



Our Story



Hawaii Forest & Trail, a premier eco-adventure company, has been sharing and connecting visitors and residents to Hawaii's unique natural world for over 30 years. Offering exclusive access to private lands and wildlife refuges, the company combines outdoor exploration with education to inspire a deeper appreciation for the islands's extraordinary ecosystems. Founded in 1993 by Robert Pacheco, Hawaii Forest & Trail has grown from a single rainforest bird adventure into a renowned adventure provider with a range of experiences spanning volcanic landscapes, waterfalls, stargazing experiences, and more.

Robert Pacheco: A Naturalist's Vision

Pacheco's passion for Hawaii's natural world began when he first arrived on the Island of Hawaii in 1990. Struck by the island's unparalleled biodiversity and unique geology, he realized that Hawaii offered a living classroom for evolutionary biology, conservation, and earth science. At the same time Pacheco, who worked as a naturalist on the mainland, concluded that residents and visitors were only seeing Hawaii's beautiful scenery and had little knowledge of Hawaii's natural history. Determined Pacheco created his vision: to share his passion for natural history with others and to help conserve Hawaii's endangered environment by educating them about it. With the growing worldwide interest in eco-tourism, and with the help of his wife, Cindy, whom he met in Kona, the idea for Hawaii Forest & Trail was born.

Unmatched Expertise and Experiences

One integral idea the Pachecos instituted was to establish partnerships with private landowners that would grant guests access to places with remote, pristine ecosystems that had previously been inaccessible. Hawaii Forest & Trail is one of the few tour companies allowed access to private lands and controlled access to wildlife refuges.





Another important element Pacheco built into Hawaii Forest & Trail was the practice of having knowledgeable and passionate guides. Initially leading every tour himself, Pacheco gradually built a team of expert guides with strong academic backgrounds. Beyond the guides simply “knowing things”, they must also have a real passion for Hawaii’s natural world and enthusiasm for sharing it. Pacheco has patiently built the best ecotour staff in Hawaii with each experience blending exploration with fascinating insights into Hawaii’s biology, geology, history, and Native Hawaiian culture, providing an unforgettable and educational experience.

Hawaii Forest & Trails’ adventure tours have attracted attention from major national and international media and have been featured in Town & Country, National Geographic Traveler, Men’s Journal, Islands Magazine, San Francisco Chronicle, Orange County Register, E-Entertainment, the New York Times, the Robb Report, CNN’s “Travel Guide,” NBC’s “Evening Magazine,” Fox TV’s “No Boundaries” and The Travel Channel.

Named “Entrepreneur of the Year” for Hawaii Island in 20, Hawaii Forest & Trail believes that “conservation begins with education.” The company actively participates in conservation efforts by sponsoring free field trips for local students, organizing tree-planting initiatives, and supporting community service projects. These efforts reflect the commitment to preserving Hawaii’s natural and cultural heritage for future generations.

Today, Hawaii Forest & Trail is housed in its headquarters in Kaloko, Kona, employing over 30 people, operates and maintains a fleet of customized vehicles, and sells branded merchandise at its retail stores. Even with this success, Pacheco remains quietly unassuming, his original vision and passion as strong as ever.

“Hawaii is a marvelous place for a naturalist to interpret,” says Pacheco. “The mystique of Hawaii, the essence of this place, a place that millions of people from all over the world love to visit, is found in the life of the land. Each day I am out in the field, Hawaii reveals a little more of herself to me; an experience I share with my guests. These encounters affect people in profoundly positive ways, and we believe that their lives are enriched by their experiences here.”

