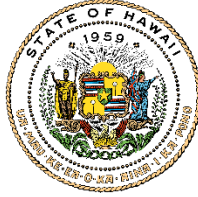


JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

P.O. BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

DAWN N.S. CHANG  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT  
RYAN KP KANAKAOLE  
FIRST DEPUTY  
DEAN D. UYENO  
ACTING DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER  
AQUATIC RESOURCES  
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT  
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS  
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES  
ENFORCEMENT  
ENGINEERING  
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

Testimony of  
DAWN N. S. CHANG  
Chairperson

Before the Senate Committees on  
TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS  
And  
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Tuesday, March 12, 2024  
3:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 415 and Via Videoconference

In consideration of  
HOUSE BILL 1899  
RELATING TO STATE SNAILS

House Bill 1899 proposes to designate certain snail species as official state snails. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure.**

Hawaiian tree snails are known as the “Jewels of the Hawaiian Forest” due to their beautiful shells. They exist nowhere else on earth and help sustain healthy forest ecosystems. Many ancient Hawaiian tales refer to snails that sing in the forest. In Hawaiian custom, snails are the voice of the forest, and they embody the Polynesian oral tradition of passing on one’s genealogy through singing, making them extremely important to the cultural practices of hula and chant.

Many of these snail species are so unique that the genealogical family is entirely composed of species found only in Hawai‘i. Hawaiian snails represent one of the most stunning examples of species evolution worldwide. Unfortunately, over half of the seven hundred-fifty terrestrial Hawaiian snail species have gone extinct. Many of these species have very small populations and are now only known from a few remote locations.

The Department’s Snail Extinction Prevention Program is breeding many of these species in laboratories and protecting wild populations with small predator-proof fences. These fences provide complete protection from rats, invasive predatory snails, and Jackson’s chameleons. Inside

these fences, the snail populations rebound naturally and provide hope for the future continuation of these species.

This two-part strategy is part of the emergency multi-island efforts to save our tree snails and ensure they remain on the landscape where they have lived for millennia. There is no other viable option for protecting wild populations of these species that once were a familiar and legendary part of the native Hawaiian forests.

The designation of these snails as the official state snails will bring awareness to both the importance of these terrestrial snails and the urgent need to save the remaining snails.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.



The Senate  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Committee on Transportation and the Culture and the Arts  
Tuesday, March 12, 2024  
3:00PM Conference Room 224 and Videoconference

### **Testimony in Support for HB1899**

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Chair Lee, Vice Chair Richards, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committees,

My name is Kailee Lefebvre and I am testifying on behalf of the Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS). We **are in support of HB1899**, *Relating to State Snails* which would designate certain snail species as official state snails.

Our native Kāhuli continue to live on the brink of extinction. HB1899 will help us fight back against our terrifying title of being the world's extinction capital of the world by shedding light on some of the most endangered and vulnerable native species of Hawai'i.

Before the Year of the Kāhuli, I couldn't name one family member or friend that had an affinity with snails. This is understandable since most of our experiences with snails as kama'aina are with non-native and invasive snails that eat their way through our gardens and are associated with slime and sickness, even sometimes leading to death. Kāhuli however, are the much lesser known native species which are beautiful, culturally important, and invaluable beneficial ecological agents of our forests.

There is no better way to end of the Year of the Kāhuli campaign than to pass this bill. The Year of the Kāhuli campaign was initiated by DLNR DOFAW and the people who have dedicated their lives to saving the species. Rounding off the outreach efforts with the participation of students voting for their island representatives would bring the project full circle.

The lack of awareness in the community is the reason why we support HB1899. The Year of the Kāhuli proclamation was a great campaign that has caught the excitement and interest of many in the community but it was only for the year. We would like to see continued engagement from the community and change-makers, especially in taking actions to protect kāhuli. Please support the conservation efforts of these native species, our watersheds, and Hawaiian culture by passing HB1899.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Kailee Lefebvre  
CGAPS Planner  
kailehl@hawaii.edu (808) 726-0181



Testimony Before The  
Senate Committee on Transportation & Culture & the Arts (TCA)  
Senate Committee on Agriculture & Environment (AEN)

**IN SUPPORT OF HB1899**

March 12, 2024, 3:00 p.m., Room 224 & Zoom

We are Olan Leimomi Fisher and Kevin Chang, Kua'āina Advocate and Executive Director, respectively, testifying on behalf of [Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo \(or KUA\)](#). "Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo" stands for "grassroots growing through shared responsibility," and our acronym "KUA" means "backbone." **Our mission is to connect and empower communities to improve their quality of life through the collective care for their biocultural (natural and cultural) heritage, serving as a "backbone organization" that supports creative, community-driven solutions to problems stemming from environmental degradation.** Hawai'i's biocultural resources continue to be negatively impacted by political, economic, and social changes, and the increasing dangers of climate change make fostering and empowering resilient communities acutely critical.

