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NOTES ABOUT THE BRAZILIAN CARDINAL

One of our new members, Mrs. Mary Roberts, sent us interesting sketches of the Brazilian cardinals she had noted at her residence. The variation in red "bib" seemed striking to her, and she quoted a description of the bird in Hawaii. Sketches and description were sent to the Bird Department, American Museum of Natural History. Dr. John T. Zimmer kindly replied. The quotation and comment follow below:

"To a less observing person, and upon first glance, the third visitor in our garden appears to be the Brazilian Cardinal; however, his markings and characteristics are different. His gray is not as smooth and soft, but has a bit of brown here and there in the wing feathers. He also wears a red, ragged bib around his throat that seems to spill down into a point over his white shirt. This red has a decided orange in it, ~~as~~ has the red of his crest (which seems to tilt a little more forward than the Cardinal's). His beak does not seem as powerful as the Cardinal's, and we found that he did not know how to handle sunflower seeds at first and spat them out, trying again and again to break the shell. He loves bread. His companion, a little smaller than he, wears a light brown crest. I take it this is the female. The brown is almost a milk-chocolate. His warble sounds like the song of a thrush. Another un-cardinalian characteristic is that he loves to travel in large groups, and during feeding time as many as 25-50 flock around and are quite daring and brave."

and Dr. Zimmer's reply:

"... As far as I know, there is only one species which agrees with your description and figures. We have a number of them in our collection, but among them I can find none which is exactly as you show in the lower of your two pictures. The extent of red on the breast is variable, but in none of our examples is it as restricted as you show. Furthermore, there is none which does not have some trace of speckling on the nape. It is possible that some local strain, I will not call it a race, has developed in the Hawaiian islands, but just what it means would be difficult to say.

"The other species of this genus have even more heavy markings on the upper parts than this species... Both sexes are very much alike, but the young birds, both male and female, have the brown head...

"Incidentally, the name Brazilian cardinal, although it is commonly applied to the various species of the genus, especially by dealers in caged birds, is rather a misnomer in the present instance since this one (*Parcaria coronata*) barely reaches extreme southern Brazil, being a common Argentine species. It has sometimes been called crested cardinal which is hardly definitive since most of the cardinals are crested."

AROUND APRIL FIRST one Brazilian cardinal was seen by Priscilla Harpham at the entrance to Trail 1 off of Tantalus Drive. She believes it to have been carried there by the wind, since none of the species has been seen that high up before, and none since.

NORTHWOOD, J. d'ARCY. THE MYNA IN HAWAII: ASSET OR LIABILITY? (Audubon magazine. Jan.-Feb. 1952:22-27) A review by Margaret Titcomb.

It is always a pleasure to know that old friends have not forgotten Hawaii. This article about the mynah is a most welcome addition to current literature about Hawaiian birds, written by an old member of our society.

A review of the record of introduction and the behavior of the mynah is set forth clearly and interestingly. In the popular mind the debate as to whether the mynah is a help or a hindrance, an asset or a liability, will doubtless go on always, according to the variation in the sets of facts gathered by the debaters and the charm appeal of the mynah. "For every adverse comment there are at least two or three in favor. One, evidently from an oldtimer, gives a picture of Hawaii in pre-mynah days. 'Before this bird was brought here, each year an army of caterpillars marched from the mountains to the sea, eating every green thing on the ground. They were so thick on the ground that every step taken left your footprint and when these same turned into moths they filled every room with the dust of their wings turning our all humans.'" This recalls the sight (about 1935) of an amazing army of fat caterpillars attempting to cross the Waimanalo road, with an excited flock of mynahs doing their best at elimination. The road was black with caterpillars, the air with mynahs! Do such sights still occur? "...In the control of armyworms, a parasitic insect... has been introduced..."

Mr. Northwood's article includes excellent notes on other birds introduced into Hawaii and now fairly common, the cardinals, white-eyes, hill robins, lianets, as well as comments on introduction of birds from any area to another.

