

T H E
E L E P A I O

Journal of the HONOLULU
AUDUBON
SOCIETY

For the better Protection of Wildlife In Hawaii

Volume 1. Number 3.

By E. H. Bryan, Jr.
Curator of Collections

In Bernice P. Bishop Museum the visitor may see a very complete collection of Hawaiian birds and a representative series of specimens from other Pacific regions. There are several hundred specimens on exhibition, and several thousand more in the study collections, where they may be examined by scientists and qualified students.

The Hawaiian birds are exhibited in the first gallery of Hawaiian Hall. Here there will be found a series of small habitat groups and cases of mounted specimens. Proceeding around the gallery from right to left, in a counter-clockwise direction, one comes to a case of black-footed albatross in characteristic attitudes. Next are the Laysan Island albatross; one pair doing their famous dance, a disappointed suitor looking on with an expression which says plainly, "I could do much better if I only had the chance," and a sedate female on her egg nearby, paying no attention whatsoever. The next case shows migratory birds which visit Hawaii each fall and winter, returning to their next places in the far north in the spring. Included are the curlew (kioea), sanderling (hunakai), turnstone (akekeke), Pacific golden plover (kolea), and wandering tattler (ulili). In the same case are a Hawaiian stilt (kukuluaeo) and its young.

The next series of cases show white tailed tropic (koa'e) nesting in a cliff; male and female frigate birds (iwa) on their great pile of twigs; a pair of Hawaiian geese (nene) and nest on the grassy edge of a lava flow; and black-crowned night herons (auku kohili) amid ieie vines in a dark ravine. The next case might be called a South Sea island bird tenement house. It represents a typical association of birds on a sand and coral island, from the red-footed booby and

3

Hawaiian tern on top of the low bushes, to the petrels and shearwaters in the basement.

In the next case are shown mounts of the Hawaiian hawk (io) and the short eared owl (pueo); a pair of Laysan teal and their eggs; a group of owls and their young, nesting among the bunch grass; a pair of Hawaiian crows (alala) and coot (alae keokeo) and nest among the rushes. Next there is a case of representative nests of Hawaiian birds. Then a grouping of birds common in the Hawaiian Island Bird Reservation, with map and references. Individual mounts of Hawaiian flycatchers (elepaio), thrushes, shore birds, marsk and pond birds, night heron, nene, and a cross between the nene and the Chinese goose occupy the next case.

Especially colorful is a case of native Hawaiian honeysuckers, illustrating their great range of bill and variety of plumage. A case of immigrant birds contains examples of a few of the many species which have been introduced. One of the rail cases illustrates the art of skinning a bird, with the mina in progressive stages of the process.

In the top gallery there are several cases of foreign birds about 165 Australian species; 17 nests from Australia; such famous New Zealand species as the kiwi, shags, ducks, hawks, woodhens, penguins, cuckoo, parrots, kaka, huia, tui, crow, and others. There are a few choice specimens from Samoa and Fiji; several New Guinea species including hornbills, crowned pigeons, cockatoos, fruit pigeons, kingfishers and several birds of paradise. There is an attractive small group of Hawaiian ducks; several large birds from Japan; and case 111 contains an albatross and a kingfisher, with their skeletons for comparison.

No visit to see Hawaiian birds would complete without a look at the Kahili Room, in which are displayed examples of Hawaiian feather

1-3

4

cloaks, capes, helmets, image, gridle leis, and kahilis, as well as the three birds-iiwi, oo, and mamoo--which furnished the finest of the feathers. There are also other examples of featherwork from Hawaii and other Pacific regions in other ethnological exhibits. The balance of the Hawaiian feather cloaks and capes, 26 in all, are kept in safes. The study collection of bird skins is arranged in metal cabinets on the top floor of Konia Hall, one of the two laboratory and office building. A card catalog of species is kept in the curator's office of all birds recorded from the Pacific islands is being compiled.

Bird-walk at Kahuku, January 14th
By J. d'Arcy Northwood

Seventeen of us arrive at Kahuku, including four prospective new members. At the lake nearby the first bird we saw was a stranger. At first we thought it was a tropic bird, then a sooty tern, but the experts decided that it was a visiting tern probably the Arctic. Since such fine points as the color of the bill could not be decided definite identification was not settled, but as the Arctic tern nests inside the Arctic Circle and migrates to Argentina and Patagonia, a distance of 11,000 miles a little side trip to Hawaii is nothing unusual.

Luckily for bird observers the railroad track crosses the lake, from there we watch coots lovemaking, a noisy business with quaint attitudes of raised wings and chasing each other over the water. Both coots and gallinules were also leading broods of chicks about the marshy edges. Out in the middle of the lake was a flock of 17 pintail upending as they fed. They are winter visitor from the coast. Some of us splashed about looking for nests. Empty ones of coot and gallinule were found and two dropped eggs, both of which had been pierced. There were gathered as specimens, this is the only kind of egg collecting the Audubon Society countenances by its members.

1-3

5

After the lake we went on in cars. Plover skimmed away on pointed wings as we followed the track across the pasture lands and at each marshy spot were parties of turnstones and sanderlings. At the small pool where two northern phalaropes were seen three weeks ago a good watch was kept and as we approached a white spot was seen on the water. One of them was still there. Soon observers were posted around the pool, in their interest respectable females even crawled on their stomachs to get a closer view. All agreed that the phalarope is one of the most dainty birds, gray and white floating high in the water like a tiny gull. Plover, turnstone sanderling and tattler had left the pool at our approach but this bird stayed. At first it was a little nervous but was soon preening itself or snapping at flies with its bodkin of a bill.

Our previous appetiser of Kamani nuts at the lake, to which we were introduced by a kamasina who cracked them between two lumps of coral, had made us ready for lunch, which we ate lying on the soft turf with the skylarks singing above us. By the bye, the kamani nuts are good, tasting rather like hazel nuts. Mr. Charles M. Dunn had thoughtfully brought his bird book and after knotty points of identification had been settled the party broke up, after a most successful day.

A week later I paid another visit. The tern was still there, flying over the lake at a height of about twenty feet with down-pointed bill. At intervals it swooped, picking a small fish from the surface of the water in its beak.

Out in the middle of the lake was a flock of 15 baldpates or wigeon, up-ending as they fed. The white crowns of the drakes were noticeable. As I crept round a bed of reeds I was lucky to surprise a party of 14 green-winged teal resting in the weeds and I had a fine view of them before they flew.

1-3

6
Both these ducks, the baldpates and teal, are rare migrants from the coast. As more observers take the field it will probably be found that these and other migrants are not so rare as they have been thought to be.

Reported by Northwood

A Junior Audubon Society will be organized by Mr. Charles M. Dunn for school children February 17th, 2 P.M. at the Library of Hawaii. The Honolulu Audubon Society will try to have the Governor Poindexter proclamation Bird-Week on March 10-16 for the Territory of Hawaii. New Members; Mrs. Walter F. Dillingham, Mrs. Alfred Castle, Mrs. Edna Blackman, Dorothy Hill, Evelyn Emerson, Margaret Titcomb, Donald Mitchell, James Gilbert, George Miranda. For information regarding to the Honolulu Audubon Society please call Mr. Dunn 4911 or write 3227 George Street.