

# Goddard College

## **Big Island, Little Planet:**

**Hawaiian, Polynesian & Global Perspectives on Nature, Culture & Healing**

*A Travel Intensive in Polynesia, on the Big Island of Hawaii*

**March 17-28th, 2012**

*Open to the public and anyone at Goddard*

**College Credit Available**

[www.goddard.edu/study\\_polynesia\\_hawaii](http://www.goddard.edu/study_polynesia_hawaii)

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Join a small group of nature-lovers on the Big Island of Hawaii, on the slopes of the world's largest live volcano, Mauna Loa. Ethnobotanist Kathleen Harrison and Hawaiian cultural teacher Momi Subiono will lead this 12-day field course, which is open to students of Goddard College, students of other schools, and non-students of all ages. A Goddard advisor will accompany the group, to help facilitate reflection and integration of experiences and new learning.

We will inhabit a comfortable, rustic B&B at the end of a rural road in South Kona, Hawaii. We will live and learn while perched above Kealahou Bay, with a view of the ocean and sunset, surrounded by orchards of coffee, banana and macadamia nuts. Our own chef will prepare delicious and nutritious meals for us, from mostly local and organic foods.

On field trips to various parts of the Big Island, Momi and Kat will share with us their palpable excitement and love of collective discovery of the wonders and meaning of the land and its cultural layers—especially the way that it is all nourished by story, and accessed by intuition. We will be living and learning on Mauna Loa (Long Mountain), the most massive mountain on earth, and a quiet but still living volcano that rises 14,000 feet out of the mid-Pacific.

Our facilitators will engage us in experiential explorations that include talks, hands-on learning and rich reflection. In an open-air classroom, we will soak up and discuss botany, comparative culture, contextual history, and folk sciences. We will

understand where we are by meeting the biology and geography the Hawaiian Islands as they are set in greater Polynesia, the origins of these peoples, their signature plant species, and the fertile mythologies of these oceanic cultures.

On the last two days of the travel intensive we will stay up the mountain, on Kat's land, next to the forest-garden of Botanical Dimensions. There we will gather plants, make medicine, and perform service to the island ecology. When appropriate, and with delicate respect for the culture and nature of the place, we will create ceremonial space, to give and receive blessings and clarity.

### **Field Trips**

Pu'u Honua o Honaunau: Place of Refuge

- Easy half-day trip, very educational about plants and ancient lifestyle. Walking discussion, tidepool-viewing, lunch.

Amy Greenwell Ethnobotanical Garden

- Easy half-day trip. Very educational about Polynesian plants of food, medicine, ritual, material culture. Hands-on demonstrations by Momi of making things from plants and minerals, participation by students.

Ho'okena Beach Park

- Favorite local swimming place, beautiful. Shady places for discussion, making things (leis, weaving, bamboo nose flutes) with Momi. Half-day trip, morning or afternoon.

Kilauea Volcano & Punalu'u Beach Park

- A day-long trip. Along the way to the center of the live volcano is Punalu'u Beach, where we will hear Momi's ancestral stories, meet birthing rocks, perhaps hear from an elder she knows there.
- Then to Halemaumau Caldera at the volcano. Look for fire goddess Pele's special plants. Walk through a ferny lava tube. Maybe walk to see petroglyphs.

Kat's house and land: Botanical Dimensions' Hawaii Project

- 2-day trip, camping in tents or sleeping on Kat's deck. Experience upland native forest ecology, with trail of Amazonian medicinal and shamanic species. Listen to forest birdsong and evening cricket serenades. Have a nightly fire circle for singing, ukulele, story-telling. Cook together if we wish. Collect plants and do a cleansing ritual together. Maybe learn botanical illustration from Kat. Reciprocate by participating in invasive plant management—pulling non-native forest weeds!

Possible trip to Northeastern Coast: Island Canyons, Waimea or Pololu, both stunningly beautiful and historically/symbolically important.

### **Possible talking topics, for learning global perspective and island particulars:**

- Multi-cultural concepts of health and illness
- Shamanism, Light & Darkness: Journeying, Protecting, Curing
- Visionary Plants & Mushrooms: Natural tools for transformation in traditional and contemporary use
- Mythologies that explain how the world works
- Folk knowledge, Ethnoscience and the Oral Tradition

- Material culture from Plants: Tools, containers, cordage, textiles, dyes, musical instruments
- Art, Symbolism and Magic from the Natural World
- Ancestral hunting and gathering of materials for food, medicine and utility
- Ancient techniques of ‘tending the wild’
- Early agriculture and the domestication of food plants
- The Silk Road and the Spice Trade that led to global exploration
- The role of plants in imperialism, colonization and oppression
- The history and post-colonial reality of Hawaii
- Polynesian/oceanic knowledge systems and Island cultures
- How to bring this knowledge home, to help self, family, community

**Facilitators for this intensive:**

**Kathleen (Kat) Harrison** is an ethnobotanist who works particularly with indigenous ways of perceiving and interacting with nature, via myths, rituals, and the hidden layers of relationship with ecology, food plants, medicine plants, and visionary species. She has done recurrent fieldwork for 35 years in Latin America and has a decades-long love and knowledge of Hawaii. Her organization, Botanical Dimensions, has initiated international botanical and ethno-medical projects since 1985. She teaches field courses for U. of Minnesota and U. of Missouri. Kat will complete her M.A. at Goddard in 2011, in Health Arts & Sciences, so she understands the unique Goddard perspective on experiential learning and integration of knowledge.

**Momi Subiono** is a Native Hawaiian Cultural/Ethnobotany teacher who works closely within the schools in Kona, and throughout the islands for the past fifteen years, teaching Hawaiian Ethnobotany in relation to traditional uses of plants in the Hawaiian lifestyle. Her focus is on edible and medicinal plants, and her personal mission to share the truth about Hawai`i through the stories, plants and sense of place. She’s a cultural artist who has learned many Hawaiian arts through experience and upbringing.

**Who is this course for?:**

This travel intensive is for people of all ages who have a desire to immerse themselves in the story of plants and a deep awareness of place, experienced through the cultural perspective of Hawaii and its traditions, as they are evolving into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We will share examples of global ethnobotany and the principles of interaction that are made evident by the nature-human relationship in many parts of the world. The history of plants in human cultures sets the context for learning about specific cultural examples wherever you are. Together, we will engage our senses, minds and hearts in clearly understanding how to see nature in a new light, and how to appreciate the intelligence and adaptation of earth-based human societies over the millennia.

**We will be led by curiosity, joy and immersion in experiential learning!**

**Come join us! ~ Mahalo (thank you) ~**

For more information, contact:

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