HOW BIRDS CAN WIN AT THE FEEDING STATION. A member from Maui, Mrs. Frances B. Cameron, has had bitter experience with mice at the feeding place for birds, and has solved the difficulty by killing off the mice. She has been good enough to send data on mice elimination. The problem of adapting this plan to getting rid of rats will probably be solved in some clever way, perhaps by using this plan as a model.

"A little house was made with removable roof and a tiny opening - too small for birds. We placed it about 15 feet from the bird feeding place, with a dish of poisoned grain in it - grain put up in tins by Gaviota, called Warfarin. It should (and does) kill rats as well as mice. The mice disappeared in just a few days, the smell of Warfarin evidently even more attractive to them than bird seed. The house was about 12" by 7", with one opening only. This we turned toward the house, and only a couple of inches from it, a position that did not escape the notice of the mice but did not lure the birds. The house is movable (so it may be cleaned? MT) but securely fastened so it won't blow off and let the birds in."

How can a hole big enough for rats to enter be made kapu to birds?

FIELD TRIP TO ULUPAU HEAD ON MARCH 19. Too late to accompany Miss Titcomb's report on this field trip came the following addition from Mr. Mace Norton.

Looking through the scope to Moku Manu I made a rough count of about 500 sooty tern and 35 frigate birds on the ground, with innumerable boobies all about. The air was so filled with birds that I would hesitate to offer a count.

Upon leaving the area we again watched the noddy tern feeding along the banks of the lagoon. One noddy was very bold, coming to within 30 feet of our parked car. Across the road on the other banks were 4 tattler and 4 turnstone.

After leaving the area we headed for home the long way (around Koko Head) so that we would be able to stop at Kuapa Ponds. There we saw about 200 ducks on the far banks.

My day's count ended with:

450 Red-footed booby	1 Female pheasant
22 Noddy tern	2 Hawaiian stilt
500 Sooty tern	11 Turnstone
215 Ducks	4 Tattler
28 Plover	35 Frigate bird

RUMP COLORATION OF THE BLACK FOOTED ALBATROSS

by Robert R. Sheehan

A factor in the determination of age in the Black-footed Albatross is the color of the rump. To what extent this criterion can be used in the determination of age is not known at present.

However, it has been noted that at the nesting grounds four stages of rump coloration exist: 1. The youngest birds have a pure grey rump; 2. The next stage is the grey-white rump with grey predominate; 3. A grey-white rump with white predominate; 4. The last stage, and those are the elder birds, is the pure white rump.

A survey was made on the rump coloration 7 November, ten days after the arrival in numbers of the Black-footed Albatrosses. Out of the count of 365, 353 were white-rumped. On a check made 25 February of 100 birds, 71 were white-rumped. This would seem to indicate that the older birds are the first arrivals at the nesting grounds. On these observations the four stages of coloration were not noted. A bird was considered grey-rumped only if the rump was pure grey.

No birds with pure grey rumps were observed nesting this season. The other three stages of coloration were observed nesting. It would follow then that the Black-footed Albatrosses don't reach the nuptial stage until the second rump coloration is assumed.

Some indication as to the age of the birds with regard to rump coloration can be determined with the recapture of previously banded birds. On 8 March a recapture was made on one of Donaghho's adults banded in 1940. The bird must have been at least fourteen or fifteen years old and the rump coloration was found to be in the third stage. Nothing, of course, can be assumed with the recapture of one bird. However, the nesting grounds are now being searched for additional bandings and it is hoped that enough recaptures can be made to at least give a suggestion as to the age with regard to rump coloration.

[Mr. Sheehan's observations are made at Midway Islands. Ed.]

