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## AFOOT AND AFIELD: The Barred Dove

By Helen Shiras Baldwin  
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Several persons who were fortunate enough to spend part of their Christmas holidays on other islands of the Hawaiian chain or in Kona or Kohala have asked, "What is the noisy little striped bird that looks like a dove?" Others have added that it runs about on the ground like a plover and is common on lawns, in vegetable gardens, pineapple fields, pasture lands and along roadsides in the drier parts of the islands.

The bird really is a dove, popularly known as the barred dove or bar-shouldered dove, though the latter name rightfully belongs to a larger and much rarer species. It is also known as Australian ground dove or New Zealand ground dove, for the bird was naturalized in both countries but is native to the Malayan region. It was introduced to the Hawaiian Islands in 1922 as a game bird, though hunters do not favor it as such because of its small size and its tameness, for those birds used to man can be as easily approached as barnyard fowl.

The barred dove, *Geopilia striata* to the scientifically minded, is a plump short-necked, long tailed, dull colored bird not much larger than a mynah and almost as noisy but in a different way. Where the mynah has a rich and expressive vocabulary the barred dove is content to monotonously repeat a few syllables. Some people say he says "Hollyhock" over and over again.

His voice is not musical, but suggests a chunk of hollow wood being struck with another piece of wood. Still there is a lazy, sleepy quality to it that is quite pleasing when heard from a distance.

The dove is equally unimaginative in dress. Males, females and young all wear the same uniform of light gray feathers, tipped and barred with darker gray or black, after the fashion of barred Plymouth Rock chickens on shoulders and back. In young birds the barring on body feathers is not quite so pronounced as in adult birds. The breasts of all are reddish tan, growing lighter on the abdomen. The largest wing and tail feathers are plain reddish gray without any barring.

Nor does the barred dove show much skill or art in making a nest. A loose bunch of twigs, bits of vine, or strands of grass carelessly piled together in the crotch of a tree or upon a flat branch, or where small branches cross, seems good enough for him. There the female lays two inch-long white eggs for each brood or clutch.

Sometimes the eggs fall from their flimsy resting place, or are injured by exposure to sun, wind or rain, or are eaten by rats or other tree climbing predators. But usually the eggs hatch.

The two squabs remain in the nest about two weeks and develop very rapidly on the partially digested and regurgitated food fed them by their parents. After they leave the nest, they are partially fed by their parents for another week or ten days, then are left to care for themselves, for mother and father are now preparing for another brood of two. Five or more broods are reared per year, although the nesting seasons are mostly confined to late winter and early spring and again in late summer and early fall.

The large number of broods per year, the rapid maturity of the young, their freedom from disease or parasites, and the abundant food supply help keep this bird common in the areas suited to it and aid in spreading it to adjacent areas. It is especially common on Kauai, Oahu, Molokai and Maui, for these islands have large areas dry enough for it to nest readily, but well watered enough to provide drinking water and to nurture the weeds, grasses and other plants, the seeds of which are its chief food.

Popular hunter's tales to the contrary, the barred dove does not drive out nor compete with the larger lace-neck or Chinese dove or with pheasants. The larger birds eat mostly the larger seeds and fruit of species not liked by the barred dove. There is no competition for fruit or insects or roots, for the barred dove does not care for these things either.

The barred dove does compete with the rice bird, linnet and English sparrow for weed and grass seed, but most gardeners would be glad to have all the seed-eating birds cooperate a little better on the weed-seed eating business, for there still seems to be a great surplus.

Those who like to tame wild birds as pets, friendly but still free to live their normal lives as they please, will find the barred dove a friendly, confiding little fellow, neat in appearance and remarkably free from vermin. He is not harmful to any cultivated crop.

#### ORNITHOLOGICAL NOTES, MIDWAY ISLANDS, 1940

By

Walter Donaghho  
(continued)

August 29: There is a marked thinning out of sooty terns in the colony near the hospital and mess hall. Many adults have taken to the air, possibly have left.

September 29: Examined a dozen Bonin petrel burrows for eggs, but failed to find any.

October 1: Visited the sand flats near the wharf, where shorebirds feed. Noted golden plover, turnstone, wandering tattler, two sanderlings, and a black-bellied plover. A wild duck, which appeared to be a female mallard, was seen over on some water-soaked flats just south of the east point.

