



# HAWAII'S Volcanoes

**T**ogether, the islands of Hawaii form the State of Hawaii, one of the 52 states of the United States of America – the only state located outside North America. It is situated in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, 3,857 km from San Francisco, California.

The capital of Hawaii is Honolulu, located on the island of Oahu, and it has a population of approximately 1.36 million people.



## Kilauea Volcano on the island of Hawai'i

Kilauea has been erupting nearly non-stop since 1983, when a vent opened on the volcano's East Rift Zone. Since then, lava flows have buried 55 square miles of public and private land, destroying vast tracts of native forest, about 9 miles of highway, and 215 structures, including homes, a church, and a National Park Service visitor centre. This eruption is ongoing, with increased activity since early May 2018, causing further destruction.

*Above:* Kilauea has erupted almost continuously since 1983 at Pu'u 'Ō'ō and other vents along the volcano's East Rift Zone. *Below:* One of the many fissures that have recently opened on Kilauea.

**T**he Hawaiian Islands are at the southeast end of a chain of volcanoes that began to form more than 70 million years ago. Each island is made of one or more volcanoes, which first erupted on the floor of the Pacific Ocean and emerged above sea level only after countless eruptions.

The United States Geological Survey (USGS) Hawaiian Volcano Observatory is responsible for monitoring six active volcanoes on the Islands of Hawai'i and Maui. These volcanoes are classified as "active" because they have erupted within the past 10,000 years and have the potential to erupt again:

**Kilauea:** the youngest and most active volcano on the Island of Hawai'i (see below).

**Mauna Loa:** situated on the Island of Hawai'i, it is the largest volcano on Earth and has erupted 33 times since 1843.

**Hualālai:** the third most active volcano on the Island of Hawai'i and has erupted three times in the past 1,000 years.

**Mauna Kea:** the highest volcano on the Island of Hawai'i. It erupted most recently between about 6,000 and 4,500 years ago.

**Lō'ihi:** the only known active Hawaiian submarine volcano, erupted most recently in 1996

**Haleakalā:** the only active volcano on the Island of Maui, erupted most recently between about 600 and 400 years ago.



Images courtesy of USGS

*Right:* One of the recent fissures at Kilauea.

Information and photographs courtesy of the US Geological Survey

© 2018 Sherkin Island Marine Station & its licensors. All rights reserved.