JOB TITLE: Research Specialist (Alien plant detection and identification)

DEPARTMENT: Natural Sciences/Botany

JOB SUMMARY: Responsible for surveying selected high-risk sites for incipient non-native plant escapes on O‘ahu, assessing their invasive potential, collecting them, and identifying them using the Herbarium Pacificum collections and other resources. Serves as a clearinghouse for the prompt identification of plant specimens brought to the herbarium by weed management groups statewide. The position will include training from specialists in field and herbarium techniques, and plant identification. A one-year position renewable upon satisfactory performance of duties and continuation of funding.

MAJOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

• Under general direction, uses independent judgment to implement an early detection program on O‘ahu. Responsibilities include surveying selected sites (e.g., nurseries, botanical gardens, agricultural experimental stations), identifying and evaluating potential weed risks, and transmitting findings to appropriate organizations for further action.
• Works in collaboration with the P.I. to modify year 1 of the O‘ahu Early Detection Program, making necessary adaptations to maximize program efficacy, and assist with the development of years 2 and 3 of the detection program.
• Performs data collection and follows up with electronic data entry. Ensures data quality assurance and control.
• Collects plant vouchers in the field and oversees their processing through all stages of herbarium preparation in accordance with Bishop Museum protocols for data collection and plant processing (pressing, drying, label data entry, plant identification, information capture and transmittal, mounting, filing).
• Serves as the coordinating entity for the processing and identification of unknown alien species vouchers submitted by the island ISCs.
• Maintains organized records of collected plant vouchers in a field notebook, as well as records of positively identified herbarium vouchers.
• Utilizes botanical reference materials (e.g., regional floras, monographs, etc.) for identification of unidentified plant specimens.
• Interacts with staff at the facilities being surveyed, staff of units requesting plant identification (e.g., O‘ahu Invasive Species Committee, State Dept. of Agriculture, USDA-APHIS, U.S. Army Environmental), and BISH Botany staff. Good communication skills essential.
• Supervises one part-time field/collections assistant.
• Responsible for logistics and coordination of field activities, including protocols for safety.
• Responsible for inventory and maintenance of all field gear and botanical materials utilized in the project.
• Assists the P.I. in preparation of final report to the granting agency.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS: Primarily light to medium work. Field surveys primarily on highly managed lands, but may involve some field work under extreme conditions (e.g., forestry plantings). Must be able to conduct field work in remote locations under difficult conditions (rain, cold temperatures, heat, poor footing). Must be capable of carrying 30 pounds of equipment for hours over rough terrain. Ability to hike up to 15 miles.

DESIRED EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE: M.S. in Botany desired, with training in plant taxonomy and a good working knowledge of the scientific identity of at least the common weedy species in Hawai‘i. B.S. in Botany or related field, or 2–3 years of field or laboratory experience working with non-native plant species, can be substituted. Experience supervising staff and volunteers.

MACHINES AND EQUIPMENT USED: Valid driver’s license required. In the field, various hand tools (hand pruners, saw), pole pruner, gps unit, digital camera, binoculars. In the herbarium, microscopes and related tools. Computer familiarity with relational database, spreadsheet, and word processing software (e.g., Microsoft Access, Excel, and Word).

REPORTS TO: Project P.I. and Botany Collections Manager.

To all qualified applicants, please send a cover letter and resume by April 30, 2006 to:

Judi McClain
Human Resources Dept.
Bishop Museum
1525 Bernice St.
Honolulu, HI 96817
or email her at judim@bishopmuseum.org

Starting date tentatively set for June 1, 2006.