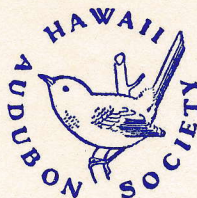


# THE ELEPAIO

Journal of the  
Hawaii Audubon Society



For the Better Protection  
of Wildlife in Hawaii

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## THE NEED FOR BIRD SANCTUARIES ON OAHU

In a recent article entitled "Birds of Oahu: A Visitor's Glimpse," by the renowned ornithologist, Dr. Alfred O. Gross (Bull. Mass. Aud. Soc. 40(9): 475-480, 500, 1956) it is stated that one of the striking features of the bird life of Oahu is the number of extinct birds in proportion to the total number of native species, than any other part of the world regardless of size. This is not a thing to be proud of.

In respect to the forest-birds, perhaps 33 species occurred in the Hawaiian Islands as a whole, when the islands were first visited by ornithologists about 1800. Since that time it appears that 13 species have become extinct, leaving 20 species still existent, although the status of certain of these is very much in doubt. In addition to the forest-birds, we have 3 species of land-birds (the hawk, the crow and the owl) and about 7 species of non-migratory water-birds. This totals about 30 species exclusive of the sea-birds and the migratory shore-birds and waterfowl.

Many of our forest-birds are members of the family Drepaniidae (Hawaiian honeycreepers) which have long been recognized by students of evolution as a classic example of adaptive radiation - meaning many forms from one ancestral type. This family of birds is strictly Hawaiian and occurs nowhere else. Thanks to the Water and Forest Reserves and the Hawaii National Park on Hawaii and Maui, the remaining representatives of this family have an excellent chance for survival if they do not succumb to new avian diseases and parasites brought in with the introduction of exotic birds. This is the main source of danger as long as our forests remain undisturbed.

The sea-birds are essential to the Hawaiian skipjack fishery. The fishermen could not locate the schools of tuna without the aid of the terns, shearwaters and boobies. The local nesting grounds of these birds and their breeding areas in the Leeward Islands, are protected by the Territorial Division of Fish and Game and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

It is the water-birds that are at present in the greatest need of protection - both they and their habitat. Attempts are being made to save the Nene, but there are other species which are also in a precarious position. The Hawaiian duck (Koloa), presently restricted to Kauai, is at a very low level of abundance. The Hawaiian Stilt and Hawaiian Gallinule are endemic subspecies whose survival is endangered by the draining of fresh-water ponds and marsh areas. The former Kaelepulu Pond, near Kailua, is the only location on Oahu where we have found the nests of the stilt in the last several years. The gallinule, according to tradition, was a great benefactor of the Hawaiian people, since it brought to earth the gift of fire.

These species do not now occur on all islands where there is favorable habitat for them. Perhaps they should be trapped in areas where they are now in greatest number or in areas which will be drained in the near future. and transferred to the other islands, in the hope of aiding their survival.



In a recent bulletin of the Honolulu Board of Water Supply we find the statement that Oahu is 44 miles long, 29 miles wide, and has an area of 604 square miles (386,560 acres). About 32 percent (123,700 acres) is reported to be in Forest Reserve. Preservation of the Forest Reserves on Oahu will help to promote the survival of our 3 species of native forest-birds (the Elepaio, Amakihi and Apapane).

According to information obtained from the Territorial Tax Commissioner's office, less than 1 percent (3,190 acres) of Oahu is devoted to fresh and brackish water ponds and marsh lands. Among the largest of the brackish water areas is Kuapa Fish Pond (521 acres), owned by the Bishop Estate. The upper (mauka) end of this pond provides a resting and feeding ground for stilt, coot and migratory ducks and shore-birds. It is probably too exposed and too near habitation, however, to be used by the stilt for nesting. I don't believe we have seen the gallinule here. Kaelepulu Pond (451 acres) also owned by the Bishop Estate and formerly the largest fresh water pond on the island, is now in the process of being drained. Our Society has observed this activity with deep regret, since as previously mentioned, this pond provided the only known nesting sites of the stilt on Oahu, and also was used by hundreds and sometimes thousands of ducks during the winter months.

