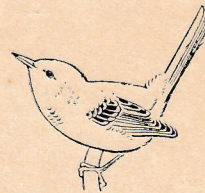


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Oahu O-o



The Oahu o-o (*Acrulocercus apicalis*) was one of the birds from which the yellow feathers were formerly obtained for the capes of the Hawaiian chiefs.

It belonged to the family of Meliphagidae, or honey eaters, and is probably extinct. There were three other species of o-o, inhabiting Hawaii, Molokai and Kauai and all are feared to be extinct, though there are occasional unconfirmed reports that it has been seen on Hawaii.

They were similar in appearance, rather large shining black birds, ten or twelve inches long, with yellow patches of feathers on the sides and under the base of the tail. These yellow feathers contributed to their disappearance. The old Hawaiian bird-catchers caught the birds with birdlime and released them after removing the yellow feathers, with little damage to the birds, but with the introduction of guns it was found easier to shoot the birds. In 1898 more than 1,000 of the Hawaii o-o were shot in the heavily wooded district north of the Wailuku river.

Perkins in *Fauna Hawaiiensis* gives an excellent account of the Hawaii o-o as he observed it fifty years ago. It was always one of the most timid and wary of the forest birds and was usually seen in the tops of the tallest trees. Nectar was its chief food, largely that of the ohia, and it was very agile in its movements when feeding. It was intolerant of the presence of other birds and would suspend its feeding to chase them away, even when they were in another tree.

The cry of the o-o was unlike that of any other forest bird, a loud "ow-ow, ow-ow, ow-ow," which could be heard at a distance of half a mile, and when the birds were feeding these cries were incessant.

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.. BIRDS OF HAWAII and ..

Adventures in Bird Study

by George C. Munro

The series of articles I have undertaken to write for the "Elepaio" under the above heading will treat on the birds of these islands and surrounding waters. There may, however, be digressions at times in regard to the second part of the caption; also notes on other birds which are of scientific or modern interest.

The first set will deal with the sea birds inhabiting the eight islands off the southeast coast of Oahu from Makapuu Head to Mokapu Point, a distance of about 12 miles. The island of Popoia is a short quarter of a mile from Kailua, Kaohikaipu is about half a mile and the others are a little more or less than a mile from the shore.

Not one of the bird study and collecting expeditions of the late eighties and early nineties gave any attention to the birds nesting on this interesting chain of islands and they are not mentioned in any of the books on Hawaiian birds.

When engaged in the bird survey of 1935-37 I realized it would be advisable to make a detailed investigation of the bird inhabitants of these islands. Through Mr. Powlinson of the City Hall Recreation Department I got in touch with Solo Mahoe, a Hawaiian youth of Kailua, who had boats and was fond of fishing and boating. On January 22, 1936 at that time being only part time employed he took me round Moku Manu and Mokulea and we landed on Mokulua and Popoia. Thus started a very pleasant series of boating trips with Solo at the helm which continued to ~~the~~ the beginning of 1938. Solo Mahoe took an interest in the preservation of the birds and was given a police commission, without pay, and he assisted considerably in getting better treatment for the birds on the islands. He secured a berth as Life Guard at Waikiki and I lost a superb boatman. He has since done good work in saving human

life in the waters of Waikiki. I secured other boatmen and bird banding has progressed fairly well except at the difficult island of Moku Manu.

In July 1937 I took up cooperative bird-banding with the Bureau of Biological Survey on this chain of islands and continued this for three years. This year through press of other work I have had to cut down my banding time to day work on Popoia. Fortunately David Woodside took up night banding and recording returns on Manana and has banded to June 1, with companions assisting, 814 birds in four trips. Woodside is now leaving for a visit to the mainland and his valuable assistance will not be available for some time. I shall be glad to have any youth interested in bird study cooperate with me in this interesting work.

The following is a list of ten sea and four shore birds inhabiting these islands at times as far as known at present:

<i>Puffinus pacificus cuneatus</i>	Wedge-tailed shearwater
<i>Puffinus nativitatus</i>	Christmas Island shearwater
<i>Bulweria bulweri</i>	Bulwer's petrel
<i>Phaethon lepturus</i>	White-tailed tropic bird
<i>Sula sula rubripes</i>	Red-footed booby
<i>Sula leucogaster plotus</i>	Brown booby
<i>Fregata minor palmerstoni</i>	Frigate bird, man-o-war-hawk, iwa
<i>Anas wyvilliana</i>	Hawaiian duck, koloa.
<i>Pluvialis dominica fulva</i>	Pacific golden plover, kolea
<i>Arenaria interpres interpres</i>	Turnstone, akekeke
<i>Heterocelus incanus</i>	Wandering tattler, ulili
<i>Sterna fuscata oahuensis</i>	Sooty tern, wideawake
<i>Anous stolidus pileatus</i>	Noddy tern, noio koha
<i>Anous melanogenys</i>	Hawaiian tern, noio

The wedge-tailed shearwater of which over 5000 have been banded on these islands will be first treated on in these papers. It belongs to the order of Petrels. This order of birds comprises the albatrosses fulmars, shearwaters and petrels. In size they range from the wandering albatross which reaches 12½ feet or more in wingspread to the little storm petrel not more than six inches long. The largest of the order in the Hawaiian group are the Laysan and black-footed albatrosses reaching seven feet across the wings. The smallest is

the Hawaiian whiterumped storm petrel, oe oe or ake ake of the Hawaiians, which is only eight inches long.