Currently KUA supports three major networks of: (1) almost 40 mālama 'āina (caring for our 'āina or "that which feeds") community groups collectively referred to as E Alu Pū (moving forward together); (2) over 60 loko i'a (fishpond aquaculture systems unique to Hawai'i) and wai 'ōpae (anchialine pool systems) sites in varying stages of restoration and development, with numerous caretakers, stakeholders, and volunteers known as the Hui Mālama Loko I'a ("caretakers of fishponds"); and (3) the Limu Hui made up of over 50 loea (traditional experts) and practitioners in all things "limu" or locally-grown "seaweed." **Our shared vision is to once again experience what our kūpuna (ancestors) referred to as 'ĀINA MOMONA – abundant and healthy ecological systems that sustain our community resilience and well-being.**

**KUA supports HB1899 as a critical step toward ensuring 'āina momona.**

This bill would designate native snail species as official State of Hawai'i snails, with distinct species designated for each main Hawaiian Island, as well as one for the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands. Similar to Limu Kala being named the official State of Hawai'i limu last year through Act 230, KUA strongly supports this effort to bring more awareness, education, and support to help protect, conserve, and replenish our native snails across Hawai'i. Native snails once thrived in abundance around our islands, and for various reasons have been dwindling in numbers for years. Sadly, several species are already extinct. **Please support HB1899 to breathe more life into these beautiful and mysterious little creatures, ideally through more habitat protection, funding, and research.**

The communities we work with are committed to ensuring the long-term health of our biocultural resources. They have depended on them for generations. **We believe our environment, the foundation of our very existence, is about long-term protection and steps in the interest of once again achieving 'āina momona.** Mahalo nui loa for considering our testimony and please **PASS** HB1899. Aloha 'Āina Momona no nā kau ā kau.

The Senate  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts  
March 11, 2024

Testimony in Support of SB 2911/HB1899

Dear Chairs Gabbard and Lee, Vice Chairs Richards and Inouye, and Members of the Committees,

I am writing to support the bill to designate certain snail species as our official state snails.

We want you to pass a law to help the Kahuli. The Kahuli snails are important in many ways. They are in many mo'olelo, chants, songs and other parts of Hawaiian culture. They also put nutrients like nitrogen back in the soil so they are kind of like our decomposers and play an important role in our ecosystem. However, because of people bringing invasive species, destruction of their native habitats, and collecting too many shells, the Kahuli population is lowering.

So far, groups like the Snail Extinction Prevention Program are putting the snails in a safe place where no predator can get through to try and help the snails. Other people are trying to spread awareness on what is happening to the Kahuli snails to help them. With your help, we want you to help pass a law to help the Kahuli so the Kahuli don't go extinct.

Sincerely,  
Aubrey Gino  
Grade 5  
Manoa Elementary School

The Senate  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts  
March 11, 2024

Testimony in Support of SB 2911/HB1899

Dear Chairs Gabbard and Lee, Vice Chairs Richards and Inouye, and Members of the Committees,

I am writing to support the bill to designate certain snail species as our official state snails.

Kāhuli, our native snails that should be thriving on ‘Ohia lehua, but instead, they are in laboratories getting taken care of by scientists because they are endangered. This is happening because predators like rats, jackson chameleons, and carnivorous snails are eating them! Our Kāhuli are important because they help our ‘Ohia lehua from staying fresh, and they are an important part of our Hawaiian culture. If they do get extinct, many kids in the future would not even know that native snails existed. David Sischo the owner of the Snail Extinction Prevention Program; they take almost extinct species of snails and keep them in labs, taking good care of them so us and our future kids can still see them. But just this can't save all of our species of snails, so that's when we need help from everyone on our island! I think that we should make a law to help protect kāhuli from getting extinct so that more people can support the Snail Extinction Prevention Program so we can all as humans see that our native snails helping our plants and living.

With Love and Aloha,

Mia Nakazawa  
Grade 5  
Mānoā Elementary School

The Senate  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts  
March 11, 2024

Testimony in Support of SB 2911/HB1899

Dear Chairs Gabbard and Lee, Vice Chairs Richards and Inouye, and Members of the Committees,

I am writing to support the bill to designate certain snail species as our official state snails. The Kahuli are important to Hawaii's ecosystem. Kahuli help our plants by getting out all the fungus in plants and trees. They especially help the ohia lehua with getting the fungus out. They are very important to Hawaiian culture. They are important to Hawaiian culture because they use them in mo'olelo and in dances they also use them to make necklaces they use their shells. Animals like Rats, the giant african snail, rosy wolfsnail and jackson chameleons are predators to the Kahuli. One thing that people are doing to help the Kahuli is keeping them in a laboratory. In the laboratory they breed the snails to make the population larger. In the laboratory they clean the cages. They also make fungus for the Kahui. To protect Kahuli we should keep an eye out for them and make an area only for Kahuli.

Sincerely,

Amaya Winqvist  
Grade 5  
Manoa Elementary School

The Senate  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts  
March 11, 2024

Testimony in Support of SB 2911/HB1899

Dear Chairs Gabbard and Lee, Vice Chairs Richards and Inouye, and Members of the Committees,

I am writing to support the bill to designate certain snail species as our official state snails. The Kahuli are very important to the ecosystem. Kahuli can do very amazing things to save the land of Hawaii. They are the ones who keep the environment clean by eating fungus, and bacteria. They are going extinct just like kauai o'o bird. So we at Manoa school want to help them from going extinct. So we want you to know what is killing them and how we can stop them from going extinct. The things that eat the snails are Rats, Jackson Chameleon, and rosy wolf snails. We can stop this by keeping these snails in an incubator or a "fridge" for snails. So this is why we should provide more snail incubators to keep them from dying and make them repopulate just like before when humans came when there used to be 750 species, but now today there are only 18 species left. So let us Oahu and all the people on it, and future generations rise up to the challenge and help pass a law so these snail don't go extinct.

Sincerely,  
Isaiah Harden  
Grade 5  
Manoa Elementary School



The Senate  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts  
March 11, 2024

Testimony in Support of SB 2911/HB1899

Dear Chairs Gabbard and Lee, Vice Chairs Richards and Inouye, and Members of the Committees,

I am writing to support the bill to designate certain snail species as our official state snails.

