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Areas of Interest: Travel; Wildlife; Conservation; Marine Protection

Kilauea Point National Wildlife Refuge to Host Launch of Hawai'i Wildlife Viewing Guide at 1:00PM on February 13

FEBRUARY 6, 2006 – HONOLULU. Native Books/ Na Mea Hawai'i and the Hawai'i Watchable Wildlife Project are pleased to announce the publication of the **Hawai'i Wildlife Viewing Guide**, which will introduce residents and visitors to the amazing diversity of flora and fauna that inhabit the Hawaiian Islands.

Author Jeanne L. Clark will join members of the Hawai'i Watchable Wildlife Steering Committee and Jim Mallman, President of Watchable Wildlife, Inc., for the book launch of the Hawai'i Wildlife Viewing Guide during the week of February 12.

Kauai's popular Kilauea Point National Wildlife Refuge will host a book launch event on Monday, February 13 at 1:00pm. The spectacular cliff-top overlook puts you at eye level with the year-round display of seabirds, including . red-footed boobies ('a), Laysan albatrosses (moli), great frigatebirds ('iwa), and both red-tailed (koa'e 'ula) and white-tailed (koa'e kea) tropicbirds with their long, elegant tails. During the albatross nesting season, their lavish courtship display involves sky-pointing, bowing, and more. You may even see a parent feeding its chick. During the wedge-tailed shearwater ('ua'u kani) nesting season, you can watch the incubating adults and the downy youngsters in their burrows, built almost on top of each other on the steep hillsides. Hawai'i's state bird, the endangered nene, is making a comeback at Kilauea Point and other protected areas around the state.

Now is the season to spot Humpback whales (kohola) swimming close to the Point, and spinner dolphins (nai'a) may be seen throughout the year. Green sea turtles (honu) surf through the surge zone and a monk seal ('ilio-holo-i-ka-uaua) might be draped over the rocks of the offshore island of Moku 'Ae'ae.

The Kilauea Point Natural History Association operates a Visitor Center with excellent interpretive displays about Hawaiian habitats and wildlife. Sales at the small store help support refuge programs. From the visitor center, it is a 300-yard walk to the lighthouse, which helped passing boats avoid the rugged coast for more than 60 years before it was retired in 1976. Knowledgeable staff and volunteers are on hand to talk about the lighthouse; to provide insight into wildlife activity visible through spotting scopes, binoculars, or on a big-screen T.V.; and to help you identify some of the seabirds riding the gusty air currents swirling around the Point. Some of the vegetation you pass on the way to the lighthouse has been planted as part of a restoration program to bring back native coastal plants, such as naupaka, 'ilima, and 'akoko.

Please join park staff and representatives of the Hawai'i Watchable Wildlife Project on February 13 to discover the scenery, culture and wildlife of Kilauea Point National Wildlife Refuge and the other 30 wildlife viewing sites included in the Hawai'i Wildlife Viewing Guide. Copies will be available for sale and for signing by the author.

The Hawai'i Wildlife Viewing Guide is the result of the vision and hard work of a Steering Committee that includes representatives of the primary conservation organizations and governmental agencies

involved in wildlife and wildlands conservation, education and tourism in Hawai'i. Principal sponsors are the Hawai'i Tourism Authority and NOAA Fisheries and NOAA National Ocean Service.

Hawai'i is the 44th state to join Watchable Wildlife, Inc., a nonprofit organization that has supported state wildlife viewing programs nationwide since 1990. The Watchable Wildlife Viewing Guide series is published by Adventure Publications under the direction of Watchable Wildlife, Inc.

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For excerpts, photos and cover image see: www.HawaiiWildlife.org.

SIDEBAR IDEA (Sample of species-specific Viewing Tips contained in the introductory chapters of the Hawai'i Wildlife Viewing Guide)

Hawaiian Monk Seals

Monk seals are among the most endangered marine mammals in the United States. Within U. S. waters they are protected by both the Marine Mammal Protection Act and the Endangered Species Act. Federal guidelines recommend staying at least 50 yards away from the seals whether they are resting on shore or swimming. As with other species of marine mammals, it is illegal to feed or attempt to feed monk seals. Seals are vulnerable to canine diseases, so keep pets well away from beaches where seals are known to rest.

Your best chance of seeing monk seals is when they are resting on shore. They tend to haul out on sandy beaches or shallow rocky reefs, so look for their out-of-place dark forms along the shore.