



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park

P.O. Box 52
Hawaii National Park
Hawai'i 96718

Mardie Lane, Park Ranger
808.985.6018
Jay Robinson, Park Ranger
808.985.6012

Hawai'i Volcanoes News Release

May 6, 2009

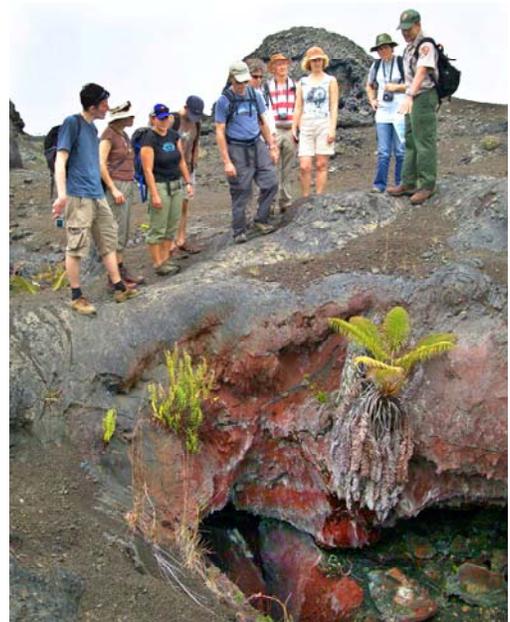
Celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the Mauna Ulu Eruption

On Sunday, May 24, 2009 join rangers and geologists on one of four hikes planned throughout the day to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Mauna Ulu eruption and the debut of the new Mauna Ulu Trail Guide.

The 3-mile roundtrip hike crosses pahoehoe lava, meanders through forests of lava trees, and passes gaping fissures where lava once fountained hundreds of feet skyward. At trail's end, climb to the top of Pu'u Huluhulu, a 150-foot high cinder cone that rewards hikers with panoramic views of Mauna Ulu, Pu'u 'O'o, Mauna Loa, and the Pacific Ocean.

Each hike will last two to three hours and participants should meet at the Mauna Ulu parking lot, located four miles down Chain of Craters Road. Wear sturdy shoes, bring water and snacks, and be prepared for cool rainy weather.

The hike at 9:00 am will be led by Hawaiian Volcano Observatory scientist Don Swanson; the 10:00 am hike by former park ranger and geological technician Jeffrey Judd; the 11:00 am hike by park volunteer Randy Ashley; and the 1:00 pm hike by park ranger Jay Robinson.



Ranger Adrian Boone and visitors at the 1969 fissure

Ashley and Robinson wrote the trail guide and will be on hand to sign copies. The guide will be available that day at the Kilauea Visitor Center and Mauna Ulu parking lot with an anniversary emblem commemorating the first day of issue.

Swanson and Judd witnessed and studied the Mauna Ulu eruption through many of its most active phases.

Its beginning was remarkable. In the pre-dawn of May 24, 1969, residents and visitors were jarred awake by window-rattling earthquakes. A mile-long fissure opened in the still forest on the upper east rift of Kilauea volcano within Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park. Soon, red-hot lava burst forth announcing the start of a new eruption and the birth of Mauna Ulu (Growing Mountain).

During five years of eruptions, flow after flow buried countless cultural sites and miles of Chain of Craters Road, and transformed forests and grasslands into fresh fields of lava.

Forty years later, Mauna Ulu still fumes and looms large over the landscape. Plants and animals have reclaimed the flows. 'Ama'u ferns and 'ohelo bushes grow out of earth cracks, lava crickets and spiders forage nightly, and 'apapane flit between 'ohi'a sipping nectar from lehua.

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.