Kahuli are important to many cultures & the ecosystem. They are used in oli, mo'olelo, mele, and they are sometimes used for jewelry. The Kahuli are land animals that take dead leaves and other things that need to be decomposed and break it down so that the plant can become nutrients for the soil. However, many rodents, birds, carnivorous snails, jackson chameleons, and even we are hurting the Kahuli population as they eat and kill them slowly. It is predicted that most large native snails will probably be extinct by the next 10 years if nothing is done. Scientists are keeping them in a safe container so that they can mate and slowly the Kahuli can grow a little. After they are done mating they are released into the Ko'olau where their predators are kept away by a fence that zaps the carnivorous snails and the fence is tall enough to where the other animals can't get in. But this isn't enough, we all need to do something about it. We should make a law to protect Kahuli so that more people will care about them and they won't go extinct.

Sincerely,  
Kenneth Louie  
Grade 5  
Manoa Elementary School

The Senate  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts  
March 11, 2024

Testimony in Support of SB 2911/HB1899

Dear Chairs Gabbard and Lee, Vice Chairs Richards and Inouye, and Members of the Committees,

I am writing to support the bill to designate certain snail species as our official state snails.

The Kahuli are important to the land of Oahu because of the amazing things they do for our land. The Kahuli reproduce the land and give back to nature, they go on plants and put nutrients like nitrogen on the leaves to help make plants easier to grow. The Kahuli are also known for their Oli, mo'olelo, meles, and beautiful jewelry they provide. The Kahuli are really important for our ecosystem because they are our decomposers, without them our land would be full of piles of leaves in our forest. Since the Kahuli are small and don't have any defense they are a very popular source of food for pigs, deer, jackson chameleons, other types of snails, and rats. Since the snails are such a popular food source the population of the Kahuli are going down, before there were 350 different species but today there are only 18 different species.

But with the help of the Snail Extinction Prevention Program they save and store snails from becoming truly extinct, they put the snails in a fenced area so no predators get in. We would like you to pass a law for our Kahuli to be protected and safe. We want you to spread a message about our Kahuli going extinct so people will know and care.

Sincerely,  
Khloe Ichiyama  
Grade 5  
Manoa Elementary School

The Senate  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts  
March 11, 2024

Testimony in Support of SB 2911/HB1899

Dear Chairs Gabbard and Lee, Vice Chairs Richards and Inouye, and Members of the Committees,

I am writing to support the bill to designate certain snail species as our official state snails.

Our Kahuli are important because they help save our native plants, the ohia lehua, recycle organic matter, and are our foundation to our watershed. Hawaiian culture treasures the Kahuli by celebrating them in mo'olelo, mele, and in oli. Kahuli eat fungus so they act as a natural antifungal for the ohia. Kahuli are being threatened by rosy wolfsnails, rats, jackson chameleons, and people because people used to go into the mountain to collect the Kahuli shells. Scientists are currently collecting and breeding Kahuli to get their numbers back up to prevent the Kahuli from going extinct. If we have a law that makes the Kahuli our state snails then people will learn more about our Kahuli and care so that they hopefully will not go extinct.

Sincerely,

Kaimalie Jensen  
Grade 5  
Manoa Elementary School

The Senate  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts  
March 11, 2024

Testimony in Support of SB 2911/HB1899

Dear Chairs Gabbard and Lee, Vice Chairs Richards and Inouye, and Members of the Committees,

I am writing to support the bill to designate certain snail species as our official state snails.

We should start saving the kahuli more. There used to be 325 different species on the islands, but now there are only 18. The Kahuli are an important part of Hawaiian culture, they are featured in many of their oli, mele, mo'olelo, and their jewelry. They are also an important part of our ecosystem because they eat the fungi and dead leaves of plants, but not harming the plant and release nutrients into the soil. They are on the brink of extinction because they are being eaten by rats, the giant african snail, Jackson chameleon, and the dangerous rosy wolfsnail that was brought here to counter the giant african snail. They also were collected by the thousands by people. David Sischo is the coordinator of the Snail Extinction Prevention Program and their program set up 5 snail breeding centers on O'ahu for them to breed and then released into an enclosure so the popollation can keep on growing. We should pass a law to protect Kahuli, let more people know about the Kahuli, so we can keep the Kahuli from going extinct.

Sincerely,  
Dylan Ueda  
Grade 5  
Manoa Elementary School

The Senate  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts  
March 11, 2024

Testimony in Support of SB 2911/HB1899

Dear Chairs Gabbard and Lee, Vice Chairs Richards and Inouye, and Members of the Committees,

I am writing to support the bill to designate certain snail species as our official state snails.

Kāhuli are not only important in hawaiian culture, but also as Hawaii's decomposers. Kāhuli are mentioned in hawaiian oli, mele, and mo'olelo, and made in hawaiian jewelry. Kamehameha the third's summer house was named after kāhuli. However, today Kāhulli are threatened by hooved animals, carnivores snails, Jackson chameleons, rats, and people. Right now people are captive-breeding kāhuli to keep them from going extinct, and also built them a closed off area that prevents predators from killing them. You can help us by passing a law to protect kāhuli. Then more people will know and care about them, so hopefully they won't go extinct.

Sincerely,

Autumn Yamashiro  
Grade 5  
Manoa Elementary School

The Senate  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts  
March 11, 2024

Testimony in Support of SB 2911/HB1899

Dear Chairs Gabbard and Lee, Vice Chairs Richards and Inouye, and Members of the Committees,

I am writing to support the bill to designate certain snail species as our official state snails.

