

# Kaua'i Mongoose Monitor



KAUA'I INVASIVE SPECIES COMMITTEE

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

July/August 2013

## DNA testing of collected scat inconclusive



*What looks like rat incisors was dissected from small portion of scat found*

On Friday, June 31, 2013, at 4:30 pm, KISC received a phone call from a gentleman who had hiked the Kuilau Ridge Trail in Wailua that morning. When he got back to the trail-head, he spotted information on the trail-head sign about mongoose reporting information.

The mongoose information had been placed on the sign only the previous month after a credible mongoose sighting was reported along this trail, about a half-mile from the trail-head. This gentleman took note of the reporting phone number and called KISC when he returned to his hotel later that day. The observer saw what he had identified as mongoose scat in the middle of the trail, about a half-mile from the trail-head. He was certain it was mongoose scat as he had raised an orphaned mongoose pup while living on the Big Island.

The scat was immediately collected and frozen. A small portion was dissected by Terry Moats and photos were taken by Dr. Russell Messing (UH-CTAHR) showing rodent teeth, small bits of bone, and hair.

Thomas Kaiakapu agreed to proceed with DNA testing by Susan Jarvi, PhD, Associate Professor Pharmaceutical Sciences, Director, Pre-Pharmacy, Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy, University of Hawaii at Hilo.

Unfortunately, the sample was too degraded (possibly from exposure on the path prior to collection) to get conclusive DNA results. "At this time, we are unable to verify whether the sample originated from a mongoose."

Disappointing? Yes. Will we keep trying to gather conclusive evidence of mongooses on Kaua'i? Yes.



*Bits of bones and hair were also present in a small portion of dissected scat*

## July 2013 Mongoose Sightings

- **July 3** - Wailua. Saw animal run across highway between bike track and KCCC at the south end of the golf course. (*Questionable*)
- **July 5** - Kōke'e. Driver and his girlfriend thought they saw a mongoose at the 10 mile marker driving down from Kōke'e. (*Questionable*)
- **July 7** - Māhā'ulepū. While walking up a trail near Makauwahe Cave, saw what looked like a mongoose run across the trail. (*Credible*)
- **July 18** - Po'ipū. Observer saw animal by Po'ipū Bay Golf Course while driving toward Shipwreck's Beach. (*Credible*)
- **July 21** - Līhu'e. Observer spotted animal running into the bushes while at the Costco gas pump next to Home Depot. (*Questionable*)

## August 2013 Mongoose Sightings

- **August 15** - Po'ipū. Saw animal near Grand Hyatt. (*Observer unavailable for interview*)
- **August 18** - Waimea. Animal ran across road about 1/4 mile up Kōke'e Road. (*Questionable*)
- **August 31** - Po'ipū. Spotted mongoose near the round-a-bout. It stopped to look at him, then ran into the bushes (*Credible*)



Photos: KISC

## New mongoose display ready “for the road”

KISC's new mongoose display made its debut at this year's annual Kaua'i County Farm Bureau Fair at the end of August.

The display, designed by Tiffani Keanini and Keren Gundersen and built by Joe Kona, features a new taxidermy mongoose by Gordon Lau, Jr., Oahu Taxidermy Services, and comparative skulls (cat, mongoose, and rat) by Skulls Unlimited (mongoose skull provided by Lau). The male mongoose was captured on Oahu by Kirk MacCarthy.

Educational signage mounted to the display outlines the history of mongooses in Hawai'i and on Kaua'i as well as what threats they pose to this fragile ecosystem. Reporting information is featured on the front plaque.

This new display will rotate throughout Kaua'i at schools, libraries, and public places. Look for it near you!