

Introduction to the Hawaiian Terrestrial Invertebrate Survey

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IN NOVEMBER 1988, the Bishop Museum, with sponsorship of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, hosted a workshop on the conservation of Hawaiian terrestrial invertebrates. The goal of the workshop was to develop strategic plans for understanding the terrestrial invertebrate biodiversity of Hawai'i in order to provide for their protection through conservation means. Heretofore, it has been difficult or impossible to answer conservation questions for the over 8,000 species of insects and related arthropods and 1,000 species of land snails because of poor knowledge of their taxonomy, biology, and, especially, their current distribution and population status.

Specialists in invertebrate biology, Hawaiian natural history, and conservation, from major institutions in Hawai'i and throughout the United States and Canada, examined means for filling the major gaps in knowledge of this fauna that hinder conservation efforts. Separate survey plans for land snails and terrestrial arthropods have evolved from the foundation established at this workshop. The Museum is currently soliciting funds for the implementation of the first phase of survey activities.

The first 2 papers in this volume of *Occasional Papers* summarize knowledge of the conservation status of 2 groups that include much of the biological diversity of the Hawaiian Islands—terrestrial arthropods and land snails. These papers provide overviews of past and current research, as well as a perspective on needs for future research. The Bishop Museum hopes that these papers will encourage interest in these important subjects. Similar papers within the Museum's interests will be published from time to time.

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