October 3: Noted a sandpiper on a visit to the flats near the pier.

October 4: To the flats again to try to identify the sandpiper noted on the 3rd. Able to get close enough to obtain a good description; believe it to be either the sharp-tailed or the pectoral sandpiper. Hope for further investigation.

October 6: Set out around the island to take a list of migrants...Route: through Cable Station grounds to the North Point; passed along road running through ironwood grove...a few golden plover and small groups of turnstones seen, feeding on

the needle covered ground; several plover and two flocks of turnstones, of 7 and 8 birds respectively, feeding on Cable Station lawn, also the sandpiper-definitely the pectoral sandpiper-large flock of 40 turnstones in chicken yard. Left grove and followed road on toward North Point, passing through tern colony where more plover and a flock of 15 turnstones were noted. Totals to this point; 84 turnstones, 31 golden plover, 1 curlew (heard), 1 pectoral sandpiper.

Second stretch: Down the beach to south end of island. Passed over broad flat of sand behind beach, keeping close to the line of dunes. Small, scattered groups of golden plover and turnstones were scared up from their foraging on the dunes near or just under the crowns of naupaka. Three curlew observed among the dunes. A flock of 15 turnstones, four plover and a wandering tattler noted on a moist, algae-covered spot near South Point. List of birds noted: turnstone, 37; golden plover, 15; curlew, 3; tattler, 1.

Third stretch: From South Point to Engineers' camp. For the first part, passed along a narrow strip of sand between the dunes and the beach where, again, scattered numbers of plover and turnstones, and one curlew, were feeding. One wandering tattler noted on the beach, following the waves for food. Approached the garbage dump, around which the shore birds were congregated in large numbers: two large flocks-40 and 44 respectively-of turnstones, 17 plover, 13 curlew, one tattler, and two wild ducks which resembled mallards were at the bottom of the pit, where a small pond had formed, with grass and other plants growing around the edges. From the garbage dump, the way led over a wide, open sand flat on which were plover and turnstones. Birds noted on this stretch: 117 turnstones; 41 plover; 14 curlews; 2 tattlers; 2 mallards (♂).

Last stretch: From Engineers' camp through flats east of Contractors' camp to shore next to pier. Nothing much till "mud" flats were reached. Here, plover, three flocks of turnstones of 4, 7 and 13 birds, respectively, and three sanderlings were noted. Feeding at the edges of the tidal pools were 3 tattlers, one more following the surf on the adjacent beach, where golden plover, turnstones, and one black-bellied plover were noted. Three more sanderlings accompanied them and were, like the tattler, following the surf line for food. Proceeded to the beach and the flat near the pier, and found only several plover and turnstones. Birds on this stretch: 30 turnstone; 24 golden plover; 6 sanderling; 5 wandering tattlers, and 1 black-bellied plover.

Total count: Ruddy turnstone, 268; golden plover, 111; bristle-thighed curlew, 19; wandering tattler, 8; sanderling, 6; mallard (?) duck, 2; pectoral sandpiper, 1; black-bellied plover, 1. Total number of migrants: 416

October 8: To the garbage pit to observe shorebirds; hoped to find the ducks seen on October 6th, but not there. Several flocks of turnstones, plover, 18 curlew and one tattler flew up at my approach but returned when I sat down to watch. They scrambled over the refuse in search of food. The curlew were the most interesting to watch, reminding me of a lot of mongooses. They were the bullies of the flock, driving each other as well as other birds out of their way.

October 9: Noted a Hawaiian tern carrying material for a nest.

October 10: A general scarcity of sooty terns on the island, the large colony south of the camp steadily losing its population, now containing only a fraction of the former numbers.

October 12: Mr. C. Brownell showed me an egg of a Hawaiian tern, one of the first, perhaps the first laid by this species this season.

October 13: Noted three pectoral sandpipers at the garbage dump today, bringing the total to four noted on the island. The fourth, seen at the Cable Station, is still there.

October 18: Mr. Harvey Jensen reported the arrival of the first gooney (black-footed albatross) on the sand flat south of the marine camp.

October 20: Went around the island to count any goonies that may have arrived; saw none, but tracks in the sand bore out the truth of the report of October 18th. Surprised to count eight more pectoral sandpipers, all on the sand flats near the garbage dump.

October 22: Noted three goonies among or near the Scaevola clumps on the sand flats south of the Marine camp; at least four reported from the other side of the island.

