

by Ken Gilliland

Overview

Aloha. The 'Ōhi'a Lehua (*Metrosideros polymorpha*) is the most common native tree in the Hawaiian Islands. It grows from sea level up to the tree line (2,500 m / 8,200 ft) and tolerates a wide range of soil conditions, temperature, and rainfall. It is most commonly found in moist and dry forests, high shrublands, and is a colonizer of recent lava flows. The slow growing 'Ōhi'a Lehua, is also dominant in cloud forests and in seasonally wet forests, where it may be dominant or form mixtures with the native *Acacia koa*.

The tree gets its name from the Legend of 'Ōhi'a and Lehua. 'Ōhi'a was a handsome young warrior who fell in love with the fair Lehua. Pele, the Volcano Goddess, was also attracted to the young warrior, but he refused all of Pele's advances. Pele persisted and finally, in a fit of rage, she transformed 'Ōhi'a into a gnarled tree. Lehua, broken by the loss of her lover, pleaded to the gods for help, but Pele's curse could not be undone. In order to reunite the lovers, Lehua was transformed into flowers on the gnarled 'ōhi'a tree. It is said that if one takes the Lehua flowers from the 'Ōhi'a tree, the clouds will burst into tears and form rain from the parting of the lovers.

The model set includes 2 highly detailed 'Ōhi'a Lehua branches in various floral colors, which are perfect for Hawaiian birdlife to perch on in close-up, detailed renders, plus there are high resolution billboard style trees and a forest. Also included are photograph backgrounds from the author's adventures on the Big Island.



Poser Use

Go to the Props section in the Poser Runtime and load the appropriate prop model from the “Hawaii Ohia Lehua” folder.

DAZ Studio4 Use

In DAZ Studio, go to “Props : Plants : O’hia Lehua” folder in the “My Library” path. The two high resolution branches default in the red flower color. Go to the “Materials” subfolder to choose a different color.

Resource Demand

There is a difficult balance between creating plants that can hold up well in a close-up render yet not have a high resource demand. The author has chosen the resource heavy path. The two branch models will load with little issue on the majority of systems.

In order to balance these two high resolution models in creating a scene, billboard-styled full trees and background photos have been included. These require very minimal system resources to use. The billboard model does include a “Curve” morph which may help in some circumstances to give a less “cardboard cut-out” appearance.



Species Name: *Metrosideros polymorpha*

Common Name: 'ōhi'a lehua

This is the most common native tree in the Hawaiian Islands and it is endemic to the six largest islands. It is a highly variable tree, being 20–25 m (66–82 ft) tall in favorable situations, while it remains much smaller when growing in boggy soils or on basalt.

It produces a brilliant display of flowers, made up of a mass of stamens, which can range from fiery red to yellow. Many native Hawaiian traditions refer to the tree and the forests it forms as sacred to Pele, the volcano goddess, and to Laka, the goddess of hula.

'Ōhi'a lehua is one of the few honey plants that is native to the Hawaiian Islands.

Plant Family: Myrtaceae

Plant Type: Large shrub to tree

Height: 66'-82' H

Growth Habit: Variable; Upright, although it can be smaller and sprawling in less favorable conditions

Deciduous/Evergreen: Evergreen

Growth Rate: Slow

Sun Exposure: Full sun to part shade

Soil Preference: Acidic to neutral soil.

Water Requirements:

Flexible; Drought-tolerant to moist

Cold Hardy to: 8,200'

Flower Season: Year round

Flower Color: Red (most common); also yellow, orangish red and white(rare)

Endangered?: Not listed

Distribution: Hawaiian Islands

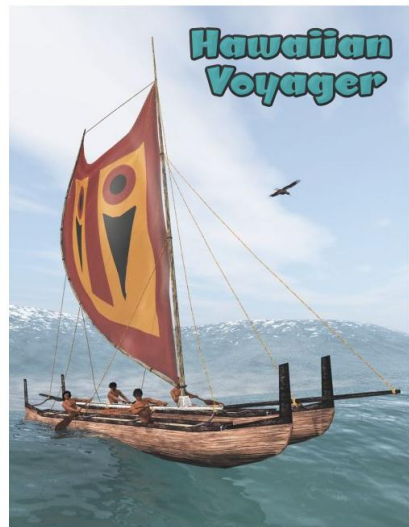
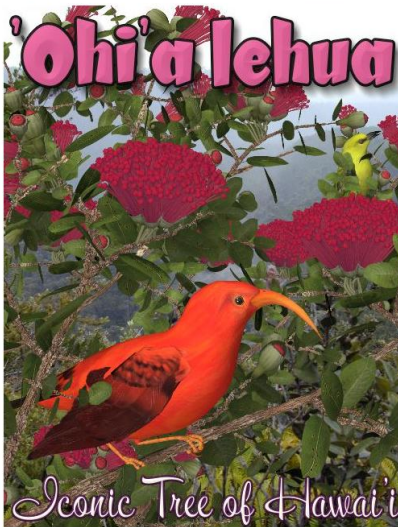
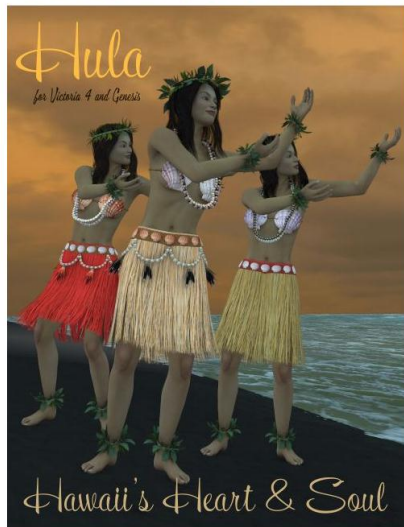
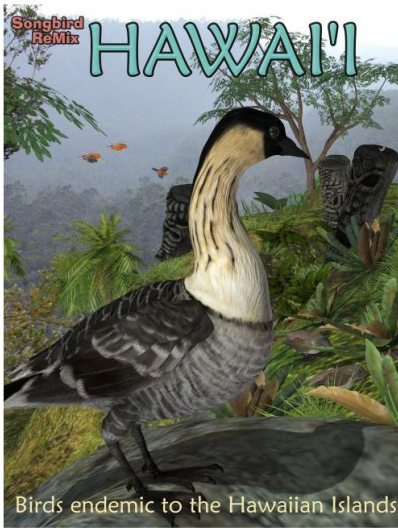
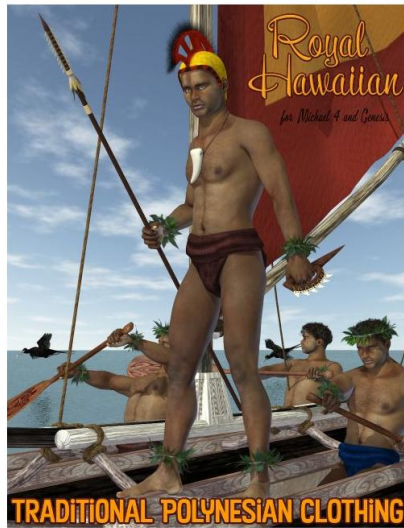
Natural Habitat: Dominant in cloud forests above 400 m (1,300 ft). Common in seasonally wet forests, where it may be dominant or form mixtures with the native *Acacia koa*. It is also common in dry forests, high shrublands, and it is a colonizer of recent lava flows.



SPECIAL THANKS TO MY BETA TEAM...

...my beta team (FlintHawk, Linda, Jan, Rhonda and Sandra)

HAWAIIAN THEMED SETS AVAILABLE THROUGH DAZ3D BY KEN GILLILAND



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