

Hala Scale

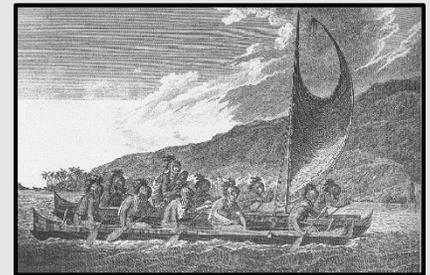
A THREAT TO HAWAII'S HALA

Lauhala weaving is an art form and tradition deeply rooted in Hawaiian culture and history, but is under peril. Hala trees continue to be threatened by an invasive scale insect, *Thysanococcus pandani*, which can cause significant damage to plants.

The hala scale can cause leaf deformities, discoloration, stunting, twisting, yellowing, and leaf blade length can be greatly reduced, rendering them useless to weavers. It also attacks the tree's fruit, can cause entire crowns of the plant to fall off, and possible premature death of stressed trees.



Woman weaving a lauhala mat with rolls of prepared hala leaves



Canoe with sails made from lauhala



Yellowing seen on top of leaf (left) and hala scales infesting the underside of the leaves (right)



Hala scales compared in size to a dime



Hala scales magnified under a microscope

Hala is an important indigenous tree of coastal ecosystems in Hawaii and throughout the Pacific. The hala scale can attack young seedlings, decreasing the chance of new trees establishing and coastal hala forests from regenerating.



Infested crowns on a hala tree from Maui

The hala scale was originally discovered in Hana, Maui in 1995, and spread throughout the island within a decade. Its presence on Molokai was suspected in 2013, however samples could not be collected until 2014, and hala scale is now spreading across the island.

Although infestations on Oahu were detected in 2013, Hawaii Department of Agriculture (HDOA) worked to eradicate these known populations. Island-wide surveys on Oahu continue with hala scale not found elsewhere on the island as of May 2016.

What you can do right now:

- Do **NOT** move hala plants (all *Pandanus*), seeds, or green leaves from islands known to have hala scale (Maui and Molokai) interisland. If moving material from uninfested islands (including Oahu), always get plants and seeds inspected by your local HDOA Plant Quarantine office.
- When collecting brown leaves from infested areas, double bag and freeze (or leave in sun) for two days.
- Do **NOT** visit uninfested hala after being around infested hala trees! Hala scale crawlers can hitch a ride!
- Report new infestations:
 - Call **643-PEST** or **973-9525**
 - Email- hdoa.ppc@Hawaii.gov



Hala scales also infest the fruit, making this another distribution pathway



Leaf yellowing/discoloration of severely infested hala crown