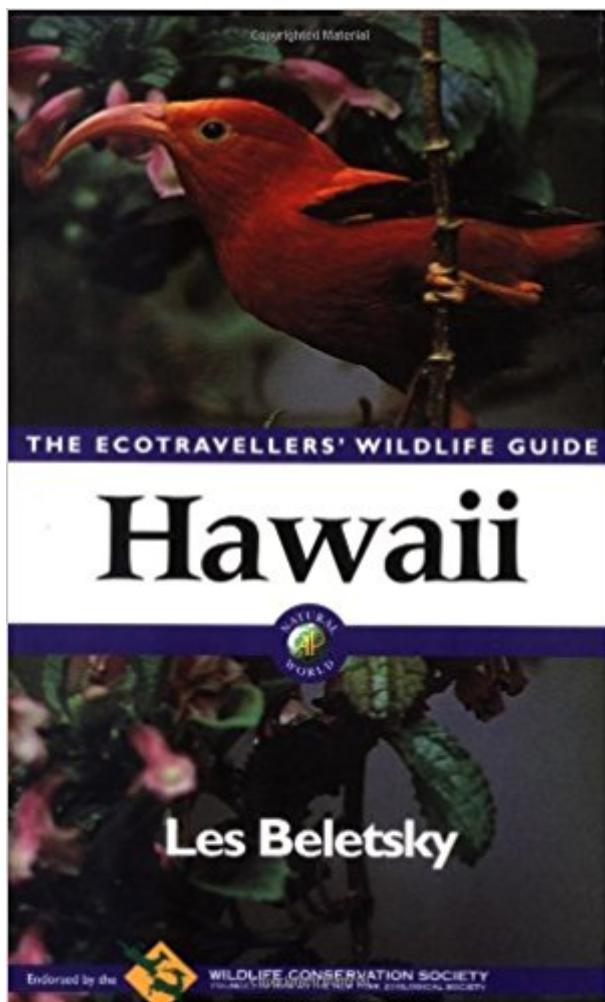


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# Hawaii: The Ecotravellers' Wildlife Guide (Ecotravellers Wildlife Guides)



## Synopsis

People travel to Hawaii for sun, sand, and surf but increasingly spend parts of their trips hiking, birdwatching, kayaking, whale-watching, or snorkeling in the island's stunning national parks and nature reserves. Ecotravellers to the islands know that Hawaii is a special place biologically, harboring many native animal and plant species that occur nowhere else on Earth. Contained in this book is all the information you need to find, identify, and learn about the island's magnificent animal life. The author visited parks and preserves, discussed wildlife with local and international experts, and then selected his color illustrations from more than 300 of the islands' most common fish, amphibians, reptiles, mammals, and birds (including essentially every Hawaiian bird). You will want to have this easy-to-carry, entertainingly written, beautifully illustrated book as a constant companion on your trip.

**Key Features\***

- Provides identifying, location, and conservation information on frequently spotted animals\*
- Gives up-to-date information on the ecology, behavior, and conservation of the families of animals to which the pictured species belong\*
- Contains information on Hawaiian habitats and on the most common plants you will see, and on the underwater animals most divers and snorklers actually see\*
- Gives brief descriptions of the state's national parks and nature reserves

## Book Information

Series: Ecotravellers Wildlife Guides

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## Customer Reviews

"...these books would be my first choice as an introduction to the natural environments of these beautiful parts of the world. For those who enjoy well-illustrated field guides, these volumes are a

visual treat."--COPEIA (2001)"This is a natural history guide for someone who is really serious about gaining an in-depth understanding of Hawaii's natural environment, animals and plants. It's very complete and very well done...and is the best one that I've seen about Hawaii."--David Taylor in HAWAII ISLAND JOURNAL (October 2000)"If you are contemplating a visit to Hawaii, this book is sure to make up your mind for you! ...It is obviously well thought out and is well-illustrated, taking a broad view of the attributes of the Hawaiian Isles - Ecotourism, Conservation, Geography & Climate, Parks & Reserves, Flora and Fauna to name but a few. ...excellent photographic plates for quick and easy reference."--SCOTTISH BIRD NEWS (2000)"They neatly fill a niche in the travel market, concentrating on the species most likely to be seen, but also covering a wide range of taxa. ...indispensable to all travellers interested in the natural world."--BTO NEWS

