

## **Wainiha Preserve** *Fast Facts*

- Size: 7,050 acres – third largest private nature preserve in the state
- Comprises two geographic areas: upper Wainiha Valley and Alaka‘i Summit Plateau
- Contains three major Hawaiian ecosystems: lowland wet forest; montane (mountain) wet forest; and wet cliff
- Contains rare natural communities: montane bog and Hawaiian freshwater stream
- One of the best examples of native lowland wet forest remaining in the state
- Provides habitat for native forest birds such as ‘*akikiki*, ‘*akeke‘e*, ‘*apapane*, ‘*amakihi* and ‘*elepaio*
- Mountain cliffs provide valuable nesting sites for the endangered Hawaiian seabird ‘*ua‘u* (Hawaiian petrel)
- Wainiha Valley contains 127 flowering plant species found only in Hawai‘i, 41 of which are found only on Kaua‘i
- Alaka‘i Summit Plateau contains 131 plant species found only in Hawaii, 46 of which are found only on Kaua‘i

### **Species of Interest:**

- *Laua‘e fern*: Upper Wainiha Valley contains one of the largest populations of the rare fern *Microsorium spectrum*, the famous fragrant *laua‘e* fern of Kaua‘i chant and traditions.
- *Phyllostegia helleri*: A native mint previously thought to be extinct in the wild. Rediscovered at Hinalale Falls in Wainiha Valley in 2004 by Ken Wood (National Tropical Botanical Garden) and Trae Menard (Nature Conservancy).

### **Key Threats**

- **Australian tree fern**: spreads great distances via tiny wind-born spores and quickly forms dense patches that displace native plants. Large dense patches in neighboring Lumahai Valley are spreading into Wainiha and could dominate the valley within 10-20 years unless immediate action is taken.
- **Introduced wild pigs**: reproduce rapidly and contribute to soil erosion; accelerate the spread of weeds and destroy native vegetation. Extensive pig disturbance in the Alaka‘i plateau and Wai‘ale‘ale summit. Native forest in this area will rapidly decline unless pigs are removed.