THE ELEPAIO

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For the Better Protection of Wildlife in Hawaii

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HONOLULU CHRISTMAS COUNT
December 23, 1956

( )--estimated or partly estimated

	AREAS															
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	TOTAL
Laysan Albatross	3	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	3
Blk-footed "	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	2	2
Red-footed Booby	(350)	(650)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	(1000)
Brown Booby	4	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	6
Man-o'-war Bird	33	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	35
Blk-cr Night Heron	.	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	2
Baldpate	.	.	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	2
Pintail	.	.	253	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	76	.	.	329
Shoveller	.	.	80	.	.	.	.	7	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	87
Ring-necked Pheasant	.	2	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	3
Gallinule	.	2	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	3
Coot	.	37	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	208	.	.	245
Pac Golden Plover	.	55	.	9	32	.	.	13	.	.	.	.	2	5	112	228
Ruddy Turnstone	.	49	.	.	34	.	.	30	.	.	.	.	.	.	2	115
Wandering Tattler	.	9	.	.	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	3	15
Sanderling	.	3	6	.	32	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	41
Stilt	.	42	35	.	5	.	.	125	.	.	.	.	.	.	4	211
Pomarine Jaeger	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	7	7
Lawn Noddy Tern	.	4	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	4
Chinese Spotted Dove	.	58	.	23	2	9	3	.	24	3	4	4	.	1	10	141
Barred Dove	.	71	.	64	2	26	.	3	25	.	2	8	2	7	6	216
English Sparrow	.	.	.	11	3	6	.	.	75	.	.	.	3	6	5	109
N Am Cardinal	.	10	.	30	.	2	5	.	5	8	4	4	4	.	.	72
Brazilian Cardinal	.	7	.	9	.	.	.	.	10	.	.	2	1	.	.	29
House Finch	.	35	.	37	.	.	.	.	.	9	5	15	.	.	.	101
Japanese Tit	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	.	1	.	.	.	2
Red-billed Leiothrix	.	.	.	.	.	.	47	2	2	45	27	27	.	.	.	150
Shama Thrush	.	.	.	.	.	.	2	.	.	2	.	.	.	.	.	4
Mynah	.	120	.	40	11	95	4	2	40	.	12	.	3	3	1	331
White-eye	.	1	.	1	.	.	9	.	3	69	16	121	1	.	.	221
Ricebird	.	116	.	40	2	6	.	.	.	2	5	1	2	2	.	176
Elepaio	.	.	.	.	.	3	.	.	.	7	.	15	.	.	.	25
Amakihi	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	9	.	68	.	.	.	77
Creeper	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	2	.	.	.	2
Apapane	.	.	.	.	.	5	.	.	.	12	.	489	.	.	.	506
TOTALS	(390)	(1277)	376	266	125	152	70	182	184	167	75	757	302	25	152	(4500)
Nr. of Species:	4	21	5	12	10	8	6	7	8	11	8	13	10	7	10	35
Hours on foot:	1	3	1	40m	26m	.1.55		12m	4	3¾	1¾	4	.	.	.	21.43
Hours by car:	.	1	½	1	5m	38m	.	5m	.	½	.	.	.	.	.	3.48
Miles on foot:	.	1	1	1	½	.	1	½	3	4	1	2½	.	.	.	15½
Miles by car:	.	15	8	12	1	11	.	½	.	5	.	5	.	.	.	57½

The following areas were covered in this year's count:

AREA 1) Moku Manu (Through telescope from Ulupau Head)
2) Ulupau Head, Kaneohe Peninsula and Ponds
3) Kaelepulu Pond and Kailua
4) Bellows Field and Waimanalo
5) Kuliouou Park
6) Manoa Residential Area
7) Manoa Falls Trail
8) Kuapa Pond
9) University and Mid-Pacific Institute
10) Tantalus Trails 2 and 2A to Pauoa Flats
11) Nuuanu Valley (Luakaha)
12) Aiea Trail
13) Salt Lake (Through telescope)
14) Damon Pond
15) Sand Island (Through telescope)

These areas were covered by the following individuals:

