
HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO
SUBMIT A PETITION TO LIST THE PUEO AS A THREATENED OR
ENDANGERED SPECIES UNDER THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT.

1 WHEREAS, the Hawaiian short-eared owl, *Asio flammeus*
2 *sandwichensis*, commonly known as the pueo, is an endemic
3 subspecies of the short-eared owl; and
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5 WHEREAS, the pueo is believed to have become established in
6 the Hawaiian Islands after the arrival of the first Polynesians
7 and is now endemic to all major islands of Hawaii except Ni'ihau;
8 and
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10 WHEREAS, the pueo was revered by Hawaiians and was an
11 aumakua or ancestral guardian of many Hawaiian families, and an
12 encounter with the pueo was considered to be an omen; and
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14 WHEREAS, in Hawaiian mythology, the pueo is the "bird of
15 wisdom," known for offering guidance and protection; and
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17 WHEREAS, in the late 1800s, pueo once flew in great numbers
18 on Oahu, but today, according to The Pueo Project, a study by
19 the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Management
20 of the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources of
21 the University of Hawaii at Manoa and Department of Land and
22 Natural Resources, the number of pueo on Oahu has declined to an
23 estimated eight hundred seven individual birds; and
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25 WHEREAS, pueo nest on the ground, in grassy areas, laying
26 three to six eggs over a few months; and
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28 WHEREAS, pueo eggs and young pueo are vulnerable to feral
29 cats, dogs, rats, and mongooses; and



1 WHEREAS, in addition to being vulnerable to many predators,
2 loss of habitat has contributed to the reduction in the pueo
3 population; and
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5 WHEREAS, Chapter 13-124, Exhibit 2, Hawaii Administrative
6 Rules, lists the pueo on Oahu as endangered; and
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8 WHEREAS, protections for the pueo under state law and
9 administrative rule are limited to prohibiting persons from
10 exporting, possessing, processing, selling, offering for sale,
11 delivering, carrying, transporting, shipping, harassing,
12 harming, pursuing, hunting, shooting, wounding, killing,
13 trapping, capturing, or collecting pueo and removing, damaging,
14 or disturbing the nests of pueo; and
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16 WHEREAS, without federal protection, the pueo will be at
17 risk of extinction; and
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19 WHEREAS, protections provided under the Endangered Species
20 Act can help the pueo population increase to a healthy and
21 sustainable level; now, therefore,
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23 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
24 Thirty-first Legislature of the State of Hawai'i, Regular Session
25 of 2021, that the Department of Land and Natural Resources is
26 requested to petition the United States Secretary of the
27 Interior, through the United States Fish and Wildlife Service,
28 to protect the pueo, also known as the Hawaiian short-eared owl
29 (*Asio flammeus sandwichensis*), by listing it as a threatened or
30 endangered species under the Endangered Species Act; and
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32 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
33 Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the Board of
34 Land and Natural Resources and Program Manager of the Endangered
35 Species Recovery Committee.