October 23: No moans of shearwaters heard this evening. I had missed them for several nights lately. Evidently means that these birds are gone, or just about gone. Several fledglings remain, most likely left by the parents to either learn to fly, or die--as in the case of the gooney. Went around the island to count goonies, and judge how numerous the adult terns are in the tern colonies. Counted 28 goonies--17 on the east side of the island, 11 on the west. On the east side, 10 were sitting together on the flat north of the garbage dump, 3 together on the next flat to the south, the rest here and there singly. On the west side, all the birds were in pairs, except one.

At the South Point colony of terns I found some still flying in and out of the area, though not quite as numerous as before. The regions on the west central part of the island and up toward the North Point, where there had been scattered colonies, seemed deserted; terns still flew into the big colony at the North Point, but during a half hour only 15. Large numbers of young were sitting on the ground and the cries of incoming adults set up a chorus of answers from the hungry, neglected young. Conditions were worse in the colony west of the hotel, where, though a goodly number of young remained, only five adults flew in during a half hour's time. It is apparent that the young have reached the stage where the adults leave them to shift for themselves. Throughout the past week, I noted young terns dying off in the big colonies near the camp.

October 27: Waked around the island to take a count of goonies: 71, of which 47 were on the west side (sheltered side), and 12 on the east side. Twelve were at South Point, mostly in small groups from four to thirteen.

October 28: While passing through the tern colonies south of the camp at about 8:00 P.M., noted that quite a few adult terns were flying about (though it was impossible to see them) and calling. This observation seems to contradict observations made on the 23rd. Apparently, more were coming in at night to feed their young. However, the colony is much depleted, and numbers of young have died, undoubtedly from starvation, during the past two weeks.

October 31: Walked around the island to count goonies again; found a marked increase since October 27. There are at least 2800 birds on the island. I noted that birds have at last settled on the sand flats north of the hotel, and I counted at least four on the barren uplands in the center of the island. There was a large colony forming on the western side of the island near South Point, and also one on the sand flats north of the garbage dump.

November 2; Saw a Hudsonian curlew on the open sandy stretches of the uplands; the bird very wary, difficult for me to approach as near as fifty yards in the open. It was of the same size as the bristle-thighed curlew, and flew up with a loud "pit pit pit!" Unlike the bristle-thighed species, which it resembled, it had a dark tail, and also a white spot on the back between the wings, visible when they were spread. It is interesting to note that this curlew has never been recorded previously in these islands.

Studied that strange ritual of the albatross, noting several pairs of the black-footed species going through the rapid motions. First bowing, the birds fence a little, with necks outstretched; then clattered their bills beside each other's, spreading out their wings in the fashion of the peacock as they did so. Then a click of the bill, and one bird clattered it under his wing, after which he stuck it straight into the sky with a hollow sound of the beak. At other times, one bird pointed its head up and uttered a loud whine, the other bird bowing rapidly with the head and prancing back and forth in front. Now and then the birds reared up on their toes. With bills touching, they stretched up their necks, making a beautiful arch as they stood with their wings outstretched in the manner of the peacock. They repeated these motions again and again, with a little variation. To watch them was extremely fascinating. The whole dance was stately and exalted, and I never tired of watching them.

November 3: Received a report from Mr. Charles Donaghho that he approached within six feet of a Laysan albatross. I have little reason to doubt the authenticity of the report, but a trip around the island failed to reveal it.

Goonies have already started to make hollows in the sand for nests; one pair noted undergoing sexual intercourse.

Saw an immature noddy, nearly ready to fly.

Presented with a duck by Mr. W. Bill, of the Cable Station. The bird had been blown in by the storm that struck Midway last week. Since I was unable to find a description fitting this specimen among the American ducks, and since the storm came from the direction of the Orient, it seems very likely that it was an Oriental species in the Hawaiian islands previous to this date, but Mr. F. C. Hadden, H.S.P.A. Entomologist stationed here on Midway, who has made a study of birds here, informs me that he has come across birds that have been blown in by storms that apparently originate in the Orient. He mentions seeing a bittern and a nightjar. It would be well worth-while to look into this report...

November 4: Saw two Laysan albatross flying over the camp this afternoon, which seems to verify the report of November 3rd.

November 5: Noted at least ten Laysan albatross about the hotel, some on the ground, some flying; the birds very wary, hard to approach.

