys during the year of number of sightings whether credible or not.

**What is disturbing** is that the blue bars represent 34 years of data, while the red line represents only 10 years. From 1968 to 2002, 89 mongoose sightings were reported. From 2003 to the present, 150 mongoose sightings were reported. That represents a 500% increase in reports if you average the number of reports with their number of years time frame (2.6 reports per year vs. 15 reports per year). Community awareness may account for some of the increase in sightings, but clearly it cannot account for all. Can we yell, "the sky is falling" yet? Maybe not, but have your umbrellas handy...

