

## Tim Huckaby's Kauai Trout Fly Fishing Guidance (for DIY fly fisherman)

*Note: If you can fish guided I strongly recommend NIGEL WARRACK, <http://www.flyfishkauai.com/> ). I have heard from a few tourists that they could not track Nigel down. And I have heard from just as many that did track him down and did well with him.*

Ok, here is my DIY Kauai trout fishing guidance; you did not get this from me. Please don't distribute this document. And please report back to me by email so I can keep this document updated and provide guidance for the many tourists and locals that contact me who want to fly fish on Kauai for trout.

If you are a "bushwhacker", adventurous, don't mind giving the island a little of your blood and sweat, and really love to fish small streams then what follows is your perfect plan to fish three streams that all hold trout.

Although I have not done it myself, carrying a small garden shears or even a machete would give you a nice advantage. That is what the guides do. They bushwhack their way to the biggest pools then machete the hell out of the place to clear a cast. You are going to want to wear boots or at least some type of river / beach shoes you can get wet, yet will still protect you from the sharp lava. Keens work well.

- A three weight 7'6" is perfect....and if you are an experienced fly fisherman you know what that means: impossible casts into overgrown areas and lots of lost flies. Assuming you don't have a short rod you really don't need anything bigger than a 4. 5x or heavier is fine. The fishing here is more about being able to land it in the water than leader or tippet. 3x will help you pull flies out of the bushes. And you will hit the trees and bushes. Flies? I have no idea. You may have read on my fly fishing blog that I caught a bunch of fish on rainbow warriors that I tie; which is an attractor nymph that really doesn't imitate anything.
- Bring a camera. This is the most beautiful area of Kauai and you will not see another sole there. If you go alone and get hurt, no one will ever find you.....until I find you.

So here we go.... I built a map that will help tremendously: <http://binged.it/1KAXt7Z>

The map will let you zoom in and out. You can see where mohihi road intersects the main waimai canyon road up top. So, I turn in there on mohihi road.

Blog reader guidance, june 16, 2017: turn off the main canyon road one block sooner and access the dirt road by following the signs to YWCA camp (Suki I think). I was much more maintained and not any further of a drive. The Mohihi road was very over grown and a bit steeper.

Normally, I park a rental car about half way, right after the berry something trail head there is a pull out dirt parking lot for a number of cars. Right after that is a step climb down on a dirt road that is barely maintained....not for a rental minivan. So, I hike from there. It's only a couple miles or so. But, with a jeep (or any 4-wheel drive vehicle) you can drive all the way there and to all the stream locations. I have always wanted to do that to maximize my fishing and minimize the hike and bush whack into the jungle.

1. **The Kauakinana:** look closely at the map and zoom in on the pushpin. There is a primitive campground on the right as you are going down the hill where you can park your 4-wheel drive vehicle or hike to. If you go over the Kauakinana bridge you have gone 200 feet too far.

If driving, pull in on the grass and park in the primitive campground. There are foot trails down to the dam / weir. I ran into a black tail deer here once; very cool. The Kauakinana flows south. See the lower mohihi ditch on the west side from the map? That is where they divert water from the kauaikinana.

Between the water diversion and 200 feet up stream is a dam. There is a large deep pool behind that dam and there is a good amount of trout in there. Under the right conditions it's pretty simple to nymph here and catch and release a handful of trout before the pool "goes down". I have never caught anything of size in there; trout to about 10". To get down there is tricky: walk on top of the dam to the other side. Hike the "trail" downstream until you see a way to bushwhack through the nasty berry plants down to the stream. work your way back up stream to fish the pool behind the dam. after you are done with that go back on the bridge and from the top of the bridge make the big reach cast and fish up stream. you can do the big reach cast here because you have room behind you. there are a number of trout there....you just can't see them. They blend in really well. Landing them is tricky because you will hook them from up on the bridge and have to scramble down to release them. Now fish your way up stream... if you are adventurous like me you'll totally dig this part. The water is really skinny and the trout are small. But, you'll rock hop your way all the way up, under the bridge, until you can't go anymore and / or the water is too skinny. I caught a bunch of small trout right under the bridge. you can exit easily after going through the bridge tunnel on the other side and walk the short 100 yards back to your 4-wheel drive vehicle or the 2 miles back to where you parked the rental car.

