

## **U.S. Customs and Border Protection's role in cargo inspection**

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U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is responsible for ensuring that air and sea cargo, as well as aircraft and vessels entering the United States meet specific regulatory requirements. The Area Port of Honolulu is a diverse port of entry that also inspects at military bases and the Honolulu International Mail Branch. CBP's work involves close coordination with other federal agencies, state interests, and industry.

## **Spotting cryptic critters in the dark: Headlamps meet the closed population**

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Visually searching for brown treesnakes at night is an important tool in snake control, especially in high prey density environments. We have previously shown that snake searchers are more successful if using floodlight lamps than spotlight lamps, and more successful when using more powerful lamps. Starting in October 2006, we had our staff search for snakes and geckos in the so-called 'Closed Population' – a 5-ha snake enclosure – using two different lamp types on alternate nights. One lamp was the strong spotlight we have used in the past, while the other lamp was a strong floodlight headlamp. During a total of 1335 standardized 220-m transect walks conducted by seven persons, 544 brown treesnakes and 2082 geckos were spotted. Of these, 1271 geckos were sighted during the 640 transects searched with floodlights while 811 geckos were seen during 696 transects searched with spotlight lamps; thus, 71% more geckos were spotted per unit effort with floodlight than with spotlight lamps. This figure is weighted with the (quite variable) search efforts spent by the different people participating in the field work, but all searchers seemed to gain a substantial boost in gecko sightings when using the floodlight lamp. For snakes the story is a bit more complicated. Overall, 24% more snakes were found per unit effort when the floodlight lamp was used, but the benefit of the floodlight lamp was not seen in all searchers. Also, some searchers contributed too small a search effort to allow the lamp effect on their search result to be thoroughly assessed. We hypothesize that the benefit of a floodlight lamp is greatest when the target of the search is a small and cryptic animal that does not stand out clearly from the surrounding habitat matrix.