



## ON ASSIGNMENT

Star-Bulletin reporter Diana Leone is on the 10-day educational cruise to the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands

# Nihoa voyagers explore grasshopper problem

### Two archaeologists on the trip will also document ancient Hawaiian ceremonial sites

By Diana Leone  
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**ABOARD THE HI'IALAKAI >>**  
The island of Nihoa lives up to its Hawaiian name, which means rigid or jagged. The sheer cliffs of the 156-acre

island drop vertically into a rich, deep-blue ocean that really does feel like the middle of nowhere. Five participants in an educators' voyage to the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands left the comforts of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric

Administration ship Hi'ialakai yesterday to spend the next week on this windswept rock. Two archaeologists, two biologists and one teacher will sleep in pup tents, eat canned food heated on a camp stove and drink only the water they brought with them. But they didn't get off at Nihoa to be comfortable. Everyone going ashore has a job to do.

>> Scott Kekuewa Kikiloi, a University of Hawaii doctoral candidate in archaeology, and archaeologist Kehaulani Souza will map several ancient Hawaiian ceremonial sites.  
>> Beth Flint, a U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service biologist, will check the well-being of plants and birds on the island, Please see Teachers, A5

>> Iraqis vow to finish constitution, falling to protect U.S. troops from the most lethal attacks insurgents.  
The ceramic plates in worn by most personnel can withstand certain munitions insurgents use. But more than Please see Armor, A11

## DEAL OF THE DAY



# COLD STONE

CREAMERY

### Free Pint

When you buy a Bucket Creation. Coupon, A3

## Guam war survivors seek compensation

As Guam observes tomorrow's 60th anniversary of Japan's surrender in World War II, momentum is building to compensate Guam residents for abuses they suffered under Japan's 32-month occupation. Because a 1951 treaty absolved Japan of individual American war claims, the U.S. would be responsible to pay for abuses committed by Japanese soldiers on American nationals on American territory. NEWS, PAGE A14

## WHAT'S NEWS TODAY



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**GOOD  
MORNING**

OHA, IT'S SUNDAY

**More than just  
a beauty queen**

*While Arlene Newman-Van Asperen showed up to a pageant interview with a shiner, it didn't stop her from being crowned Mrs. Hawaii. E1*



**Unsettling  
debt settlements**

*Some companies across the nation promising to reduce people's debt are leaving many in worse shape than before. D1*



# Star-Bulletin

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**TURTLES BECOME MAJOR TOURIST ATTRACTIONS AT LANIAKEA BEACH**



**Analyst  
skeptical  
of Hawaii  
gas cap**

*The oil economist says a rumor could create a fuel shortage*

Scott Kekuewa Kikioi and ship electronics technician Mike Cumley blew conch shells yesterday to announce the arrival of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration ship Hi'ialakai at Nihoa Island.

DIANA LEONE / DLEONE@STARBUZZLETIN.COM



## Teachers: Students will learn about Nihoa discoveries via online exercise

*Continued from A1*

never been seen on Nihoa in 2002.

such warming numbers until something she has done seven times before.

>> Pete Oboyski, an insect biologist with the University of California at Berkeley, will see if a ravenous grasshopper that ate most of the island's plants in 2002 and 2004 has returned.

>> David Boynton, an environmental resource teacher at Kokee Discovery Center on Nihoa found that he was surrounded by grasshoppers within minutes, where before there had been none.

That anecdote about the progress of scientific discovery set off a lively discussion among teachers on this voyage and the scientists who are sharing their research with the grasshoppers are on all the main Hawaiian islands and have been seen on French Frigate Shoals and Mokumanamana (Necker) Island, but had

Teachers Barbara Mayer and Maggie Prevenas were so excited by the grasshopper saga that they crafted an online exercise for their students, asking them to guess what might have caused the

population explosion. They'll ask Oboyski to share what he observed on Nihoa with their students online, when the Nihoa five are picked up Saturday.

One possible silver lining in said Prevenas.

Two of those sights, unfortunately, were in the same eye.

The small gray reef shark "was wearing a piece of debris rope around its middle like a halter."

They saw several of the sights that are just about guaranteed on a trip to Hawaii's most remote islands: monk seals, shark and marine debris.

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**TEACHERS AT SEA**

**ON THE NET**

>> Trip postings from teachers and other information:  
 hawaiianatolls.org  
 >> U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Pacific Islands: www.fws.gov/pacific/pacificislands/wmr/northwestnw.html  
 >> Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve: www.hawaiireef.noaa.gov

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Continued from A1

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>> David Boynton, an environmental resource teacher at Kokee Discovery Center on Kauai and a photographer, will spend some time with each of the groups.

Oboyski will count the invasive gray bird grasshoppers (*Schistocerca nitens*), and he'll check on the 36 local native insects known to live on Nihoa.

Even if the grasshoppers — which are related to the "locusts that wrought plagues of biblical proportions" — are not there this year, they may have taken a toll, he said.

The grasshoppers are on all

never been seen on Nihoa in such warming numbers until 2002.

Other insect biologists reported that "most of the vegetation was completely chewed off," in 2002 and 2004, Oboyski said.

Oboyski will test five "flavors" of oils for their use as possible attractants for the grasshoppers. One will be orange oil, because a scientist who opened a fresh orange on Nihoa found that he was surrounded by grasshoppers within minutes, where before there had been none.

That anecdote about the sometimes serendipitous progress of scientific discovery set off a lively discussion among teachers on this voyage and the scientists who are sharing their research with them.

Teachers Barbara Mayer and Maggie Prevenas were so excited by the grasshopper



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[www.fws.gov/pacific/pacificislands/wnwr/pnorthwestnwr.html](http://www.fws.gov/pacific/pacificislands/wnwr/pnorthwestnwr.html)

>> Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve:

[www.hawaiiireef.noaa.gov](http://www.hawaiiireef.noaa.gov)

the dark cloud of grasshopper overpopulation may be that one of Nihoa's rare birds, the Nihoa Millerbird (*Acrocephalus familiaris kingi*), seems to have increased in numbers over the grasshopper years.

Flint, ever the cautious scientist, said it's not clear whether the larger Nihoa Millerbird numbers are because they've reproduced well on a diet of grasshoppers, or if it's simply easier to spot the secretive birds on bushes devoid of leaves.

Taking advantage of the unusually calm waters around Nihoa, the other nine teachers on this voyage snorkeled in its waters and circled the island in an inflatable boat.

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