Even though I'm a professional wildlife biologist, I've always found it difficult while travelling to identify animals I'm not familiar with and to get good, on-site information about them, unless I'm with an expert guide or willing to lug around several heavy books (a bird book, a mammal book, etc.). I've produced the Ecotravellers' Wildlife Guides to help solve this problem. The books in the series are aimed at travellers with an interest in animals, at people for whom some of the best moments of any trip to places like southern Mexico are unexpected encounters with birds and mammals, reptiles and amphibians, fish and other marine organisms. You will find in these books information on (1) common animals likely to be seen, (2) those that are commonly pointed out by tour-guides and tourist literature, (3) some threatened ones that are, for example, subjects of conservation attention, and (4) some that are of special ecological significance. The books, endorsed by the Wildlife Conservation Society, are real field guides, with extensive color artwork produced by some of the world's top wildlife artists. To give you an idea of the "depth" of coverage, the Tropical Mexico book (which covers the Yucatan Peninsula, Cancun region, Oaxaca, Chiapas, and Tabasco states) includes detailed information and color illustrations on 104 plates of about 250 bird species, 55 mammals, 95 species of amphibians and reptiles, and 150 coral reef fish and other marine organisms - the book truly covers most of the animals you might encounter in this large region. Additionally, initial chapters in each book introduce the country or region, its habitats and climate, its common trees and other plants, and describe conservation projects and ecotourism there, as well as major eco-attractions (national parks, nature reserves, etc.). My hopes are that these books will be put to good use in the field by ecotravellers, will make trips more enjoyable, and will assist in conservation in a small way by helping to educate people about the wildlife and habitats in the countries through which they travel.

This is a natural history guide for someone who is really serious about gaining an in-depth understanding of Hawaii's natural environment, animals and plants. It's very complete and very well done (for the most part) and is the best one that I've seen about Hawai'i. Following the pattern of many other guidebooks, Beletsky's guide is divided into two sections. The first section (204 pages) is explanatory text while the second section (180 pages) consists of color drawings and photographs of Hawaii's flora and fauna. The first half of the book is very comprehensive and is itself divided into basically two parts. Part "A" (6 chapters) covers ecotourism, Hawaii's natural history (including geography and climate), habitats, parks and preserves, getting around, environmental threats, conservation and how to use the book. Part "B" covers Hawaii's animals in just the right amount of detail (and in 6 more chapters). Each chapter explores a major animal group, such as "Amphibians and Reptiles," "Birds," "Mammals," etc. The chapters are well organized and they all include the same sections for each animal group. For example, the chapter on Mammals includes Mammals of Hawai'i, Characteristics of the Mammals, Family Profiles, and an "Environmental Close-up." Each of those sections then includes common subsections. It sounds tedious, but it actually works very well! The second half of Beletsky's guide contains the color plates used for identifying all of the species described in the first half. They are beautifully done. Each animal has a brief description along with its names (common, Hawaiian and scientific), a habitat icon and a habitat description. There are also lots of interesting "factoids" in this guidebook. One of the more interesting "environmental close-ups" is the one on spinner dolphins. They often travel with spotted dolphins and/or tuna in what is called a "mutualistic relationship" to protect themselves against sharks. Spinners feed during the night and spotteds feed during the day, so they trade off watching for sharks. They both like tuna schools around because the tuna are better than they are at sensing the presence of sharks; when the tuna take off, so do they! While this is an excellent guidebook overall, I do have some complaints. The key to the habitat icons isn't anywhere near the color plates or in the index; it's way back on page 77 and very hard to find. Some of the sections are actually contributed by different people and I got tired of reading the same introductory comments about Hawaii's isolation and the evolution of endemic species over and over. The habitat pictures feel like they were just "thrown in" - they aren't captioned very well and they aren't matched to the habitat icons. The plant plates also feel "thrown in" - there isn't a matching chapter on plants in the first half of the book. Fixing those items would make it a "five out of five stars" book.

An absolute must for Hawai'i visitors who want to get out of the tourist traps and

into the remnants of "the real Hawai'i." Beletsky understands the natural history of these islands very well, and is an excellent communicator. Superb illustrations as well.

Such a bargain! I purchased this book "used" for \$5 -- and it was brand spanking new -- not even a crease or smudge. This book was invaluable on our recent rip to the Big Island -- plants, birds, fish, marine life, reptiles, mammals -- and nice articles about the ecosystems and natural worlds to be found in Hawaii. It went with us everyday as we explored the island. And became a useful read back in the room at the hotel or on the beach. It does not contain "everything" but is a concise snapshot of most wildlife and vegetation that you will encounter on your travels. Great find!

This is an excellent and somewhat timeless summary of the natural environment of Hawaii. Thoroughly recommended and really good value for money.

I'm moving to Hawaii in February for four months to work outdoors and this book has been invaluable for planning my weekend backpacking trips when I'm not working!

We took several field guides to Hawaii, and this is the one I turned to over and over. On a hike, I took it first. Bird coverage is not fully complete for all possible birds. But we didn't see a bird not in this book. Best short form plant guide we found.

I like that this book because it actually rates hikes. I need an opinion when I am provided with such vast natural beauty to choose from as in Hawaii. He also tells you the best sights for spotting so apart from referencing wildlife, fauna and marine life as you come across you can seek it out. A good reference to use before and during your trip to the islands.

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