The Kahuli in Hawaii is an important part of our culture in Hawaii. They help plants and trees in nature. Kahuli snails are an important part of Hawaiian culture because they are in mo'olelo, mele, oli, and jewelry or accessories. Kahuli helps our ecosystem in forest or nature because Kahuli scrubs fungi and fungus off on trees and plants and when they do that they make the plants healthy. The Kahuli are threatened of getting eaten by carnivorous snails and Jackson Chameleon, rats, and snail collectors who collect snail shells of Kaniakapupu. Luckily, for snails safety, David Sischo the coordinator of the snail Extinction Prevention Program, and other scientists have made a peaceful place for snails called love shack. It's a shack made out of wooden planks, wire mesh seats and concrete. The love shack has over 100 Amastra Spirizonas. Kahuli were also released to a fenced site that protected kahuli with electric wire that was 4.5" tall. We need your support to help continue the effort to keep our kahuli safe for future generations.

With Aloha,  
Ethan Peng  
Grade 5  
Manoa Elementary School

The Senate  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts  
March 11, 2024

Testimony in Support of SB 2911/HB1899

Dear Chairs Gabbard and Lee, Vice Chairs Richards and Inouye, and Members of the Committees,

I am writing to support the bill to designate certain snail species as our official state snails. Kāhuli are very important in our culture and we honor these special snails by telling stories, including them in our songs, chants, and hula. Our Kāhuli's role in our ecosystem is by helping us clean the fungus and bacteria off our native plants. And these special Kāhuli connect us to special ancient times. But there is a problem: our Kāhuli are becoming extinct because before there were humans, there were 750 different species, but now there are only 200 different species left! It's because of predators like the Jackson chameleon, Rosy wolf snails, and rats, and also because of natural disasters like hurricanes, fires, and droughts. Scientists are helping these kāhuli by creating a program called the Snail extinction prevention program. We can all help save kāhuli by Keeping sacred places secret, keep our critters contained, and keep kāhuli in their natural habitat.

With Aloha,  
Hannah Low  
Grade 5  
Manoa Elementary School

The Senate  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts  
March 11, 2024

Testimony in Support of SB 2911/HB1899

Dear Chairs Gabbard and Lee, Vice Chairs Richards and Inouye, and Members of the Committees,

I am writing to support the bill to designate certain snail species as our official state snails. Kahuli land snails are some of the rarest animals in the world, and there were over 750 species of Kahuli before humans arrived in Hawaii. Now there are only 18 species of Kahuli and we all know they are endemic to Hawaii. They are also important to our culture. We use them for oil, mele, moolelo and jewelry. We also need Kahuli for our trees and soil; the Kahuli help us by eating fungus off of tree leaves and turning it into fertilizer. Kahuli have many predators such as: rats, other snails, and Jackson chameleons. It's not just animals that are killing them, it's humans too. We are cutting down their habitat. I believe it's pollution in the air as well. So what scientists are doing is keeping them safe when they are babies, then putting them in a supervised forest when they are teens. This way, the Kahuli are safe from any predators that eat them, also so no one will chop their habitat down. What we can do to help is raise awareness and encourage others to protect them as well so they don't go extinct.

Sincerely,

Joan Fong  
Grade 5  
Manoa Elementary School



The Senate  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts  
March 11, 2024

Testimony in Support of SB 2911/HB1899

Dear Chairs Gabbard and Lee, Vice Chairs Richards and Inouye, and Members of the Committees,

I am writing to support the bill to designate certain snail species as our official state snails.

This snail is important because they came here before humans came to earth by bird, currents in the ocean, and in the air. Our snails are also important because they have been in our oli, mele, and mo'olelo for many years. They are important to our island because they are decomposers and they put nutrients in the soil so the soil can be healthy. Though, there are some threats to the Kahuli snail like Jackson Chameleons, rosy wolf snails, and rats. Because of these threats we only have 200 species left in the wild and before we used to have 750 species. What's being done to help them are scientists like David Sicho who is the coordinator of the snail extinction program which is a program that helps the Kahuli snail population. What we, and our leaders, should do to protect them is to pass a law that will protect the Kahuli from going extinct and so more people can know more about the Kahuli in the future.

Sincerely,  
Asher Dalgamouni  
Grade 5  
Manoa Elementary School

The Senate  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts  
March 11, 2024

Testimony in Support of SB 2911/HB1899

Dear Chairs Gabbard and Lee, Vice Chairs Richards and Inouye, and Members of the Committees,

I am writing to support the bill to designate certain snail species as our official state. The Kāhuli help us eat fungus growing on our native plants and they help clean up bacteria. Kāhuli are a really important part of our culture. Kāhuli are mentioned in mele, oli and mo'olelo. They can also use the snails for jewelry like necklaces and bracelets. Kāhuli also have a lot of predators such as rosy wolf snails, rats, jackson chameleons and other carnivorous snails. To prevent that, people make programs to protect the Kāhuli. To prevent the Kāhuli from going extinct we want to pass a law to protect our Kāhuli. We want to pass the law so more people know and help out. Mahalo for your attention.

Sincerely,

Mason Kenjo  
Grade 5  
Manoa Elementary School

The Senate  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts  
March 11, 2024

Testimony in Support of SB 2911/HB1899

Dear Chairs Gabbard and Lee, Vice Chairs Richards and Inouye, and Members of the Committees,

I am writing to support the bill to designate certain snail species as our official state snails

Kahule, one of the most famous and important animals of Hawaii, and is also a huge part of Hawaii's culture used in Oil, Mele, Moolelo and their shells are used as jewelry. Kahuli are also a big part of their ecosystem because they eat fungus off of soil and plant material. And now Kahuli are endangered, many pigs, goats, deers, and cattle are threats to kahuli. There used to be 750 species, now only 200 remain! At this pace kahuli would be extinct in five to ten years. On a good note many people from the Snail Extinction Prevention program are protecting our kahuli. But, we also want to pass a law that people will protect and care about the Kahuli so that they won't go extinct.

