

## HAWAII

### FAST FACTS

- **Nickname:** The Aloha State
- **Statehood:** 1959; 50th state
- **Population (as of July 2015):** 1,431,603
- **Capital:** Honolulu
- **Biggest City:** Honolulu
- **Abbreviation:** HI
- **State bird:** nene, the Hawaiian goose
- **State flower:** yellow hibiscus

### HISTORY

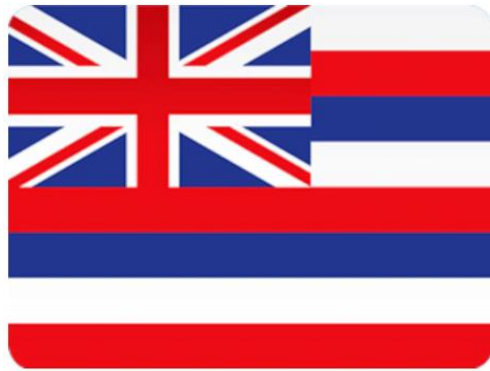
About 1,500 years ago a group of canoes came ashore to some of the islands now known as Hawaii. These people—the islands' first known residents—had rowed about 2,000 miles from the Marquesas Islands to get here. People from what is now Tahiti—over 2,500 miles away—followed 500 years later. These cultures brought traditions of their own and over time created new traditions such as surfing, hula dancing, and exchanging flower garlands called leis.

In 1810 Kamehameha became Hawaii's first king. The islands continued to have royal rulers into the 1880s. In 1898 Hawaii became a U.S. territory. It was named the 50th state in 1959, and to this day you can still visit Iolani Palace—the only royal building on U.S. soil.

### WHY'S IT CALLED THAT?

Hawaii may have been named for Hawai'i Loa, a legendary figure who is said to have first discovered the islands.

Hawaii's nickname, the Aloha State, is no mystery: Aloha is a Hawaiian way to say hello and goodbye.



LEFT: HAWAII FLAG



RIGHT: HAWAII STATE SYMBOLS

## GEOGRAPHY

Hawaii sits over 2,000 miles west of California.

Hawaii is the world's largest island chain, and it's the only U.S. state completely made up of islands. But only 7 of its 132 islands are inhabited: Hawaii (also known as the Big Island), Maui, Molokai, Lanai, Oahu, Kauai, and Niihau.

The Hawaiian Islands are volcanic islands. They have formed as the Earth's crust, made up of giant rocky slabs called tectonic plates, moves over a particularly hot spot in the molten layer beneath the crust. The heat melts the rock that makes up the crust, turning it into magma. Then once the magma breaks through to the surface of the Earth's crust it cools and forms new land.

The Earth's crust is always moving just a little bit, but the hot spot that produces magma isn't. So over time as the crust moved, but the hot spot remained—creating a series of volcanic islands. Hawaii's most active volcano is Kilauea, and you can see it at Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park on the Big Island. Kilauea has been erupting for over 30 years, and each year, its lava expands Hawaii by over 40 acres.

Hawaii is known for its beautiful beaches—some of them with unusual colors. Many beaches are filled with white sand, but other Hawaiian shores are covered with green, red, pink, and even black sand.

Whether you like hiking, biking, kayaking, sailing, swimming, or just sitting on the beach, Hawaii is the state for you. Near the water, you can relax as palm trees blow in the island breeze. Travel toward to the center of one of the big islands and you can hike through dense tropical rain forests and experience

stunning waterfalls. Don't forget to dive in the waters and snorkel near Hawaii's coral reefs.

On Hawaii you can experience yet another environment: the volcano Mauna Loa's dry lava is so much like parts of the moon's surface that astronauts once walked on it to practice for lunar voyages. Mount Waialeale on Kauai is considered one of the rainiest spots on Earth, getting 384 inches of rain a year on average.

## WILDLIFE

Though Hawaii has thousands of plants and animals, it has only one native land mammal: the Hawaiian hoary bat. Hawaii's other mammals, including the mongoose, rat, and feral pig, were brought to the islands by humans.

Hawaii is teeming with native birds like the pueo (also called the Hawaiian owl), the noio (a type of tern), and Hawaii's state bird, the nene (it's related to the Canadian goose). Hawaii's waters are home to sea life such as monk seals, hawksbill turtles, and lizardfish. Humpback whales visit the waters from December to May to mate, give birth, and nurture their calves.

Thousands of species of trees—from perfumed magnolias and plumeria to fruit-filled ohia 'ai trees—grow on the islands. Thousands of flowering plants grow there too, including exotic orchids.

## NATURAL RESOURCES

Hawaii's rich soil is considered one of its most important natural resources. Sugarcane, pineapples, coffee, macadamia nuts, and flowers are all important sources of income for the state's economy. Tourism is the state's leading source of income.

## FUN FACTS

—Hawaii is the only U.S. state with two official languages: English and Hawaiian.

—In 2008 Barack Obama, who was born in Honolulu, was elected the 44th president of the United States.

—Entertainer Bette Midler was also born in Honolulu.

—The hula is a traditional Hawaiian dance that tells a story through movement. Dancers often wear grass skirts and leis.



—The sport of surfing may have originated in what is now Hawaii. Today professional surfers ride waves over 50 feet high.



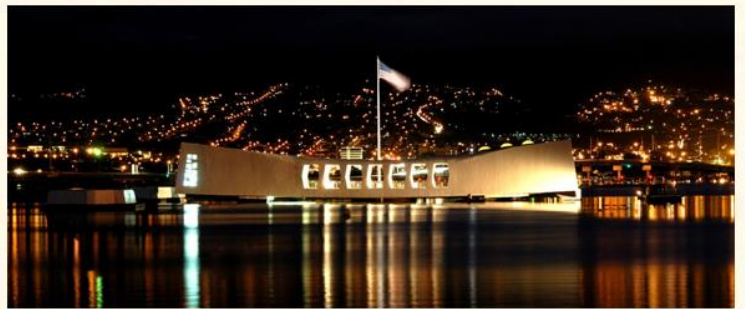
## Mauna Kea

Mauna Kea is the highest point in the state of Hawaii. It is a dormant (sleeping) volcano on the Big Island of Hawaii.



## Pearl Harbor

Pearl Harbor is located on the island of Oahu. Much of this area is a US naval base.



During the Second World War, Pearl Harbour was heavily bombed. Thousands of people were killed or injured. The USS Arizona Memorial remembers the people who lost their lives on that day.