Other areas on Oahu, important in the conservation of water-fowl, are Nuupia Pond (315 acres) at the Kaneohe Naval Air Base, under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Government, and Salt Lake (239 acres), formerly a part of the Damon Estate but recently sold with the prospective development of its shore line into homesites. In addition to the above open-water areas, there is Kawainui Swamp (665 acres), property of the children of H.K.L. Castle, which is being partially drained and is so badly choked with vegetation that except for providing refuge to a few gallinule it is not of much use to water-fowl. Another such area is Ukoa Pond (107 acres), owned by the Bishop Estate, and presently blocked with aquatic vegetation. Our Society has tried in vain to interest various agencies in clearing the pond and thus make it available both to waterfowl and for fish farming.

Also we should mention Pearl Harbor which, although more salt than fresh, is a protected area and does provide shelter and feeding grounds, particularly in the shallow waters of West Loch, to a large number and variety of water and shore-birds. In addition to these large areas, there are a number of small ponds and "wet spots" which are located for the most part in thickly settled regions and can serve little purpose in the conservation of waterfowl.

There are, therefore, only a few localities on this island that are presently aiding in the conservation of water-fowl, and whether these limited areas can provide the proper habitat and conditions to ensure the survival of our native birds is very doubtful indeed. While our Society cannot and does not wish to prevent the industrial and residential development of Oahu, we would like to encourage the clearing of ponds presently choked with vegetation and the preservation for as long as possible of the few remaining wild pond and marsh areas. We believe the native fauna is deserving of consideration along with archeological sites and other things Hawaiian.

Joseph E. King  
January 22, 1957

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#### WATERFOWL REFUGES ON MAUI By Joseph S. Medeiros

On Maui, as well as in the Territory as a whole, standing water is a must for our migrating waterfowl. Food also plays an important part in determining whether ducks and geese will spend their winters here, or perhaps, continue south to areas that are more suitable.



Drainage of water areas on the national scale is continuing at an unprecedented rate. The hunter because he sees his sport adversely affected, and the lover of wildlife, who eagerly awaits the arrival of the first pintail or plover, are disturbed over the fact that humanity is destroying necessary waterfowl habitat.

Yet, it is difficult for a sub-divider to appreciate the aesthetic values that are attributable to wildlife, or the seemingly intangible income realized from the sport of hunting, when he envisions the possibility of a healthy profit resulting from the filling of what appears to be marginal land in order to provide home sites for our growing population. The farmer, too, sees the possibility of eking a living from what he terms "waste land."

Oahu, because of its limited lands and high population, is faced with this problem of drainage more than the neighbor islands.

Fortunately, on Maui the pressure for land is not felt to any great degree. There has, however, been some sentiment raised by the public for the drainage of the ponds within the Kanaha Waterfowl Refuge. Such sentiment is heard during periods when decomposing plant and animal life releases what is commonly called "marsh gas." These periods seldom occur, and when they do, the odor usually disappears before too much opposition is organized. On the other hand, at the Kealia Waterfowl Refuge the predominant trade-winds whip up the dried surface and carry a cloud of silt that is deposited upon the kihei community. The residents prefer to see the area filled with water so as to create a permanent type of pond.

The Kanaha Waterfowl Refuge encloses several permanent bodies of water which support a fluctuating waterfowl population. The population is high before the winter rains envelop the Territory. When this occurs, the Kealia area is filled up and the light use of irrigation water allows the reservoirs to remain at a high water level. The majority of the waterfowl are then attracted to these areas. The Kanaha area serves as the principal area for wintering shovellers in the Territory and it also supports a considerable number of the pintail population. It has accommodated up to 3,000 birds a wintering season.

When filled, the Kealia area attracts most of the waterfowl on the island. The various reservoirs play an important part only before the Kealia area fills up, or during periods of an unusually high migration. But waterfowl by nature are curious, for during rainy periods, ducks have been observed trying to alight on the Kahului airport runways, only to find the water an inch or two in depth.

Are the areas aforementioned sufficient? I believe that they are enough to take care of the birds that do come this way. Do we have enough refuges? The answer again is yes, for both the Kanaha and Kealia areas have been declared refuges by the Board of Commissioners of Agriculture and Forestry. The plantation reservoirs are semi-refuges, for all of them are posted and guarded against hunting.

It is because of this protection or the "Maui No Ka Oe" spirit that the majority of the Territory's waterfowl winter on the Island of Maui.

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#### POSSIBLE SANCTUARY SITES ON HAWAII

By Helen S. Baldwin

(Ed.note: The following information is from a letter written by Mrs. Baldwin)

... The question of a waterfowl sanctuary on this island is a difficult one to answer ... After talking to several people, among them Albert McKenzie, Dick Cartwright, Stephen Ho and Dick Northwood, we have come up with some suggestions.



