



## Hawai'i Volcanoes News Release

March 9, 2008

### Help Rangers Restore the Rain Forest



*Kahili ginger is named for its resemblance to the feather standard of Hawaiian royalty*

Park visitors are invited to join Park Ranger Jason "JZ" Zimmer to help restore Hawai'i Volcanoes' rain forest by removing non-native kahili ginger. The activity will be held on the second and fourth Saturday of each month from 9:00 to 10:30 am through May 2008.

Participants can meet Zimmer at the Kilauea Visitor Center at 9:00 am and help remove the invasive plants growing alongside the Crater Rim Trail by pulling or cutting with loppers.

Native to the Himalayan region of Asia, kahili ginger (*Hedychium gardnerianum*) was planted in the park housing area as an ornamental about 50 years ago, before the harmful impacts of introduced plants were widely recognized.

"I spent the first half of my childhood living in the park and I don't remember seeing so many ginger patches," said Zimmer.

Kahili ginger is a prolific producer of seed-bearing fruits. Its bright red seeds attract birds that disperse the plant to remote areas. Once established, kahili ginger spreads vegetatively by growth of its rhizome mass. In time, this species can completely dominate the ground cover of invaded forests, replacing natural understory plants and preventing the regeneration of native trees.

Zimmer is the son of Chris Zimmer who worked at Hawai'i Volcanoes for 35 years controlling and eradicating alien plants so that the native forest could make a comeback.

"I have a deep passion for continuing my father's legacy in the park," said Zimmer.



*Park Ranger Jason Zimmer uproots kahili ginger along Crater Rim Trail Photo by David Boyle*

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