(to be continued)

## PLOVER IN KAPIOLANI PARK

By George C. Munro

August 10th to 12th were the days I first saw returning plover in Kapiolani Park in 1951. As leaving time approached my wife Jessie saw at least eight on May 3, 1952, and none from then till August 17, 1952, when some of the birds of the previous season began to appear on their former stations. By the 22nd I decided that last season's birds had occupied their old beats but some new ones had also come and disappeared again. I was fairly sure of the birds of last season by their individual action. They were slightly puzzling till October when they seemed to be well settled on their former areas. I kept three occupied areas under steady early morning observation about four days in the week till the birds left, which they evidently did between the 26th and 30th of April, 1953. On the morning of the 26th the three beats were occupied but on the 30th there were no plover to be seen, and I had a telephone call from eastern Oahu that they had disappeared from there as well. I may have seen one on the 28th, but am not sure it was a plover.

There were several other areas in occupation in the park but I could follow up only three. These were on the picnic part from the junction of Kalakaua and Paki Avenue to the race track. The two ends, so far as I could judge, were occupied by single birds, the middle between Kalakaua and Paki Avenue by a pair each keeping to either side. When found together they separated, going in opposite directions--one toward Paki Avenue, the other in the direction of Kalakaua Avenue. This did not happen often but enough to show that they were a pair, and on April 26th one flew from the Kalakaua side right round over the Paki side and back to where it started from, which was additional evidence. The other at the time was feeding near Paki Avenue. Between the pair in the middle and the one on the open lawn by the race track there was a neutral area where plover were never seen, or even flew over. The territory on the south end joined the middle section without a neutral area which was more confusing for a time, but from October one very consistently occupied that area. The birds at the two ends may have had mates across the street and over the race track, but I could not be sure of that. Other plovers might appear at times on these occupied sections but did not stay, and on several occasions I have seen the occupant drive off an intruder. They did not seem to fight but one persistently herded the other off. Sometimes this took considerable time, the birds going back and forward across the beat but not going off it until one tired and left.

I did not notice plover in the southern or picnic end of the park during 1947 and 1948. There was very little vegetation on that part till 1949. Then I noticed what I took to be young birds arrive there in September and take up definite feeding areas. They stayed till they migrated in May 1950; returned in August of that year, kept more definitely to their individual beats, and stayed until May 1951. They brought others with them, probably younger birds, in August 1951 and then disappeared, the younger ones staying on. These migrated in May 1952 and returned in August, leaving at the end of April 1953. Their return in August 1953 will be diligently watched for or for young birds coming in September.

The slightly different action of the individual birds is a guide as to whether they are the ones under observation before. The pair, slightly different in size, that appeared in September 1949 and finally disappeared after a short visit in August 1951 helped considerably in this.

## POAMOHO AT DUSK TO DAWN

What happened to those enthusiasts for an overnight trip to Poamoho? Only three appeared on Saturday, July 25th--Blanche Pedley, Mace Norton and I! The rest missed a grand trip.

It was still daylight when we arrived at a dry Poamoho. We walked for a time along the jeep road, listening for birds that were settling down for the night, emitting sleepy chirps. On our return to the car, Mace stretched his plastic car cover between the cars, we set up our army cots under it, complete with sleeping bags and blankets. We really cannot brag of having roughed it.

Darkness fell as we finished supper. It was a beautiful night; the stars were brilliant, the lights of Schofield twinkled in the distance, and at a much later hour we were able to see the eclipse of the moon. Everything was favorable. The cover stayed tight, making a shimmering canopy in the moonlight, the anticipated mosquitoes failed to appear, and Blanche's cot waited until morning to disintegrate!

Mr. King arrived as we were preparing breakfast, joining us for the walk. We kept no count of the birds, but apapane, amakihi and leiothrix were numerous. It was a good week-end. Poamoho at night and in the early morning is a special delight.

Grenvill Hatch

## BIRDS AT HAWAII NATIONAL PARK

Greetings! Take a full-grown lehua tree, in blossom, and you will find birds, anywhere in the area from 4,000 to 7,000 feet elevation, in the Volcano district. On a warm, sunny day in August, with the lehua trees in bloom, iiwi, apapane, amakihi, elepaio and mejiro were seen in the same tree at the same time. There were so many birds that it was useless to try to count them. One curious feature was that these birds were feeding silently. The iiwi were much less shy than others, much easier to observe, less nervous in their actions than the apapane and elepaio.

