

SWCA's Honolulu Office is Helping Protect Native Trees

Danielle Frohlich, an Invasive Species Program Specialist in our Honolulu office, is leading the preparation of an Environmental Assessment to determine the potential significant impacts of releasing a biocontrol species to reduce the negative presence of the *Erythrina* gall wasp throughout Hawaii.

The presence of the *Erythrina* gall wasp was first detected in Hawaii in 2005 and quickly spread to *Erythrina* species throughout the state, including wiliwili, a highly valued dominant species of Hawaii's lowland dry forests. The infestation by the *Erythrina* gall wasp has since resulted in the defoliation and mortality of thousands of *Erythrina* trees throughout the state.

In 2008, when the state released *Eurytoma erythrinae*, a wasp parasitoid of the *Erythrina* gall wasp, wiliwili populations finally began to show signs of recovery.

With the help of SWCA, Hawaii is now looking at releasing a second biocontrol, *Aprostocetus nitens*. The hope is that this species will further reduce the *Erythrina* gall wasp's negative impact.

To read more about the problem and proposed solution, check out this article from [The Maui News](#).