Because of heavy rains during the previous fall season, the trail in certain places was deeply eroded and washed out, bordered on each side by high banks. In one of these banks, some eight feet above the trail itself, we found the nest of a Siberian Bluechat surrounded by many dead deciduous leaves. The nest held two cobalt blue eggs, one small and one large, the first belonging to the rightful owner of the nest, the other deposited by its feathered parasite the Chinese Hawk Cuckoo. At one time the Hawk Cuckoo was more commonly found on the lower slopes around Subashiri but with the gradual disappearance of the deeper forest in that area it moved to a slightly higher elevation. This was my first observation of its egg laying habits since the end of the war and, needless to say, I was greatly pleased to make the discovery again. Kenji Shimomura, in his excellent series of motion pictures, which took him three full years to procure on Mt. Fuji, finally established as a fact the long held belief that the Hawk Cuckoo swallows an egg of its foster parent after laying one of its own in the nest. In this next, too, we presumed that the same bit of strategy had been employed. After taking a picture of the nest we continued up the trail.

Since it was already after three o'clock it was necessary for us to hasten our steps a bit in order to attain the First Station, our goal for the day. Little by little, as we progressed upwards, the busy-like, active "Tee-tip, tee-tip, tee-tip, tee-tip" of the Winhoe's Willow Warbler reached our ears as well as the songs of the Siberian Bluechat and the Siberian Bluetail.

As is invariably the case at this time of the day on Mt. Fuji, a heavy bank of fog completely hid the summit of the mountain from view and a light rain began to fall. Afraid that we would be soaked to the skin if we continued on to the First Station we decided to turn back and hoped for better luck on the morrow.

The top of the mountain was still fog-bedecked as we left the hotel at eight o'clock the following morning (27th May) and once again started out for Dainichido. Approximately two and a half hours brought us out on top of the ridge near the shrine where we hastened to enter the blind, which we had constructed two days ago in order to observe the birds in their morning bathing activities.

The thrush family seemed to hold a sort of monopoly on the pool this particular morning and was well represented in numbers by all three species found in this area: the Brown Thrush, the Gray-headed Thrush and the Davison's Ground Thrush. A single aoji stealthily crept through the undergrowth to the edge of the pool and was soon joined by a single male Siberian Bluechat, ordinarily one of the most difficult of the deep forest birds to observe. A Hondo Great-spotted Woodpecker, usually a denizen of the tree trunks and branches, shortly added its presence to the group and awkwardly hopped across the little clearing to the brink of the bath. Lack of a red patch on the head at once identified it as a female and the black and white frame-like markings on the side of the head were clearly delineated. A wren finally crowded its way in among the larger bathing beauties and added no small degree of humor as it busily and comically twitched itself here and there around the pool.

After some two hours of observation in the blind, we proceeded on up the mountain and shortly came out of the forest onto a sort of high grassy plateau. High in the sky an ojishigi of Latham's Snipe was in the midst of its spectacular courtship flight and regularly drummed its rapid, feathery "Go-ga-ga-ga-ga-ga" as it

descended in one power dive after another over our heads. Strangely enough we sometimes also saw it perched on top of a dead stump, approximately four feet above the ground, out in the middle of the grassy clearing, at which time it appeared like an entirely different species from the bird which we flushed from wet paddy fields in the Osaka-Kobe district during the spring migration. Although all other members of the genus Capella appear to nest in fairly wet, swampy areas, the Latham's Snipe, at least in central Japan, seems to prefer such a dry grassy area as found here on the slopes of Mt. Fuji.

I have always found this species exceptionally tame on the breeding ground and extremely reluctant to flush from the nest even though one approaches within close range. This habit was well illustrated during the latter part of May last year when Col. Wolfe and I, after having otherwise assured ourselves that the bird nested in this particular area, spent, in company with our two guides, a total of some thirty hours searching for a nest before success finally smiled upon us. When, at last, the brooding bird did flush from the nest, Col. Wolfe's foot was not more than five inches away. This particular nest was situated on the ground at the base of a small wild rose bush and measured 14 x 16 cm. across the top and 6 cm. in depth. It was lined with dry grass and contained four eggs of light brown ground color, spotted and blotched with blackish-brown.

