

halapepe (*Chrysodracon auwahiensis*)

AGAVACEAE, agave family



Pleomele auwahiensis St. John

This species is endemic to Moloka`i and Maui (Wagner *et al.* 1990:1352). Another Hawaiian name for local species is *le`ie* (Pukui and Elbert 1986). The Hawaiian name, *halapepe*, translates literally to “crushed Pandanus” or “dwarfed Pandanus”.

Summary statement of uses: The soft whitish or reddish wood of *halapepe* was used for carving images (*ki`i*) (Hillebrand 1888) and has religious significance.

Halapepe was one of the five essential plants represented at the hula altar (*halapepe*, *ie`ie*, *maile*, *hi`a lehua*, *palapalai*) (Emerson 1965; Handy and Handy 1972:241). Abbott (1992:117) noted that the branches of *halapepe* were used at the altar to represent the goddess Kapo.

Status at Auwahi: Despite a near complete lack of reproduction at Auwahi, this species is still one of the most common and characteristic tree species of Auwahi and other high diversity dryland forest on Haleakalā.