






O'opu Facts

'O'opu were an important cultural resource to Native Hawaiians. They were used for both food and religious ceremonies (within limits of kapu).

There are five different species of native 'o'opu swimming in Hawaiian streams. Four species are endemic (E), meaning they are not found elsewhere in the world. One species is indigenous (I) and is present in Hawai'i and Polynesia.

				
'O'opu Nopili (E) (<i>Sicyopterus stimpsoni</i>)	'O'opu Alamo'o (E) (<i>Lentipes concolor</i>)	'O'opu Naniha (E) (<i>Stenagobius hawaiiensis</i>)	'O'opu Akupa (E) (<i>Electris sandwicensis</i>)	'O'opu Nakea (I) (<i>Awaous Guamensis</i>)

The native o'opu lay eggs in Hawai'i mountain streambeds. When they hatch, larvae are swept down to the ocean (makai) with rushes of fresh water caused by heavy rains. After spending a few months at sea, the juvenile 'o'opu (hinana) migrate back upstream toward the mountain (mauka) to spend the rest of their adult lives.

The migration journey makai to mauka is what makes 'o'opu so incredible! 'O'opu collectively are known for their ability to climb upstream. They use their strong suction cup mouths to cling to rocks and move upward. Some species are even able to climb waterfalls at elevations over a thousand feet!



In addition to being home to the 'o'opu, the streams of Hawai'i are home to a wide variety of native mollusks, shrimp, and insects.

		
Hihiwai	Pipiwai	Opae

Many of these creatures also have diadromous life cycles, spending parts of their lives in both salt and fresh water. Water diversions, stream channelization, and pollution are all examples of threats to the native 'o'opu like Apoha and other friends in the streams.

A clean connection between the ocean and mountain streams is essential to their life cycle and survival. It is important that we do our part to take care of these creatures and minimize our impact on their home.

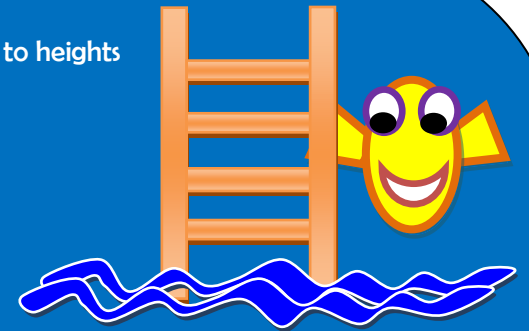


The next time you see a stream winding its way down to the sea, think of me and keep it clean!



O'opu will hatch and begin their life in a Hawaiian mountain stream. After a heavy rain, they are washed down to the ocean. There, they will grow bigger and stronger, in hopes of returning to their birth place.

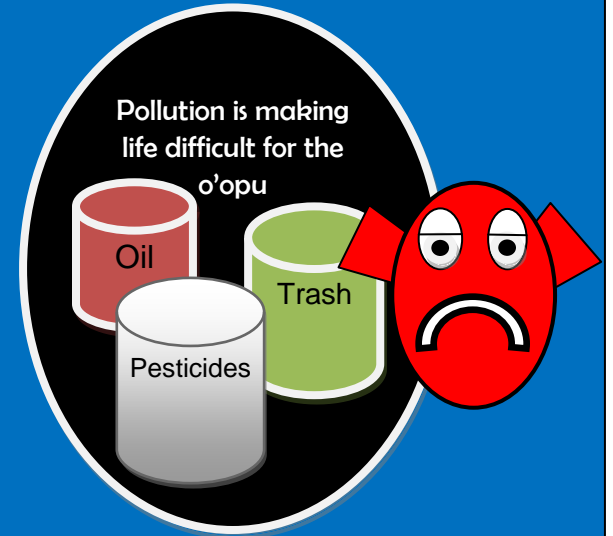
O'opu can travel up to heights as high as 1,200 feet above sea level



Interesting Facts About o'opu

Hawaii's native forests are among the Earth's biological treasures, sheltering more than 10,000 unique species. These forests supply our state with fresh water, protect our world-class beaches from destructive run-off and sediment, and are a vital link to the survival of Hawaiian cultural practices.

Last Stand, The Nature Conservancy



Pollution is making life difficult for the o'opu

There are 5 different species of O'opu. 4 of which are endemic meaning that they are found nowhere else in the world.