The Latham's Snipe winters in Australia and arrives in the Osaka-Kobe area around 15 April. Approximately ten days later it arrives on its breeding ground in central Honshu. Eggs are laid between the first and middle of May. The southward migration appears to start at an early date, perhaps because of the long flight involved and the birds already begin to leave the nesting area during the latter part of July.

In the same general area as that frequented by the ojishigi, we noticed in the distance a rather small bird perched in the top of a dead tree and upon studying it through our field glasses found it to be a Bull-headed Shrike. The mozu is extremely common at sea level throughout all Japan but at this elevation (approx. 4000 ft.) apparently attains its uppermost limit in the central part of the country.

As we had anticipated, we found its nest located on the branch of a small deciduous tree, approximately six feet above the ground. It contained five eggs and was artistically lined with the light bluish green rump feathers of the male Green Pheasant. This I considered a very interesting observation, since, at sea level, in the suburbs of towns and cities, the mozu lines its nest with chicken feathers.

According to my observations in the suburbs of Kobe, each nesting pair of Shrike maintains a territory of approximately 40,000 square feet. However, here on the slopes of Mt. Fuji, I observed only a single pair in the whole open plateau area before us. The competition for existence must really be at a minimum under such conditions.

Crossing the large clearing and once again entering the forest, we soon struck the Summit Trail and arrived at the hut at the First Station at approximately 1330 hours. The moboso and the Japanese Wren were especially numerous at this elevation and the surrounding vegetation was alive with their songs. Heavy fog still hung over the summit of Mt. Fuji and its long clammy fingers even extended down to the First Station, clothing the forest in a blanket of cold mist. Already wet with perspiration from our efforts of climbing, we felt chilly as soon as we stopped to rest and were glad to make a small fire of dead fir branches around which we

huddled and ate our lunch. It was still too early in the season for the regular climbing tours of the mountain, and the hut keeper had not yet arrived to take up his residence. The smoke of our fire drifted in among a pile of tables and chairs stacked alongside the hut and soon drove out into, shall we say "choking" flight, a small bat or usagi komori (Placotus auritus sacrimontis), one of the rarer species of bats in Japan with extremely long, rabbit-like ears. Hence the Japanese name, Usagi komori, which means rabbit bat.

As we sat quietly partaking of our lunch, a ten or Japanese marten (Martes m. melampus) suddenly appeared on top of a large fallen log not more than ten feet distant and after nosing about for a few minutes, apparently without taking even the slightest notice of us, jumped down and continued on its way. Its upper parts were still of the bright yellow winter shade although its face, legs and feet had already turned to the dark brown of its future summer coat. Surely it was a great thrill to be able to observe this usually shy, retiring inhabitant of the deep forest at such close range and we considered ourselves extremely fortunate indeed.

The mist gradually increased in density and soon turned into rain although the songs of the moboso, Siberian Bluechat and Wren continued undampened in spirit. Taking advantage of a slight lull, we continued up the trail after a few moments and soon found the beautifully constructed dome-shaped nest of a Wren, well sheltered under the large roots of a coniferous tree overhanging the high bank alongside the trail. It was situated about six feet above the level of the trail and constructed entirely of dry-green moss with the fine twigs of coniferous trees worked in around the entrance. The entrance hole was extremely small for even such a small bird as the Wren and was firmly encircled by the small twigs mentioned above. Just how the Japanese Little Cuckoo manages to deposit its eggs through such a small aperture is quite beyond my understanding, yet such is the case. This particular nest contained only two small, nearly pure white eggs of the rightful owner, which were only the beginning of the normal clutch of five. Both birds excitedly flew about and roundly scolded us the whole time we remained in the vicinity of the nest.

Upon observing a Coal Tit enter a small cavity in the trunk of a nanakanado tree, we examined its nest and found it to hold no less than a total of nine eggs, all with whitish background and finely spotted with light brown. It was only five inches above the ground and was lined with the hair of a species of rat (Apodemus s. speciosus) and of the kamoshika or Japanese Serow (Capricornis crispus).

