



**(Ni'ihau) *Homalopoma verruca*:** Although not a land snail, Ni'ihau is known for their Ni'ihau shells. Although there are several species used for lei and none are endemic to the Hawaiian Islands, *Homalopoma verruca* stands out by being first described from Hawai'i. Additionally, these shells are known as Kahelelani (royal going; name of first chief of Ni'ihau). These shells were worn by chiefs and as the smallest of Ni'ihau shells, they were the difficult to make into lei, therefore, being one of the most precious shells from Ni'ihau

**Why should this be the state snail for Ni'ihau?**

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# Vote for Hawaii's State Snails

Invertebrates, such as insects and molluscs, are integral components of ecosystems, providing pollination for plants, decomposition of waste, and food for other animals. Hawai'i is an invertebrate biodiversity hotspot because of its unusually high number of native species found nowhere else in the world. Native Hawaiian land snail species, or kāhuli, embodies this diversity with a high number of species and endemism (species found only in Hawai'i) with 759 species and 99.9% endemism. However, the vast majority of these species are threatened or critically endangered, and many more already extinct. Hawai'i's kāhuli hold ecological significance in Native Hawaiian ecosystems due to their role as decomposers, breaking down dead or decaying material to provide plant-life with nutrient-rich soil. Additionally, they are a food source for our other native species such as *Hyposmocoma molluscivora*, the carnivorous moth native to Maui and O'ahu, and native forest birds such as the Po'ouli, *Melamprosops phaeosoma*, a native and recently extinct honeycreeper. Hawai'i's kāhuli have served an important role in the Hawaiian culture through mele (song), hula, mo'olelo (story), 'oli (chant), and as symbols for romance and good omens. They are described as the singing snails representing the voice of the forest. This ancient description was made due to kāhuli's immense prominence in the forests. The snail's voices were signifiers of positive events or affirmations for certain decisions. As our kāhuli continue to decline, so do our cultural connections with the land, and our understanding of our place in the world.

In 2020, Kalikoonāmaukūpuna Kalāhiki, a Kamehameha Schools high school student, drafted a resolution to designate a state snail, *Laminella sanguinea*. The House and Senate bills were supported, however, due *Laminella sanguinea* being endemic to O'ahu, the legislators suggested the designation of an endemic snail for each of the islands. The COVID-19 pandemic delayed these efforts, but we are relaunching this campaign to designate a state snail for each island of Hawai'i. Through these designations, we hope to raise awareness and appreciation for these critically land snails and reconnect us to the lands on which we so heavily rely for our lives. We hope to instill a foundation for not only land snail conservation, but natural resource conservation broadly, and a passion for preserving the natural and cultural resources of the world.

The candidate snails were selected from extant members of each island.

**How to vote:** Please vote for your choice of snail to be designated for each of the islands including the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands. There are three ways to vote:

- 1) Fill out an online form and submit your vote at <http://histatesnails.org>
- 2) Submit a coloring voting ballot that can be downloaded and submitted online at <http://histatesnails.org>
- 3) Submit a coloring voting ballot that can be downloaded at <http://histatesnails.org> and sent to:  
Bishop Museum  
Malacology Department  
1525 Bernice Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822



We will announce the island snail winners at the 2nd Annual Kāhuli Festival on September 23, 2023 and submit a new resolution to the State of Hawai'i for consideration.

## Keiki State Snail Coloring Contest

Bishop Museum is hosting a coloring contest for keiki from grades K-12. Contest entries will be judged in three age categories: Grades K-5; Grades 6-8; and Grades 9-12. Winners will be announced at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Kāhuli Festival on September 23, 2023.

**If submitting to the "Keiki State Snail Coloring Contest", please fill out the following information with the coloring sheet:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Island: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Legal Guardian permission if under 18 years old: I give permission for my child to participate in this contest. I agree to allow my child's name and entry to be displayed publicly, published, or used in any advertising related to this contest.**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_