AREAS 1-3) Neil Case, Florence Durfee of San Jose, Cal., Charles Hanson, Carol Horning, John H. Horning, Harriet Mundy of Palo Alto, Cal., Al Stoops, Lillian Williams of Brisbane, Australia
4-8) Robert Cunningham of Sacramento, Cal., Joseph E. King, Blanche A. Pedley, Hazel Walsh of San Rafael, Cal.
9) Irma Botsford
10-11) Grenville Hatch, Al Labrecque
12-15) Unoyo Kojima, John Obata, Ruth R. Rockafellow, Margaret Smail

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HAWAII AUDUBON SOCIETY BIRD COUNT, 1956

The Honolulu Christmas Count was taken over the same areas as last year, within a circle of 7½ miles radius centered near Nuuanu Pali. Counting extended from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. The weather was generally cloudy or overcast in the morning, with no rain, clearing in the afternoon, but with scattered clouds over most areas. The temperature ranged from 65° at Aiea trail in the morning to 84° at Bellows Field in the afternoon. The trade wind was very light in most areas, but with mild gusts in the Aiea area. Nineteen observers spent a total of 25½ hours (21¾ on foot, 3¾ by car), and covered 73 miles (15½ on foot, 57½ by car). Thirty-five species were listed, one more than has ever been reported before. (Thirty-four were reported in 1954 and 1955.) A mocking bird was seen and heard just outside the circle at Salt Lake, by Chuck Hanson, who made a special trip at dusk to locate it. This was noted in our report to FIELD NOTES, although it cannot be counted as an additional species. The total number of individuals was about 4,500, down by almost 2000 from last year's count.

Smaller numbers of waterfowl, shore birds and the common "residential" birds from all areas account for the drop in the number of individuals, which the increase in stilt and apapane was not large enough to offset. Certain residential areas which usually swelled the total numbers could not be taken this year, because of Miss Taylor's illness, and Mrs. Kuhn's absence from the island.

Sand Island produced two "firsts" on our count -- the pomarine jaegers and black-footed albatross. Aiea trail produced a great surprise in a count of 489 apapane. Paper bark and eucalyptus were in full bloom. The apapane were fairly delirious with the nectar, whirling and singing madly. Two of the census takers, Unoyo Kojima and Ruth R. Rockafellow, had been fortunate in seeing a similar sight on Poamoho, in 1950 and 1952, when paper bark trees were in bloom there. Owl pellets were found along the trail, but efforts to rouse a slumbering owl were futile. The creepers, as usual, were found high

on the trail. The group of census takers did not go to the summit, nor make the loop, which usually yields very few birds.

The same group, Ruth Rockafellow, Unoyo Kojima, Margaret Smail, and John Obata, also reported startling a tattler at Damon Pond. The tattler flew and perched in a tree! Truly, a day of surprises for them!

The Ulupau Head group had the good fortune to find three Laysan albatross on Moku lanu, seeing them clearly silhouetted against the sky. All were able to identify the birds through the 'scope. Kaelepulu had quite a concentration of ducks, although the water is low, and confined to a fraction of the original size of the pond. The two baldpates were prizes here. No attempt was made to count the ducks which were indistinguishable as to species on the far side of the pond.

At Manoa Falls, the greatest surprise was to find apapane in the pagoda trees. Here, too, the eucalyptus trees were in bloom, presumably accounting for the presence of the apapane.

Apapane were in the eucalyptus grove on Tantalus, not in as great numbers as last year, or possibly we reached the grove at a later hour, although the trail was entered just as the first birds began to call. Luakaha was not productive this year, as Tantalus had been covered first, and the quiet hour for birds had come when we reached Luakaha.

We have reason to feel pleased with the results of our Christmas count, especially as we look back over the number of species counted annually from 1940 on, ranging from a low of 28, with an average of 29.5. Obviously our present circle produces the best results. A few more parties out at dawn would undoubtedly increase both number of species and individuals.

All regret that it was not feasible to take count on Hawaii this year. We shall lay our plans early in 1957, and attempt it next count season.