Near the same place, along the banks of the trail, we found also two nests of the binzui, each containing four eggs and in each case attended by a brooding bird.

A single male Siberian Bluechat was seen perched on the low branch of a tree along the trail and I was delighted to again observe the peculiar, typically characteristic tail-pumping motion in which this bird indulges. It is a regular winter resident in my garden near Kobe, but in the summer retires to this elevation (between 4200 and 6500 ft.) in central Honshu to carry on its nidification activities.

(To be continued)

APRIL FIELD TRIP. Easter Sunday seemed an inappropriate time to watch birds and therefore the date of the monthly walk was changed to the first Sunday of April. This confusion may have accounted for only one member being on hand to go and have pleasant acquaintance with the birds. However, five guests were not confused and we had a most delightful time searching the Aiea Heights area. Birds were there in plenty. Staying in one spot for some time - just beyond the newly cleared heiau (old temple site) - gave us a fine chance to see the birds fly across a large cleared space. Alas, we could not always be sure just what they were! But we are sure that we saw doves, cardinals, white-eyes, Japanese hill robins, mynahs. An extended coverage of the higher portions of the trail yielded fewer birds, but many were evident in the lower valley areas which we could see to advantage from our ridge.

Present: Mr. and Mrs. Harry Wallenberg and Mrs. Ethel Matheson, three loyal guests whom we have enjoyed knowing very much indeed for several weeks; Brenda Bishop and Mrs. Matheson's guest, Mrs. Helen Transue. M. T.

UNOYO KOJIMA writes from Fort Lee: "The excitement of spring is everywhere evident. The mocking birds are so plentiful that they easily outnumber the English sparrows. The blue birds are very common too - they are such gentle birds. I somehow feel the same excitement when I hear them as when I hear an apapane. Kildeer with its plaintive call flies over the parade grounds. The horned lark's song reminds me of the English skylark's. The starling is unusually scarce but the crow is everywhere. The crows make modernistic patterns against the white and stormy clouds. Even at a military fort there's a fountain and a small pond which the birds frequent. The most exciting experience was my first sight of these birds bathing. They were trying so hard to look clean, but nothing in Fort Lee can take away the soot. The mocking bird will walk along the rim of the pond then suddenly fly to the very top of a tree and begin his mocking song, while the robin is busy with the earthworm. The weather is still too cold for robins or song sparrows, and yet too warm for the juncos for they are less numerous this week. The yellow dandelion is blooming; forsythia and even the daffodils are pushing their way toward the sun. My best wishes to...the Audubon members."

THE HAWAIIAN OWL. May I suggest that all members write in their reports on the latest sight they have had of a Hawaiian owl? Friends who live on the Pauoa slope of Pacific Heights report that their Pauoa owl is still observable. Many times through the last ten years I have seen a lone owl there, flying down the valley at dusk - the same fellow? And where is his mate?

We might make it a double feature. Who hears the aukuu at night as it flies from Moanalua region to the heights? Or from some other part of the shore to the heights? Gone are the days when the eager eye could spot several aukuu in the marshy parts of Moanalua Bay from a car making time along the highway. But now and then wakeful night hours are rewarded by the sound of the aukuu's call. Who else hears it? Let us take count. Send in any account to Bishop Museum Library. M. T.

MAY MEETING will again be a study meeting at Bishop Museum on the 19th at 7:30. Several of these study meetings have taken place and those who come to them are enthusiastic about them. However it would be satisfying to hear from those who do not come. Do you miss the other meetings? The Program Committee has been crossing them off because so few attended. Please express your views and wishes to: Program Committee, Hawaii Audubon Society, c/o Bishop Museum Library, Honolulu 17.

MAY BIRD WALK. The May bird walk will be on the 11th, and the high plateau of Pupukea is suggested as objective. Meet at Library of Hawaii at 8:00 a.m.