Sincerely,  
Cruz Ferreira  
Grade 5  
Manoa Elementary School

The Senate  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts  
March 11, 2024

Testimony in Support of SB 2911/HB1899

Dear Chairs Gabbard and Lee, Vice Chairs Richards and Inouye, and Members of the Committees,

I am writing to support the bill to designate certain snail species as our official state snails.

The kahuli are an important part of Hawaii. They help get fungus off of ohia. Ohia is a keystone species meaning that the whole food web would fall apart without it. The ohia are water collecting trees so without them we won't have fresh water. The kahuli keep the ohia healthy and also bring nutrients and nitrogen into the soil. The kahuli are also in many mo'olelo, oli, mele, and jewelry in Hawaiian culture. Invasive predators like rats, rosy wolf snails, jackson chameleons, and humans who collect their shells. Cattle and destruction of their natural habitats is another threat to the kahuli. The Snail Prevention Extinction Program helps to protect the snails by raising them in labs then releasing them into an enclosure that is safe from any threats to the kahuli. We should help by passing a law to protect kahuli so that we can spread awareness so that more people will try to protect them.

Sincerely,

Kolbie Wu  
Grade 5  
Manoa Elementary School

The Senate  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts  
March 11, 2024

Testimony in Support of SB 2911/HB1899

Dear Chairs Gabbard and Lee, Vice Chairs Richards and Inouye, and Members of the Committees,

I am writing to support the bill to designate certain snail species as our official state snails.

The kahuli are important because they decompose for hawaii forests. They have a big role in ecosystems and they are very important to Hawaiian cultures. The thing is they are getting hunted by the rosy wolf snail, the giant African snail, rats, jackson chameleons, and other big snails. The scientists are doing everything they can to save them from extinction by putting them in refrigerators and also putting them in protected areas. We should pass a law to protect the kahuli so more people will know more about the kahuli this way then this way don't go extinct.

Sincerely,

Emma Kapaona  
Grade 5  
Manoa Elementary School

The Senate  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts  
March 11, 2024

Testimony in Support of SB 2911/HB1899

Dear Chairs Gabbard and Lee, Vice Chairs Richards and Inouye, and Members of the Committees,

I am writing to support the bill to designate certain snail species our official state snails.

Our endangered Kahuli Snails are going extinct in the next 5-10 years. These important species save our precious 'Ohia lehua. Although scientists are working hard to try to save the Kahuli from going extinct from today, most of them are dying due to humans and invasive species predators. Some Scientists say that the Kahuli came over from the nesting of the **Birds**. Before humans arrived there were over 750 species. The most famous snails are the tree dwelling snail. The precious shells are made into jewelry from their beautiful shells. Because of the work on Snail Extinction Protection Program predators like Rosy Wolfsnails, Jaxon Chameleons, and Rats cannot attack the Kahuli Snail. We need your help to pass the law that will continue to help protect the Kahuli, and we need more people to know about the Kahuli and to care for them.

With Aloha,  
Ryan Giambrone  
Grade 5  
Manoa Elementary School

The Senate  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts  
March 11, 2024

Testimony in Support of SB 2911/HB1899

Dear Chairs Gabbard and Lee, Vice Chairs Richards and Inouye, and Members of the Committees,

I am writing to support the bill to designate certain snail species as our official state snail. We should start saving Kahuli. The Kahuli are important for the ecosystem because the Kahuli are the decomposers and the Kahuli feed on the fungi on the leaf's and on the dead leaf's they eat the mold on it. They are in meles and are in mo'olelo and in are oli. Then they put nutrients in the soil that help because the nutrients are poor so with them they can put nutrients in the soil. The things that are killing or threatening them are the giant african snail, rosy wolfsnail, and the jackson camolen. But, there are things being done to help scientists like the captive breeding programs in the laboratory. What we should do to help is that we can put the Kahuli in a safe place until we have a lot of Kahuli and we should make a law to help the Kahuli so more people can care about them. If more people know, then they will care they will start saving more of the Kahuli too, and if we keep on doing that the Kahuli will not go extinct.

Sincerely,

Peyton Tamanaha  
Grade 5  
Manoa Elementary School

The Senate  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts  
March 11, 2024

Testimony in Support of SB 2911/HB1899

Dear Chairs Gabbard and Lee, Vice Chairs Richards and Inouye, and Members of the Committees,

I am writing to support the bill to designate certain snail species as our official state snails.

Kahuli are important to not only humans, but to the ecosystem too. We use the Kahuli shell to make many of the most beautiful jewelry like necklaces, bracelets, and more. Kahuli are in many Hawaiian stories, and are important to Hawaiian culture. We need Kahuli for the ecosystem so our forests don't die. If we kill all of them then the ecosystem will be off balance because they eat fungus off plants like our Ohia tree, and that makes the watershed healthy. After they eat all the fungi off plants they put nutrients back into the soil and make plants nice and strong. There used to be more than 750 species of Kahuli, but they declined to 200 species. We want a law of the Kahuli so that people will want to help save them so they don't go extinct. Some people already are helping by collecting the Kahuli and putting them into a snail lab where they will wait until they are teenagers. After that let the Kahuli go into a protective forest where predators can't get them. We want a law for the Kahuli so that people will want to help save them so they don't go extinct. Hawai'i is not our land, but the Kahuli's land too.

