UH Hilo student wins award for presentation at national meeting

Jessica Kirkpatrick, a graduate student at the PI-CSC Consortium partner University of Hawai‘i at Hilo (UHH), presented her research in a speed talk at the NE CSC-hosted Student and Early Career Training event last month in Massachusetts, earning herself an **award** and recognition across the CSCs. Kirkpatrick is in the Tropical Conservation Biology and Environmental Sciences (TCBES) program at UHH, working with other graduate students to help resource management organizations to understand the ecosystems they manage in these days of changing climate conditions.

Her current research, with her advisor Dr. Jesse Eiben, focuses on clarifying the habitat characteristics of a rare endemic Hawaiian insect, the wēkiu bug, which lives on the summit of cinder cones of Maunakea. With the approaching decommissioning of three telescope observatory structures at the summit over the next few years, restoration of the original habitat will be required, and Kirkpatrick's work will help provide baseline information to create a restoration plan of the natural habitat. She is currently funded under a fellowship from the Hau‘oli Mau Loa Foundation.

Field work under a deep blue sky, at 13,000 ft!

The rare, endemic wēkiu bug.