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Island Landscaping Snake Duo

On January 25, landscape worker Manuel Acosta of Island Landscaping was cutting grass along a drainage canal on Nimitz Highway near Valkenburgh Street when his weed whacker hit a snake. Although injured, the snake was still alive and crawled out onto the highway as Acosta called his supervisor.

Barney Kim remembers answering his cell that morning. “I couldn’t believe it,” he said. “I was nearby and told him to make sure the snake doesn’t get away, then I called the Department of Transportation, and they referred me to the Hawai‘i Department of Agriculture, who came and got the snake.”

“I know we’re not supposed to have snakes here,” said Kim, who was born and raised in Hawai‘i. “I just never expected to see one,” he said.

Acosta, who is from the Philippines, has more experience with snakes but was unsure what to do until his co-worker advised him to report it.

(insert quote from Chris Dacus on the importance of protecting Hawai‘i/something relevant)

The snake was a juvenile male bull snake, which is native to North America. They eat ground-nesting birds and eggs, lizards, rodents, and other small mammals.

Due to the threat that snakes pose to island ecosystems, it is illegal for people to import or possess snakes in Hawai‘i. The punishment for possessing or transporting a snake is a fine of up to \$200,000, imprisonment of up to three years, and payment for the costs related to the capture and eradication of the pest.

If you see a snake and can safely contain or kill it, do so. If not, keep track of it and call the State’s Pest Hotline at 643-PEST (643-7378), or 911.

(END)