With Aloha,  
Laynie Hirohata  
Grade 5  
Manoa Elementary School



The Senate  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts  
March 11, 2024

Testimony in Support of SB 2911/HB1899

Dear Chairs Gabbard and Lee, Vice Chairs Richards and Inouye, and Members of the Committees,

I am writing to support the bill to designate certain snail species as our official state snails.

Snails are very important for our culture, because we use kahuli snails for oli, mele, mo'olelo, and jewelry. If we didn't have kahuli snails all the chants and mele that use them wouldn't be the same. Also if we didn't have kahuli snails we wouldn't have all these nice jewelry because we use the shells for necklaces and bracelets. The kahuli snails help our ecosystem by eating leaf fungus, mold, or dead leaves. They are our decomposers. We also need to help them because of all the threats around them like pigs, goats, deer, and cattle, even kids. Because a long time ago kids would go up the mountains and collect an abundance of kahuli snails. Luckily, today we already have people helping out by keeping the kahuli in a snail extinction prevention program but there used to be 750 species but now there's only a few species left. We need to pass the law to protect the kahuli so more people will care and learn about it. If not, the beloved kahuli snails could go extinct.

With Aloha,  
Kolten Vierra  
Grade 5  
Manoa Elementary School

The Senate  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts  
March 11, 2024

Testimony in Support of SB 2911/HB1899

Dear Chairs Gabbard and Lee, Vice Chairs Richards and Inouye, and Members of the Committees,

I'm writing this in support of SB 2911 to make our Kahuli the state snail. The Kahuli are important to our culture because they have been in our oli, mo`olelo, mele, and hula. They are important to our ecosystem as well by putting nutrients in the soil for plants to grow. Jackson Chameleons, Rats, and Carnivorous Snails are threatening Kahuli so we need to stop them. David Sischo at the Snail Extinction Prevention Program is helping the Kahuli grow and protect them from predators, and we want you guys to pass a law so more people would know about the Kahuli and so they hopefully won't go extinct.

Mahalo for your time,  
Kayle Luke  
Manoa Elementary School  
Gr. 5

The Senate  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts  
March 11, 2024

Testimony in Support of SB 2911/HB1899

Dear Chairs Gabbard and Lee, Vice Chairs Richards and Inouye, and Members of the Committees,

I strongly support this bill because the Kahuli are an important part of our Hawaiian culture. They are in mo'olelo, oli, mele, and jewelry. The kahuli are really important to the ecosystem as they decompose leaves and eat fungus on the floor. The kahuli are threatened by Jackson chameleons, Rats, and carnivorous Snails. Scientists are putting kahuli into containers and when they are about a teenager the kahuli will be moved to an enclosure that is highly protected from their threats. If we pass the law that will protect the kahuli, then more people will know about the kahuli and will care about them more so they will not go extinct.

Sincerely,  
Isaako Pule  
Manoa School

**Testimony of The Nature Conservancy  
Supporting HB 1899, Relating to State Snails**

**Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
March 12, 2024, 3:00 p.m.  
Conference Room 224 and via Videoconference**

Aloha Chairs Lee and Gabbard, Vice Chairs Inouye and Richards, and Members of the Committees:

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) supports HB 1899, Relating to State Snails, which designates certain snail species as official state snails.

Invertebrates, such as insects and mollusks, are an integral component of ecosystems: providing pollination for plants, decomposition of waste, nutrient cyclers, and food for other animals. The Hawaiian islands are a hotspot for invertebrate biodiversity, with a uniquely high number of native species, many of which are threatened, endangered, or extinct. Nearly 100 percent of Hawai'i's 750+ snail species are endemic, but an estimated 70% are thought to be extinct, and the status of several remaining species is threatened.

Hawai'i's land snail fauna holds 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, or fungivores, scraping and eating fungus off of plants, promoting healthy plants. They are a food source for other native species such as *Hyposmocoma molluscivora*, the carnivorous moth native to Maui and O'ahu.

Hawai'i's kāhuli (snails) have also served a significant role in Hawaiian culture through mele (song), hula, mo'olelo (story), oli (chant), and as symbols for romance and omens. They earned the ancient description: the singing snails, representing the voice of the forest due to their immense prominence in the habitat. As the wind rustled the leaves of trees, kāhuli shells were thought to create a whistling noise, interpreted as a signifier of positive events or affirmations of certain decisions.

We strongly support the protection of biodiversity, climate change adaptation, watershed management, and conservation. Designating State snails would be an important step forward in promoting public awareness of natural resource management and mālama 'āina.

For over 40 years, TNC has actively managed nature preserves throughout Hawai'i. We currently manage 40,000 acres in preserves on Hawai'i Island, Maui, Moloka'i, Lāna'i, and Kaua'i. We also work with over 30 coastal communities through networks and partnerships to help protect and restore the nearshore reefs and fisheries of the main Hawaiian Islands. Over our decades of

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The Nature Conservancy, Hawai'i and Palmyra  
March 11, 2024  
Page 2

experience of forest management and marine conservation, TNC has implemented many conservation actions that promote biodiversity and it is these experiences which underpin our support for this measure.

We look forward to continuing to support efforts to collectively raising awareness about the importance of our State's natural resources.

Mahalo for the opportunity to support HB 1899.