Grenville Hatch

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DR. DEAN AMADON
By Charles Vaurie

Dean Amadon was born in Milwaukee on June 5, 1912, the son of Arthur Amadon and Marie (Evenson) Amadon, his family moving a few years later to a farm in western New York. In 1940 he married Octavia Gardella of New York City and has two daughters, ages 9 and 13. His undergraduate days were spent at Hobart College, Geneva, New York, from which he graduated in 1934 summa cum laude and with a Phi Beta Kappa key. His graduate studies were made at the University of Wyoming, Columbia, and Cornell, and from the latter he received a Ph.D. degree in 1947. It will be of interest to the reader of "Elepaio" that the studies which won him his Doctor's degree were on the evolution and systematics of Hawaiian birds. After a brief period in wildlife management for the State of Connecticut he came to the American Museum of Natural History in New York City in 1937, and in 1942 was appointed Assistant Curator in the Bird Department. From October 1943 until February 1946 he served in the Medical Corps of the United States Army and was for some time stationed at Tripler General Hospital in Honolulu and later in Manila, P.I. In 1952 he rose to Associate Curator and in 1955 he was named Lamont Curator of Birds, succeeding the distinguished Dr. Robert Cushman Murphy. At present he is Acting Chairman of the Bird Department. In addition to his research, curatorial, and executive duties he took leave of absence in 1954 to teach at the University of Wisconsin, has served the Linnaean Society of New York in various offices, including those of Editor and President, and is and has been on various committees of the American Ornithologists' Union of which he is a Fellow, the highest class of membership. His duties at the American Museum are not restricted to the Bird Department but embrace a

number of other activities, notable among them the Chairmanship of the Scientific Publications Committee. He is a member of the Society of Sigma Xi and a number of other scientific societies both in America and abroad. He has also taken part in various expeditions, notably to Mexico.

Dean Amadon is a prolific writer and his publications have appeared in a long list of American and foreign publications. Some have been published in "Elepaio." His papers on the relationships of the Hawaiian avifauna are very significant contributions and especially so his study of the honeycreepers, published in the Bulletin of the American Museum in 1950. This paper is a modern classic and is widely quoted.

The paragraphs above sketch an unusually full and distinguished career but present only the bare facts. As Dean Amadon is one of my closest friends I may be excused for not mentioning more personal matters but mention only the appreciation of his colleagues. He is one of this country's most outstanding ornithological scholars, noted for his incisive and analytical mind. In his writings he cuts through masses of technical matter and, impatient of verbiage, penetrates to issues of basic and wider interest. His opinions are presented logically and are always stimulating, not only in the field of bird systematics but also in the wider and more important ones of modern evolutionary thought and biological theory. The formative period he spent in Hawaii and the problems presented by its avifauna made a great and lasting impression on his mind, as it did in the case of a famous predecessor.

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THE PROBLEM OF EXOTICS IN HAWAII

By Grenville Hatch

As we study the results of this year's Christmas count, and make comparisons with past years, it may be a good time to take a critical look at the general status of the bird fauna in Hawaii. We still have the sea birds of wide-spread distribution, a small number of native marsh birds, for whose existence we fear, if the present trend of draining ponds and marshes continues; but what is the status of our native passerines, those unique and beautiful birds of the forest?

A few months ago at one of our Audubon meetings we were startled by the information contained in a report by Mr. Vernon Brock, Director of the Division of Fish and Game, concerning the importation of non-game birds. Mr. Brock summarized the general situation in a masterly fashion. Among other points, he stated that of the 20 exotic species of passerine birds now established in the Territory, nine are apparently pests to agriculture; two seriously (the two species of cardinals), four moderately (skylark, mejiro, English sparrow and mynah), three to a lesser extent (house finch, mocking bird, and ricebird).

This appraisal of birds as pests to agriculture is based upon the number of permits issued to farmers to destroy birds that are injuring crops. Such permits are issued only after representatives of the Board of Agriculture and Forestry and of the University Extension Service have examined the complaint and inspected the area. All told some 600 permits have been issued, and a large number of birds destroyed, "in some instances over 1300 by a single farmer."

