

# Nā wahi pana o Hanauma

## The place names of Hanauma



Image courtesy of NASA

### Hanauma

Hanauma literally means “curved bay” or “hand wrestling bay.” A fishing spot of ancient Hawaiians and Hawaiian royalty. Kamehameha the Great’s favorite wife, Ka’ahumanu, stayed at Hanauma for a month, holding hula competitions and uma (hand wrestling) contests. Hanauma Bay was also a canoe departure point for ancient navigators and royalty traveling to Moloka’i and other islands. It is unlikely that Hawaiians had large settlements in Hanauma because of low rainfall, nutrient-poor soil, and scarcity of fresh water.

Puku’i, Mary Kawena, Samuel H. Elbert, and Esther T. Mookini. *Place Names of Hawaii*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1976.  
Sterling, Elspeth P. and Catherine C. Summers. *Sites of O’ahu*. Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press, 1978.

### ‘Ihi’ihilauākea

A crater west of Hanauma Bay. ‘Ihi’ihilauākea is acknowledged by Pele and her sister Hi’iaka as they travel. Hawaiians named the winds and rains in each area around the islands. ‘Ihi’ihilauākea is the name of the wind of Hanauma. ‘Ihi’ihilauākea and Kauanono’ula are ancient chiefesses that were kind to the people of Makapu’u. The ‘ihi’ihilauākea fern is endemic to Hawai’i and grows in ‘ihi’ihilauākea crater. The ‘ihi’ihilauākea fern occurred in dryland forests in low elevations, but today is known to exist in only five areas of Hawai’i.

Moses K. Nakuina, Esther T. Mookini. *The wind gourd of La’amao: the Hawaiian story of Pāka’a and Kuapāka’a, personal attendants of Keawenuia’umi, ruig Chief of Hawaii and descendants of La’amao*. Honolulu: Kalamakū Press, 2005.  
Puku’i, Mary Kawena, Samuel H. Elbert, and Esther T. Mookini. *Place Names of Hawaii*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1976.  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 1996. *Marsilea villosa Recovery Plan*. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Portland, Oregon.

### Kahauloa

A small crater near Hanauma. Kahauloa means “the tall hau tree.” Hau is a lowland tree, with large yellow or red flowers. Bouyant hau wood is used to make outriggers for canoes. Hau fibers are used to make rope. The sap and flowers are used as medicine.

Puku’i, Mary Kawena, Samuel H. Elbert, and Esther T. Mookini. *Place Names of Hawaii*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1976.  
Puku’i, Mary Kawena and Samuel H. Elbert. *Hawaiian Dictionary*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1986.

### Kawaihoa

Kawaihoa literally means “companion’s water.” At Kawaihoa point, Kāne thrust his cane into the land to bring forth fresh water, which Kāne and his brother Kanaloa used to prepare their ‘awa drink. ‘Awa is a favorite drink of Hawaiian akua Kāne and Kanaloa. The legendary spring at Kawaihoa no longer flows.

Puku’i, Mary Kawena and Samuel H. Elbert. *Hawaiian Dictionary*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1986.  
Tape Recorded Interview with Almeda Goss, interviewed by: Mary Kawena Puku’i 1962 April 23. Honolulu: Bishop Museum Archives.

### Kohelepelepe

Koko Crater is also known as Kohelepelepe. Kamapua’a and Pele shared a tumultuous relationship. Kamapua’a, attacked Pele in Puna, Hawai’i. Pele’s sister Kapo sent her vagina to lure Kamapua’a. He followed it to Koko Head, where it left an imprint before flying off to Kalihi. Kohelepelepe literally means “vagina labia minor.”

Kame’eleihiwa, Lilikala. He Mo’olelo ka’ao o Kamapua’a (A legendary tradition of Kamapua’a, the Hawaiian pig-god) an annotated translation of a Hawaiian epic from Ka leo o ka lahu, June 22, 1891-July 23, 1891. Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press, 1996.  
Puku’i, Mary Kawena, Samuel H. Elbert, and Esther T. Mookini. *Place Names of Hawaii*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1976.

### Kuamo’okāne

The eastern rim of Maunalua Bay and the hill above Hanauma Bay. Kuamo’okane was called “Mo’okua o Kāne’apua,” which means “the back bone of Kāne’apua.” Kāne’apua, the younger brother of Hawaiian akua, Kāne and Kanaloa, was left there by his brothers because he was slow to return with fresh water from a spring on the hill. Kāne’apua threw himself face-down to the ground and his body remains there as Kuaomo’okāne.

