

Kaua'i Mongoose Monitor



March 2013



Patiently waiting...

Well, not exactly waiting. Or patient, for that matter. It only appears that we are always waiting; for the next report, for the trap to spring, or for the next mongoose capture.

The mongoose response team (Jamie Harris - DLNR DOFAW, and Pat Gmelin - KISC) have continued with their trapping and outreach efforts across Kaua'i.

There were six mongoose sightings reported to KISC during March; three considered credible, and three deemed questionable. This month, the mongoose reports that seemed "iffy" were only so because the viewer did not have the animal in their sights very long. They were certain it was a mongoose, but they could not recall enough details about the observation for us to deem it credible.

One of the sightings this month was seen by both the driver and the passenger, in a "hot spot" (meaning area of repeated historical sightings).

Currently, we are patiently waiting for just the right type of mongoose sighting that would warrant a rapid-response effort with the mongoose-detecting dog.

Meanwhile, new areas are being scoped out for trap placement and property access permission is being pursued.

Trap set at Matson, Inc. in Nawiliwili Harbor

March 2013 Mongoose Sightings

- **Mar. 1** - Haena. Mongoose ran across road near Tunnels. (*Questionable*)
- **Mar. 9** - Moloaa. Observed mongoose run across highway near fruit stand. (*Questionable*)
- **Mar. 13** - Halfway Bridge area 1/4 mile past Humane Society headed toward Kalaheo. Both driver and passenger saw mongoose run makai to mauka across highway. (*Credible*)
- **Mar. 14** - Kuilau Trail, Wailua. Wildlife biologist visiting island saw mongoose run across trail. (*Credible*)
- **Mar. 15** - Kahili Mountain. Driver saw mongoose cross highway. (*Questionable*)
- **Mar. 25** - Lawai. Driver saw mongoose run across the road just in front of her car. (*Credible*)

Future Mongoose Display (Spoiler Alert)

Educating the public is a primary mission of KISC, and there is no shortage of work regarding mongoose education on Kaua'i.

Tiffani Keanini, KISC's Outreach Specialist, has been working on a new mongoose educational display for the community. She plans on making it a "traveling" display; moving it from school to school, various libraries, and just about anywhere that agrees to display it.

"This will be a fantastic display with a new mounted mongoose in a running position, because that's how most people see them," Keanini said. "We are adding a scientific component as well with skull comparisons. The kids will love it."

In front of the running mongoose will be professionally cleaned skulls of a cat, rat, and

mongoose so the public can see how they differ in size and shape. The skulls will be prominently displayed so that the teeth can be easily inspected.

Joe Kona, KISC's Field Operations Supervisor and resident wood-crafter, will build the display stand and skull mounts. A Plexiglas display cover will be ordered from Oahu and affixed in a way that the display can not be tampered with.

Kirk McCarthy, mongoose dog-handler and DLNR State Parks employee on Oahu, was able to obtain the mongooses to be used for the mount and skull display. Gordon Lau, an Oahu taxidermist, is currently working on the mongoose. The cat and rat skulls were purchased from Skulls Unlimited.

"We are really excited to get this display finished and out into the public," Keanini added.



The new mobile display will also offer information as to how to report mongoose sightings and take-away flyers with information about how mongooses can affect native ground-nesting bird populations, carry disease, and even impact back-yard chicken farmers.

KISC will also be featuring this new display at the annual County Fair that is held at the end of August.

