

29 Feb ~ Friday, Haleakalā.

Outside our door is the morning paper, Maui News. The birds are happy. This must be Kona coffee. Three swans swim by in the lagoon. A couple of sparrows try to fly off with half a roll. Good morning Maui...

Offshore is the island of Molokai, long used as a leper colony (Hansen's disease.) In 1873, Father Damien deVeuster, aged 33, arrived at Kalaupapa. A Catholic missionary priest from Belgium, he served the patients until his death in 1889.

Our coach follows a tortuous route with dozens of hairpin bends, along the Haleakalā Crater Road. At the Visitor Center (9,740ft), in the National Park, we pause for orientation and a certificate. 21 miles in circumference and 300ft deep, this is not a true crater, but rather an erosional depression, which has later been partially filled by further eruptions and cinder cones. The peak, Pu'ū Ula'ula, Red Mountain is 10,023ft.



271. Silversword



At this altitude, Silversword, a succulent adapted to extreme temperatures, grows wild and is only found in the Haleakalā summit depression. To flower, it produces a tall stalk, seeds and then dies.

272. The Bloom.



283. Haleakalā summit depression.



280. Pa Ka'oao and the view from the top to the parking lot, 281.



Haleakalā Depression panorama.



The hike to the top of nearby Pa Ka'oao (White Hill) is strenuous but the views are well worth the 15 minute hike.

Because of the remarkable clarity, dryness, and stillness of the air, its location above one-third of the atmosphere, and the absence of the lights of major cities, Science City, an observatory for ground-based telescopes, is located on a nearby ridge.

288. Science City.

We descend through clouds to a Protea farm and sample sweet pineapple.

In the early 19th century, Sandalwood was highly valued for carving and furniture in China. A *picul* is a Chinese measurement of weight equaling 133 1/3 lbs, and is the weight of sandalwood one person was expected to carry on their back. Over production almost wiped out the Sandalwood but was the crop which changed the society from bartering to cash.

Back at Whalers we lunch at Leilani's and make dinner reservations at the Hula Grill.

290. Protea Farm.



292. Protea used in dry flower arrangements.



295. The Beach.



293. Lunch.