

Proclamation

The nēnē, or Hawaiian Goose, has come to symbolize the precious and beautiful natural blessings of the Hawaiian Islands. But like our reefs, diverse populations of fish and unspoiled shorelines, nēnē are a fragile and finite treasure that we have a responsibility to protect.

In the past, humans and the animals they introduced to the islands have been the source of the nēnē's woes, and the population once dwindled to as few as 30 birds due to hunting and predators. In the 1950s, recognizing that the species was endangered, Sir Peter Scott, son of famed Antarctic explorer Robert Scott, undertook a captive breeding program to reintroduce the geese to the islands in which they once thrived.

Through a combination of conservation efforts and breeding programs, the nēnē population has been increasing, and the total number is believed to have climbed to more than 1,700.

According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature, a global environmental network, despite the fact that the nēnē is rebounding from near-extinction, the species remains particularly vulnerable on the Big Island because populations are dependent on the periodic release of captive-bred birds. The majority of nēnē do not effectively breed in the wild.

The National Park Service calls the nēnē the world's rarest goose. Before the introduction of predators to the islands, nēnē bred on the lowlands, laying their eggs on the ground. Due to the loss of their native habitat, nēnē have been forced to higher altitudes, where a scarcity of plant food, strong winds and colder weather can kill their young.

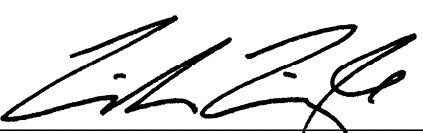
That's why it is important that every resident of Hawai'i know of the nēnē's plight, so that we can all share the solution. The Nēnē Preservation and Awareness Society of Hawai'i, the Department of Land and Natural Resources and the Division of Forestry and Wildlife are working together to sponsor public awareness campaigns and education. Posters featuring the nēnē will be placed across the state featuring images from the "Goose that Laid the Golden Egg" school contest to create awareness about the difficulties facing our beloved state bird.

THEREFORE, I, LINDA LINGLE, Governor, and **I, JAMES R. "DUKE" AIONA, JR.**, Lieutenant Governor of the State of Hawai'i, do hereby proclaim **September 26, 2008**, as

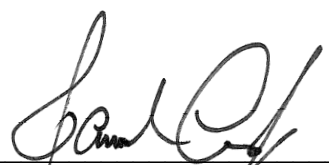
NĒNĒ AWARENESS DAY

in Hawai'i, and thank the community and public partners for their continued efforts in providing information about this magnificent bird.

DONE at the State Capitol, in the Executive Chambers, Honolulu, State of Hawai'i, this first day of September 2008.



Linda Lingle
Governor, State of Hawai'i



James R. "Duke" Aiona, Jr.
Lieutenant Governor, State of Hawai'i