**HB-1899**

Submitted on: 3/11/2024 4:43:04 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/12/2024 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Serena Marsden	Testifying for Le Jardin Academy 2nd and 3rd Graders "Kahuli Hui"	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

[Le Jardin Academy Kahuli Hui's video testimony in support of Bill HB1899](#)

March 11, 2024

Dear Representatives, Chairs, and Members of the Committee,

We, the students of Le Jardin Academy from second grade and members of our school's Kāhuli Hui, are expressing our strong support for HB 1899 proposing a native snail designation for each of the Hawaiian Islands. The Kāhuli snails are essential to our Hawaiian ecosystems, being uniquely specific to our islands. It's crucial to shed light on their current challenges and actively work towards ensuring their protection. These remarkable "gems of the rainforest" are disappearing rapidly, posing a significant threat to Hawaii's environment. We sincerely request your support for this Bill, recognizing its importance in safeguarding the Kāhuli for the benefit of future generations.

Thank you for your consideration and your support.

Sincerely,

The Kāhuli Hui

Students from 2nd Grade

Le Jardin Academy

March 11, 2024

Dear Representatives, Chairs, and Members of the Committee,

We, the students of Le Jardin Academy from third grade and members of our school's KāhuliHui, are expressing our strong support for Bill HB 1899 proposing a native snail designation for each of the Hawaiian Islands. The Kāhuli snails are essential to our Hawaiian ecosystems, being uniquely specific to our islands. It's crucial to shed light on their current challenges and actively work towards ensuring their protection. These remarkable "gems of the rainforest" are disappearing rapidly, posing a significant threat to Hawaii's environment. We sincerely request your support for this Bill, recognizing its importance in safeguarding the Kāhuli for the benefit of future generations.

Thank you for your consideration and your support.

Sincerely,

The Kāhuli Hui

Students from 3rd Grade

Le Jardin Academy

March 11, 2024

Dear Representatives, Chairs, and Members of the Committee,

I, Meara Marsden, a student of Le Jardin Academy from third grade and a member of our school's Kāhuli Hui, am expressing my strong support for Bill HB 1899 proposing a native snail designation for each of the Hawaiian Islands. The Kāhuli snails are essential to our Hawaiian ecosystems, being uniquely specific to our islands. It's crucial to shed light on their current challenges and actively work towards ensuring their protection. These remarkable "gems of the rainforest" are disappearing rapidly, posing a significant threat to Hawaii's environment. I sincerely request your support for this Bill, recognizing its importance in safeguarding the Kāhuli for the benefit of future generations.

Thank you for your consideration and your support.

Sincerely,

Meara Marsden

3rd Grade, Le Jardin Academy



March 11, 2024

Dear Representatives, Chairs, and Members of the Committee,

I, Eric Baum, a student of Le Jardin Academy from second grade and a member of our school's Kāhuli Hui, am expressing my strong support for Bill HB 1899 proposing a native snail designation for each of the Hawaiian Islands. The Kāhuli snails are essential to our Hawaiian ecosystems, being uniquely specific to our islands. It's crucial to shed light on their current challenges and actively work towards ensuring their protection. These remarkable "gems of the rainforest" are disappearing rapidly, posing a significant threat to Hawaii's environment. I sincerely request your support for this Bill, recognizing its importance in safeguarding the Kāhuli for the benefit of future generations.

Thank you for your consideration and your support.

Sincerely,

Eric Baum

2nd Grade, Le Jardin Academy

March 11, 2024

Dear Representatives, Chairs, and Members of the Committee,

I, Sahana Lyon Tanovic, a student of Le Jardin Academy from third grade and a member of our school's Kāhuli Hui, am expressing my strong support for Bill HB 1899 proposing a native snail designation for each of the Hawaiian Islands. The Kāhuli snails are essential to our Hawaiian ecosystems, being uniquely specific to our islands. It's crucial to shed light on their current challenges and actively work towards ensuring their protection. These remarkable "gems of the rainforest" are disappearing rapidly, posing a significant threat to Hawaii's environment. I sincerely request your support for this Bill, recognizing its importance in safeguarding the Kāhuli for the benefit of future generations.

Thank you for your consideration and your support.

Sincerely,

Sahana Lyon Tanovic

3rd Grade, Le Jardin Academy

March 11, 2024

Dear Representatives, Chairs, and Members of the Committee,

I, Jonie Nagle, a student of Le Jardin Academy from second grade and a member of our school's Kāhuli Hui, am expressing my strong support for Bill HB 1899 proposing a native snail designation for each of the Hawaiian Islands. The Kāhuli snails are essential to our Hawaiian ecosystems, being uniquely specific to our islands. It's crucial to shed light on their current challenges and actively work towards ensuring their protection. These remarkable "gems of the rainforest" are disappearing rapidly, posing a significant threat to Hawaii's environment. I sincerely request your support for this Bill, recognizing its importance in safeguarding the Kāhuli for the benefit of future generations.

Thank you for your consideration and your support.

Sincerely,

Jonie Nagle

2nd Grade, Le Jardin Academy

March 11, 2024

Dear Representatives, Chairs, and Members of the Committee,

I, Blair McCray, a student of Le Jardin Academy from second grade and a member of our school's Kāhuli Hui, am expressing my strong support for Bill HB 1899 proposing a native snail designation for each of the Hawaiian Islands. The Kāhuli snails are essential to our Hawaiian ecosystems, being uniquely specific to our islands. It's crucial to shed light on their current challenges and actively work towards ensuring their protection. These remarkable "gems of the rainforest" are disappearing rapidly, posing a significant threat to Hawaii's environment. I sincerely request your support for this Bill, recognizing its importance in safeguarding the Kāhuli for the benefit of future generations.

Thank you for your consideration and your support.