Puku’i, Mary Kawena, Samuel H. Elbert, and Esther T. Mookini. *Place Names of Hawaii*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1976.  
Tape Recorded Interview with Almeda Goss, interviewed by: Mary Kawena Puku’i 1962 April 23. Honolulu: Bishop Museum Archives.

### Keahupuaomaunalua (Kuapā)

Keahupuaomaunalua means “the shrine of the baby mullet at Maunalua.” Keahupuaomaunalua is the 523-acre Maunalua fishpond, also known as Kuapā. Kuapā literally means “fishpond wall,” and a loko kuapā is one type of fishpond that utilizes a stone wall. Keahupuaomaunalua was the largest loko kuapā in Hawai’i. Its kuapā was about 5000 feet long. Hawaiians raised Mullet or ‘ama’ama in the fishpond. It is said that the pond was partially constructed by Menehune, and was connected through an underground tunnel to Ka’elepulu fishpond in Kailua.

Handy, E.S. Craighill, Elizabeth Green Handy, and Mary Kawena Puku’i. *Native Planters in Old Hawai’i*. Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press, 1991.  
McAllister, Gilbert J. *Archaeology of O’ahu*. Honolulu: Bishop Museum, 1933.  
Puku’i, Mary Kawena, Samuel H. Elbert, and Esther T. Mookini. *Place Names of Hawaii*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1976.  
Stump, Jane Barr. *Our Hawai’i Kai: A History of Hawai’i Kai and Maunalua Book 1*, Manuscript. Hanauma Bay Education Program Library.

### Maunalua

Maunalua literally means “two mountains.” This ahupua’a, or Hawaiian division of land, was notable for its 523-acre loko i’a (fishpond) called “Kuapā” or “Keahupuaomaunalua.” It is likely that the inhabitants at Maunalua were mainly fishermen, but the area was also known for its sweet potato farming. According to mo’olelo, Maunalua was a landing spot of some of the early Polynesian people coming to Hawai’i from central Polynesia. It is said that fire goddess, Pele, had a fondness for Maunalua. Another story about Maunalua concerns a sacred drum that was placed in Hawea heiau.

Handy, E.S. Craighill, Elizabeth Green Handy, and Mary Kawena Puku’i. *Native Planters in Old Hawai’i*. Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press, 1991.  
Kamakau, Samuel M., translated by Mary Kawena Puku’i. *Ka Po’e Kahiko, The People of Old*. Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press, 1964.  
Puku’i, Mary Kawena, Samuel H. Elbert, and Esther T. Mookini. *Place Names of Hawaii*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1976.  
Stump, Jane Barr. *Our Hawai’i Kai: A History of Hawai’i Kai and Maunalua Book 1*, Manuscript. Hanauma Bay Education Program Library.

### Nāmakaokaha’i

A pōhaku located at Hanauma Bay. It was left by Nāmakaokaha’i when she came to fight her younger sister Pele. “It is a dark stone which glows in the night provided it has awa. The drops of the awa were left at the stone.” -Pukui Mrs. M.K.

Sterling, Elspeth P. and Catherine C. Summers. *Sites of O’ahu*. Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press, 1978.

### Nono’ula

A crater west of Hanauma Bay. Nono’ula literally means “red sunburned.” Nono’ula is associated with Pele, the Hawaiian volcano goddess. Hi’iaka recognized Nono’ula as kindred, and as a spring of water welling out of the mountain. Kauanono’ula is the name of a chiefess that was kind to the people of Makapu’u, the area to the east of Hanauma Bay.

Puku’i, Mary Kawena, Samuel H. Elbert, and Esther T. Mookini. *Place Names of Hawaii*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1976.  
Sterling, Elspeth P. and Catherine C. Summers. *Sites of O’ahu*. Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press, 1978.

### Palea

The north point of Hanauma Bay. Palea literally means “brushed aside.”

Puku’i, Mary Kawena, Samuel H. Elbert, and Esther T. Mookini. *Place Names of Hawaii*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1976.

### Pai’olu’olu

The south point of Hanauma Bay. Pai’olu’olu literally means “lift gently.”

Puku’i, Mary Kawena, Samuel H. Elbert, and Esther T. Mookini. *Place Names of Hawaii*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1976.

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