It seems to me that there is considerable difference between the elepaio of Oahu and that of Hawaii. The Hawaii elepaio appears larger, is grayer, has less rufous on the head, and the breast is less uniform in color than the Oahu elepaio. It is definitely less friendly, refusing to come when called, and does not approach closely. The call and song, recognizable as elepaio, still is different from the familiar Oahu notes.

I was fortunate enough on this trip to see the omau three times, and to hear the call a number of times. The call note, like that of some mainland thrushes, is chordal. It has the timbre of a refined mynah call, softer and higher pitched, and two-noted. One call note is harsh, sounding somewhat like the "caw" of a crow. We found that the omau responds to the imitation, however crude, of its call, coming (at times) to look over the imitator. The bird is brownish above, lighter gray beneath. It is perceptibly larger and plumper than the apapane. It has a curious habit of fluttering its wings as it perches in a tree, much like a young bird begging for food. It was this action which made my first identification certain. The omau frequents the fern glades and lehua trees, and from the frequency of the call, seems fairly numerous.

In one day spent in the Bird Park I saw more iiwi than I had ever seen in all my years before. They appeared to have taken over. Amakihi were also numerous, but apapane were so outnumbered by the iiwi that they almost appeared absent. One which chose to settle in a tree in which an iiwi was feeding was promptly chased

out. Two young iiwi were observed closely. Each was yellow-green on head and throat, the latter streaked with darkish spots, while the back and breast had already turned scarlet.

Pheasant flew across the road as we drove from Kona to Waimea, at least seven or eight. Two of them barely walked out of the way of the car, turning to give us a reproving look for having disturbed them as they drank from the rain puddles on the pavement.

Skylark were seen on the Hilina Pali Road, and so many on the way from Kona to Waimea, and on the first part of the Saddle Road that we lost count. A covey of about twenty adult California Valley quail crossed in front of the car as we approached Pohakuloa. They, too, were not disturbed, and we had plenty of time to admire their bobbing topknots as they leisurely made their way into the bushes. A charming sight!

We were told by the Ranger at Pohakuloa that two persons recently have seen a small flock of 7 or 8 nene at Hawaii National Park. Good news indeed!

Grenville Hatch and Pricilla Harpham

Miriam Sinclair, vacationing at the Volcano, accompanied by Janet Bell, writes, "At 5:15 we heard one (plover) and thought we saw one's distinctive outline against the sky. Now, at 6:45 we have just watched three on the golf course through the glasses. We pride ourselves upon having caught the day of their arrival. These look a bit thin, but full of energy, browsing on the apparently buggy (?) grasses of the course. In the dulling light they look rather dark." August 16th.

Mrs. Helen Shiras Baldwin writes from Hilo, "...the Chinese thrush, once plentiful in suburban Hilo, practically disappeared during the war--presumably because of an epidemic of some sort--is now returning. I have heard them several times in the Wailuku gulch in the residence area. This morning I heard one in my own yard. Others report hearing them, too. Best regards to you and the Audubon group." August 5th.

On August 19th some fifteen plover were seen in the marginal area at Kaelepulu pond, which is now very low, and two pintail ducks rose from the small stream which flows from the pond. G. H.

#### SEPTEMBER FIELD TRIPS

September 13th. To Opaulea Trail, under the leadership of Mr. McGuire. We have not taken this as a scheduled trip before, but are promised good birding and some unusual plants.

September 26th. (Saturday). There should be young shearwaters on Popoia, so meet at the Library of Hawaii at 3:00 p.m., bringing picnic supper, or meet the group at the Kaneohe end of Kailua park at 4:00. We will leave the island about 9 or 9:30. (Charge for the boat trip: \$1.00).

#### SEPTEMBER MEETING

September 21st, at 7:30 p.m. at the home of Mrs. Ruth Rockafellow, 2238 B Kalia Road. Mace Norton will lead us in the study of the Pacific golden plover.

HAWAII AUDUBON SOCIETY OFFICERS: President, Miss Grenville Hatch; Vice-Presidents, Mr. Mace Norton, Miss Margaret Titcomb; Secretary, Mrs. Ruth R. Rockafellow; Treasurer, Mrs. Blanche A. Pedley.

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