

About our Native Landscape

`Imiloa Astronomy Center's beautiful native landscape was created as a collaborative effort by Ka Haka `Ula o Ke`elikōlani, the UH-Hilo's Hawaiian Language College, and by landscape architect Randall Monaghan.

Featured are endemic, indigenous and Polynesian introduced plants, including many commonly seen plants as well as some rare endemic and indigenous species.

Signage throughout the landscape identifies plants with their Hawaiian names, and indicate whether the plant is `āpa`akuma (endemic), `ōiwi (indigenous) or Polenesia (Polynesian introduced).

Indigenous plants have counterparts throughout Polynesia and can be found in Tahiti, Marquesas, Rarotonga, and Rapanui (Easter Island).

- `Āpa`ākuma (endemic) plants evolved in Hawai'i and can be found on all islands, on only one particular island, or in a specific vicinity of an island. Of the 1,000 native plant species of Hawai'i, nearly 89 percent are endemic.

- `Ōiwi (indigenous) plants arrived in Hawai'i via the jet stream, in winds of a storm, or floated in on ocean currents. Some even hitchhiked on or in birds. These plants did not evolve into unique species. `Ōiwi plants represent 11 percent of native species.

Many of these native plants are mentioned in the Kumulipo (Hawaiian creation chant). See Kumulipo Theater exhibit to hear the chant).

- Polenesia (Polynesian introduced) plants are sometimes called "canoe plants," plants introduced to Hawai'i aboard wa`a kaulua (double hull canoes) as early as 300 A.D. `Imiloa features 36 canoe plants which can be found in our Meakanu Polenesia gardens.

- Two kīpuka (native vegetative oases) have been saved. Most prominent is the kīpuka seen from the windows of the restaurant. Notice the lava rocks with hala plants and `ōhi`a roots growing out of the lava.

Native Plant Landscape

Hi`onaina`ōiwi

Enjoy our award-winning native plant landscape at `Imiloa – a glimpse into Hawai'i's pristine native ecosystem. This living outdoor exhibit thrives over six acres of land and showcases over 70 native species onsite, representing Hawai'i's largest native plant landscape.

Nu`ukia

The Mission of `Imiloa

To celebrate Hawaiian culture and Maunakea astronomy sharing with the world an inspiring example of science and culture united to advance knowledge, understanding and opportunity.



500 `Imiloa Place • Hilo, HI 96720
Mahalo to Hawaii County Research and Development and the Hawaii Tourism Authority



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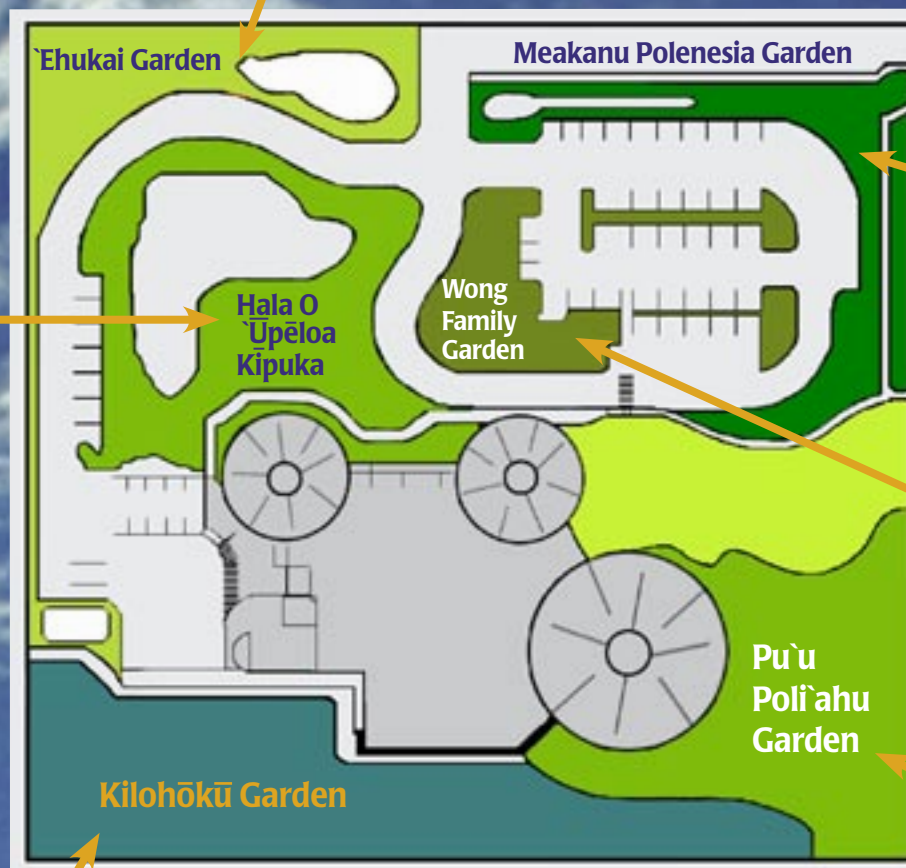
ʻEhukai (Seascape) Garden

Found at the entrance to ʻImiloa – these are Hawaiʻi's coastal natives. Note the half-flowered naupaka kahakai (*Scaevola sericea*), milo (*Thespesia populnea*) and kou (*Cordia subcordata*).



Kīpuka Hala o ʻŪpēloa (Oasis of Native Vegetation)

This kīpuka, oasis of native plants, was saved during construction of ʻImiloa. The endemic ʻōhiʻa lehua (*Metrosideros polymorpha*) can be found in many colors and range in age between 50 -100 years old. The naming of the site signifies the beauty of the hala (*Pandanus*) found in this area known as ʻupeloā.



Meakanu Polenesia (Polynesian Introduced) Garden

Plants cultivated for food, clothing, medicine, house construction and other purposes – these plants were introduced by Eastern Polynesians as early as 300 A.D. See the kalo (*Colocasia esculenta*) from which poi is made.

Lāʻau Lapaʻau Wong Family (Medicinal) Garden

These plants were vital to the health of the Hawaiian people. Roots, leaves, bark and fruit offered healing properties. See Mamaki (*Pipturus albidus*), an endemic plant whose dried leaves were used to make a tea to treat stomach, bladder, and liver problems.

Puʻu Poliʻahu (Hill of Poliʻahu) Garden

This garden is named after the Hawaiian snow goddess Poliʻahu who resides on Maunakea. Note the ʻūlei (*Osteomeles anthyllidifolia*). Here is another kīpuka (vegetative outcrop) with ʻōhiʻa lehua (*Metrosideros polymorpha*) and the indigenous neneleau (*Rhus sandwicensis*).

Kilohōkū (Stargazing) Garden

This garden features breathtaking views of Hilo Bay. Planted are an array of fragrant native plants, the endangered and endemic nāʻū (*Gardenia brighamii*) and the endemic white hibiscus called kokiʻo keʻokeʻo (*Hibiscus arnottianus*).