Sincerely,

Blair McCray

2nd Grade, Le Jardin Academy

March 11, 2024

Dear Representatives, Chairs, and Members of the Committee,

I, Alice Katzman, a student of Le Jardin Academy from second grade and member of our school's Kāhuli Hui, am expressing my strong support for Bill HB 1899 proposing a native snail designation for each of the Hawaiian Islands. The Kāhuli snails are essential to our Hawaiian ecosystems, being uniquely specific to our islands. It's crucial to shed light on their current challenges and actively work towards ensuring their protection. These remarkable "gems of the rainforest" are disappearing rapidly, posing a significant threat to Hawaii's environment. I sincerely request your support for this Bill, recognizing its importance in safeguarding the Kāhuli for the benefit of future generations.

Thank you for your consideration and your support.

Sincerely,

Alice Katzman

2nd Grade, Le Jardin Academy

March 11, 2024

Dear Representatives, Chairs, and Members of the Committee,

I, Rie Connors, a student of Le Jardin Academy from third grade and a member of our school's Kāhuli Hui, am expressing my strong support for Bill HB 1899 proposing a native snail designation for each of the Hawaiian Islands. The Kāhuli snails are essential to our Hawaiian ecosystems, being uniquely specific to our islands. It's crucial to shed light on their current challenges and actively work towards ensuring their protection. These remarkable "gems of the rainforest" are disappearing rapidly, posing a significant threat to Hawaii's environment. I sincerely request your support for this Bill, recognizing its importance in safeguarding the Kāhuli for the benefit of future generations.

Thank you for your consideration and your support.

Sincerely,

Rie Connors

3rd Grade, Le Jardin Academy

Le Jardin Academy's Kahuli Hui

**HB-1899**

Submitted on: 3/11/2024 7:34:31 AM

Testimony for TCA on 3/12/2024 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Debbie Millikan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill is important in recognizing our critical native land snails and does even more to recognize the work of our students and the role of education in bringing attention to Hawai'i's endangered species. Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.



**HB-1899**

Submitted on: 3/11/2024 1:19:03 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/12/2024 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hoku Hulihee	Testifying for 'Iolani School	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Senate,

IN SUPPORT

My name is Hoku Hulihee and I am a senior at 'Iolani School. I am testifying in favor of HB1899, which addresses the importance of Hawaii's land snails. Gifting a specific snail to each island in Hawaii as well and the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands will shed light upon the beautiful creature, which resides in our forests. The significance of our land snails have tight ties to Hawaii's close connection to our 'āina.

There are 41 species of land snails found in Hawaii. Each species is listed as endangered. They can be found within native trees and bushes, feeding on the fungi found on the surface of leaves. These snails act as cleaners to allow the native plants to grow and prosper against invasive plant species. These snails have significance in supporting our native ecosystems. They symbolize strength as they are able to battle against invasive animals that feed upon them.

Not only do snails support our local native ecosystems, but they also hold strong significance in Hawaiian culture. We can hear references to the different variants of the snails within stories, chants, hula and mele. My grandmother was a kumu, or teacher, who mentored many young women in Hawaiian hula and cultural beliefs. My grandmother cultivated knowledge, passing on traditions to her students, her daughters, and to me, and that inspired me to cultivate the knowledge that I have to share. Dancing to different mele, I could hear small references to the sacred tree snail. Within the mele, it is said that deep in the forests you can hear these snails sing. As they eat away at the fungi, they create sounds like chirping. When I go hiking along the ridges of the mountains, I listen for the beautiful sound of the snails eating away at the fungi. With a decrease in population, the sounds and sight of these snails deplete. By gifting each island a land snail to represent, we can bring awareness to the Oahu land snails. The significance of these snails are important both to native ecosystems and Hawaiian culture.

I am in support of HB1899, which supports gifting each island of Hawaii and the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands an official snail. The mighty land snails represent Hawaiian culture, native ecosystems, and strength.

Hoku Hulihee



**HB-1899**

Submitted on: 3/9/2024 12:40:23 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/12/2024 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jacqueline S. Ambrose	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Yes to designating certain snail species as official state snails.

**HB-1899**

Submitted on: 3/11/2024 1:56:31 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/12/2024 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sophia Victorino	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Chris Lee of the Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts, and Chair Mike Gabbard of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment,

This is in reference to House Bill 1899 relating to state snails being introduced on March 12, 2024 at 3:00pm.

IN SUPPORT

My name is Sophia Victorino and I'm currently a junior in high school studying environmental science. I am testifying in favor of Bill 1899.

I strongly support this bill as it would be a significant step towards promoting awareness and education on the often underappreciated species of Hawaiian land snails. We must acknowledge that even the smallest creatures, such as the Hawaiian land snails, play a crucial role in preserving our native ecosystem, but unfortunately, they are frequently overlooked. By spreading education and awareness through establishing state Hawaiian land snails throughout the islands, the bill can undoubtedly boost conservation efforts and emphasize the importance of biodiversity in the Hawaiian Islands. The bill's implementation would also help preserve the voice of the forest, the Hawaiian land snails, which have been an integral part of Hawaiian culture for centuries, referred to as kani kanahale or the voice of the forest. As our native forests are at risk of being lost and our endemic flora and fauna face the threat of extinction, we must take action to preserve these species. Therefore, I support the passing of this bill because it would be a significant move toward preserving our environment and ensuring a more sustainable future for our islands.

I support this bill which would promote awareness and education about Hawaiian land snails, as it will help preserve the voice of the forest and protect our environment for a sustainable future.

Sophia Victorino

**LATE**

**HB-1899**

Submitted on: 3/11/2024 5:23:47 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/12/2024 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Carol Kwan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

What a great idea! Hawaii has cool native snails, and this is a great way to feature them.