

# Is the coqui really a threat for Hawaiian birds? <sup>[1]</sup>

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Cited from [endi.com](#) <sup>[2]</sup> "Besides how annoying the coqui's song can be to Hawaiian residents, it has been assured that the coquí will compete with the honeycreeper for the same niche and that the population of these birds will decrease." "The truth is that Hawaiian native species do not exist. The Hawaiian islands arose in the middle of the ocean by volcanic action, and all of the birds that have arrived there are invading species (except the ones derived from the colonizing species) although they ones that arrived after the Polynesian colonization 15,000-20,000 years ago are they only ones treated like that." "The honeycreepers are exotic little birds of live colors and beaks, some of which are insectivorous, considered native species and are revered by Hawaiians. Their number has been reduced alarmingly mainly due to the import, firstly, of the avian smallpox mosquito around 1826, and later, of the avian malaria mosquito." "Given this situation, a competitor like the coquí would not do them any good. But will the coquí be a competitor, really?" Several points argue against this theory: - The honeycreepers are daytime animals and the coquies are nocturnal. - "Honeycreepers actively hunt their prey and the coquí sits and wait for them." - "Honeycreepers are hot-blooded animals and coquies are cold-blooded, with smaller metabolic necessities." - The coquíes are mainly arboreal; they spend most of their time in plants and shrubs. - The coquí is an opportunistic hunter that feeds of whatever is available, whereas the honeycreepers mainly eat insects. - "Practically any insectivorous bird is a potential predator for the coqui. In fact, in Puerto Rico, birds are their main predators." "Maybe with the information above, we could say that, possibly, the coqui won't damage the insectivorous ornithological fauna of Hawaii, nevertheless there are occasions in which very distantly related animals and plants have extremely complex ecological relations, and the addition of a single element to the ecosystem can cause a cascade of unpredictable effects. But due to the reasons stated before, the possibilities of problems happening do not seem to be alarming."

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