2. **The Kauaikoi.** The Kauaikoi is much bigger than Kauakinana; which means it has bigger trout. The monster that still haunts me today is in that river. He rose on me and then refused a big huck hopper. People tell me there are no more trout there. But, every year I see the trout fry in there. I have never caught a trout of size in here. I just know they are there, upriver where it would be very difficult, if not impossible to get to. To get there from the Kauakinana, keep going on mohihi road (walking or driving) until you see the formal hiking / camping area on your left. It is right next to the Kauaikoi river. If you pass it, you will cross the Kauaikoi river, through the water. If driving, park at the campground before the river crossing (or the campground right after you cross).

*Fishing the Kauaikoi up stream:* This is one of the most beautiful spots on the island. It's impossible not to take pictures. And there plenty of water. Just ½ mile upstream from the crossing is where I saw the monster trout rise. The water is coffee colored so you have zero visibility into the water...well, I guess it depends on the rains. You can see small trout in the riffles. But, there are a lot of deep pools. If you have a frog pattern try it. I have always wanted to try that and always forget frog patterns when travelling to Kauai. there are no bugs of significance in or around the water. You can only fish about ½ mile before it gets extremely difficult if not impossible; certainly too dangerous when I am fishing alone. You'll have to be nimble / agile for the rock hopping. You'll need to wet wade in spots too. and the water gets still (froggy) so it gets a bit creepy when you sink in the mud and leaves.

You may also be tempted to fish downriver from the crossing... it gets fished because there is a campground (and easy parking) right there. But, there are spots that I know hold fish that are just impossible to get to...well, if there is a will; there is a way. Go for it. Unfortunately, the river ends...literally... about ½ mile downstream right before a huge waterfall. Look at the map. That is the water source of the mohihi ditch. They divert all the water there. It's really quite depressing if you hike down there because they ruined one of the best waterfalls on the island by doing it 100 years ago. But, you can stand on the edge of the top of that waterfall and look 100 feet straight down. Be careful. Btw, supposedly you can bushwhack the to the exposed parts of the mohihi ditch between there and the kaauikinana from above. It's supposed to hold huge stocked trout in the ditch that have escaped the lake you passed on the way there. I still haven't figured out how to do it. a machete would be necessary....and a lot of work. That is on my list of still to dos.

3. **The Waiakoali** – after fishing the Kauaikoi keep going on Mohihi road to the Waiakoali. Stare at the map again and follow Mohihi road to the bridge that crosses the river. There is parking on the right in a campground / picnic area right before the river. I'm told it holds a good amount of fish. I'm also told the ditch holds fish up there, but I never made it to it. btw, the only time I hiked that far...the Waiakoali was blown out.... But, with a 4-wheel drive vehicle.... So easy. If you do fish here and have any guidance please report back and I will update this document. Update: in July of 2018 a guy I sent this guidance to did well in there.

### **Epilogue**

Understand there are a group of selfish folks that don't want the word to get out to tourists or locals on where to find the trout on Kauai. I had quite an email battle with one of these selfish anglers who felt the trout were his and his only. Selfish people like that don't understand conservation and never will. I don't get that thinking because conservation starts with awareness. And typically a C&R fly fisherman is the most generous person in the world. But, in general terms there is a large population of the Hawaii culture who don't believe in conservation – it is a culture of poaching; poach until the resource is gone. That is a generalization. There are obviously a number of great conservationists on the island. But, these are the reasons this document is not posted on [my fly fishing blog site](#).

FYI, within the last decade, there used to be a huge population of big rainbows in the Waialua river...right below the falls. But the locals found out and bait fished them out. It would take a stocking to replenish trout in the Wailua. A trout stocking has not occurred in the Wailua in over 100 years.