The birds of this order are easily distinguished from other seabirds with webbed feet and long hooked bills by the absence of a hind toe and by their nostrils being in tubes on top of the beak.

The wedge-tailed shearwater is about 18 inches long, the female is about half an inch shorter and slightly smaller than the male. It belongs to the Genus *Puffinus* and is *Puffinus pacificus cuneatus* a subspecies of *Puffinus pacificus pacificus* which nests in large numbers on the Kermadec Islands, ^{north} of New Zealand. The species is all brown but our subspecies is white on the underparts. About 5%, however of those inhabiting the islands off the coast of Oahu, Hawaii, are brown breasted and there are a few of intermediate stages between the two colors. On the northwestern chain of islands to Midway brown breasted birds of this species are more rare. On islands off the coast of Mexico the two kinds and intermediates breed together in a mixed community.

Our subspecies as far as known breeds in the Hawaiian group, on the Equatorial Islands and on the northwest chain of islands running to Midway from the main group. I have found it on seven islands off the coast of Oahu, one off Molokai, on Jarvis Island south of the equator. And on French Frigate Shoals, Laysan, Lisiansky and Midway of the northwest chain. Its range at sea is not fully known, but it is not thought that it migrates far.

The birds begin to arrive here about the end of March. They mate and prepare their nests. These are in burrows up to six feet long or more, in holes in and under rocks and even on the surface of the ground with some shelter overhead. Some pairs stay on the nests in the daytime and large numbers come in at night from the sea.

To be continued

LEARNING THE BIRDS.

by J. d'Arcy Northwood.

These notes are meant to help those who want to be able to recognise our birds. Recognition is the first step towards a better knowledge of them.

In the forest hearing is a much easier and more certain way of identifying a bird than sight. It is not easy to get a good view of a small bird among the leaves of the trees and if the bird be alarmed it makes matters more difficult by concealing itself. If a person know the calls and go along listening for birds and not looking for them he will recognise many more than if he relied on sight alone.

First one has to know the calls. The easiest way to learn them is to go with someone who already knows them and can instruct. In this way many people who have been on our Audubon bird walks have learnt to identify the birds. Although it is the easiest way it is not the most interesting and I am glad that I had the satisfaction of finding out for myself. I learnt as much about the birds from books as I could, though it is difficult to describe a call or song and convey to the reader an idea of the actual sound. I well remember my difficulty with a call that sounded like a thin screech. It was some time before I could get a good view of the author of this call and found that it was an amakihi. Henshaw gives 'a low sweet "tweet"' and Perkins 'a squaking call note', though these descriptions may refer to the Hawaii amakihi.

Going along the trail I would hear an unfamiliar note. I would stop and sit quietly, hoping to get a view of the bird. In most cases this would be successful and I would be able to make a note of its characteristics.. It is best to stop and keep quiet, the bird is probably alarmed at the sight of an intruder and is still further alarmed and will only fly away if one attempt to approach it.

By-keeping quiet the bird's alarm subsides and often its curiosity is aroused and it will give better chances of a close view and of learning something about its habits. Thoreau says "You only need sit still long enough in some attractive spot in the woods that all its inhabitants may exhibit themselves to you by turns".

It is movement that frightens birds, I have often sat with a friend talking quietly when watching birds without alarming them. The sound of the voice is accepted by them as one of the many sounds of Nature, but a movement means the approach of an enemy.

Have a small notebook and pencil handy and write down at the moment all that you see and hear. Recollections some hours or days later are likely to be mistaken and the fact of writing helps to clarify impressions. First the size of the bird, is it as big as a sparrow (6 inches) or a mynah (9 inches). Then its color, marks, notes, habits and anything else that may strike you. Field glasses are almost essential, preferably with a large field and a magnification of 8. Wear them slung around the neck ready focussed, one may lose an opportunity while fumbling for them in a case. I have devised a flap of leather strung on the strap which covers the eyepieces and drops clear when the glasses are raised. This protects them from rain and dirt, it is bad for the lenses to clean them continually.

Perhaps it is practice that enables one to hear bird notes above all other sounds. One becomes more receptive to faint impressions, and without wishing to encourage unsociability, one who wants to see birds at their best and learn their ways must go alone. That does not mean that birds walks in the company of a congenial group are a failure. Far from it, they are often the only means most people have of learning even a little about birds, but the more people there are the fewer birds will be seen.