Mr. Brook points out that we do not know the exact amount of damage done by these birds. No survey has been made to weigh scientifically the balance between the good that they accomplish and the harm that they do. The writer of this article spent several hours reading requests for permits, finding the requests from farmers in widely separated sections of the islands to be similar. We were astonished to find the skylark on the destructive list, yet a farmer in Kohala, Hawaii, wrote that he had been forced to make six successive plantings of lettuce because of the depredations of this species. In a number of instances damage to vegetables and to fruit (plums, figs and persimmons) ranged from an estimated 25 to 50 percent of the crop.

Such situations cannot be minimized or lightly dismissed. And can those of us who were on the recent field trip to the Puuloa rifle range doubt that the flocks of Brazilian cardinals in that area could wreak considerable damage to young crops?

A still more sobering thought comes to us who are vitally concerned with the preservation of the native birds. Recently a committee went through issues of the ELEPAIO from 1939 to the present date, in an effort to find whether exotics have advanced into the forests, and to what degree. We found that there has been a definite encroachment. Leiothrix, almost unknown in Oahu forests in 1939, now may be found on all trails and at all elevations. Mejiros are probably the most numerous birds in the forests. The aggressive North American cardinals extend higher into the forest each year. Unfortunately the exotics appear to be more adaptable than our native birds, which in the past have found it difficult to survive environmental changes. We certainly hope that the native species yet remaining will continue to survive, thus preserving a fragment of Hawaii's unique and interesting avifauna. But if subjected to increasing competition for food, nesting areas, and probably to avian diseases, who can tell what the outcome may be?

A law prohibits importation of all except a few varieties of birds into the United States. The Fish and Wildlife Service, though aware that importations are regarded by most conservationists and naturalists as extremely dangerous and therefore not to be countenanced, has not assumed the problem of exotics in Hawaii, permitting us to import as long as a Territorial law forbids the exportation of any birds from Hawaii to the mainland. Unfortunately such a law was passed in the last session of the legislature, so that now birds may be brought in with the permission of theBoard of Agriculture and Forestry.

This would be entirely harmless, if birds did not bring in new diseases, assume undesirable habits, and would remain out of the forest. Since a change of environment often brings radical changes of habit, even the most thorough study of the birds to be introduced would not insure that they would be desirable when liberated in Hawaii.

The exotics are here, and here to stay. We enjoy their beauty, and their song. But in the light of the problems that they present to agriculture, and the proven danger to our native birds, might it not be well for us to consider whether our heretofore neutral stand on importations is the correct one for us to take?

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BOOK REVIEW:

Among new books: "Days with Birds; Studies of Habits of Some East African Species," By V.G.L. Van Someran: Vol. 38 of Fieldiana: Zoology, 1956 (520 pages)

"It is .. a fine treatment of bird life for the student and the public. Africa is far from us, but related birds are there: the quail, plover, pigeons, owls, white-eyes. It might serve as a model, or a help to someone studying our birds ..."

Margaret Titcomb

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OBSERVATIONS -- By Marie C. Neal

Found in a pheasant's crop, November 1956: two fruits, a flower head, and a bug (of unknown variety). The fruits were kawa'u (Ilex anomala f. sandwicensis), a native Hawaiian holly, a tree; and huehue or hue'ie (Cocculus ferrandianus), a native vine. The flower head was that of a daisy, perhaps Floras paint brush (Emilia sp.), an introduced weed.

FEBRUARY ACTIVITIES:

FIELD TRIPS: February 10 - To Poamoho Trail.
The garrulax has been heard and seen several times lately by groups other than ours.
We will meet at 6:00 a.m. at the Punchbowl Street side of the Library of Hawaii, hoping by this early start to find the birds.

February 24 - To Kawaiiki Trail.
This is a very beautiful, easy trail, with interesting plants along the way, including many bird nest ferns. This is the area in which unusually large elepaio are found, which we would like to study.
Meet at the Punchbowl Street side of the Library of Hawaii at 8:00 a.m.

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MEETING: February 18 - At the Aquarium Auditorium at 7:30 p.m.
Al Stupes will show his motion pictures of Hawaiian birds.

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