Presumably any such sanctuary would have to be on Territorial land and set aside for that purpose by the Legislature, or be on private land, such as Bishop Estate, and the owner thoroughly convinced of its value for that purpose.

Stephen Ho was quite insistent that the sanctuary be placed in some accessible region so people could visit it, otherwise public support would soon fade away and maintaining and policing it be difficult.

Easily accessible places are few in number. The main ones are: - (1) the ponds in Keaukaha, Hilo, whose shores are leased or owned by several persons; (2) the ponds near Punaluu in Kau and similar ones near Honuapo, the latter leased or owned by the Hawaii Agricultural Co. and fishing rights held by a Japanese; Pololu valley in Kohala; (3) some part of Waipio valley; (4) marshlands above Puu O-o leased or owned by Parker Ranch. All the other places are either too small or so remote that very few people, other than hunters or folks like the Elders would ever go there. Some are in water reservations and closed to the public; these are sanctuaries in fact if not in law already.

Nowhere do we have the congregation of waterfowl that Kanaha Ponds on Maui have. This year barely half dozen ducks came to the Keaukaha ponds, though some years there may be a hundred or more. During the summer months, in fact over half the year, birds would be so conspicuously absent from these ponds that the average person would see no sense in calling it a sanctuary.

The one place most of those to whom I have talked recommend is Waipio Valley. Most of this land now belongs to the Bishop Estate, I understand. Certainly you are surer of seeing birds there any time of year. Nowhere in the lowlands of this island have I seen the quantity and variety of wild birds, mostly not waterfowl, however, as there are in Waipio Valley.

Waipio has its drawbacks. It is not very accessible, though a "truck trail" negotiated usually on foot or mule back leads into it. I went down by jeep and am still in one piece. More remarkable still, the jeep still ran after the trip.

Waipio is wet, very wet. When the mists don't fall, the wind blows. Waipio is for people who like their hiking, horseback riding and camping very primitive. For them it is a 7th heaven, wild, rugged; sad in its human history; deceptively gentle and placid in its taro-field lowlands; majestic in its scenic canyon walls (there is a waterfall which drops, so I am told, over 1300 feet in one sheer mist-blown plunge through ferns. See that and you'll forget to look at birds).

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#### POSSIBLE SANCTUARY SITES ON KAUAI By Richard E. Fuller

(Ed. Note: This information is taken from a letter from Richard E. Fuller of the Board of Agriculture and Forestry.)

In recent years (this season included) there have been very few migratory waterfowl coming to Kauai. Perhaps the reason for this is the lack of any suitable sanctuary or habitat. We do have many reservoirs here, but their water level fluctuates a great deal and I doubt if they can provide any food for waterfowl. I believe they are all privately owned and used mainly for irrigation.

Many years ago there was a large swamp at Mana and the old timers tell me that the Mainland ducks came there in large numbers. This area has been drained and is now planted to cane.

There is one small area that might be obtained and with some effort could be made into a waterfowl sanctuary. It is located near Hanapepe and known as the Hanapepe



Salt Pond. It is dry in the summer, but perhaps something could be done about that. I'm not sure.

Another possibility might be the Koloa reservoir, which is quite large but would need to have some mud flats and shallow areas created.

Koloa reservoir is privately owned by Grove Farm Co., Ltd. The Hanapepe Pond area is on Territorial land.

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JOHN d'ARCY NORTHWOOD  
By Olive M. Northwood

John d'arcy Northwood was born in Wolverhampton, England, and attended King Edward's School, Birmingham. From childhood he was interested in bird watching and at the age of 14 had some observations of bird behavior published by the British Naturalists Association.

World War I interrupted his education and at 17 he enlisted in the British Army and served in the trenches in France. He later transferred to the Royal Flying Corps, was trained as a pilot and at 21 attained the rank of captain and flight commander. In 1918 he took part in the defense of London against night-flying Gothas. He recalls when flying over Ypres seeing a flock of lapwings on migration at 6,000 feet.

After the war he spent three years in South Wales studying metallurgy in a steel works near Swansea. Every spare moment was spent along the beaches and cliffs of the Gower Coast, which were inhabited by new and exciting birds. Their activities, and those of the red kite in central Wales, were meticulously recorded and the nests of peregrine falcons and ravens were photographed. Early photographic equipment was cumbersome and cliff climbing required some acrobatic skills. Caves containing evidences of prehistoric man and other animals were explored and excavated, some of the discoveries were of interest to scientists and the findings were published by the Royal Institution of South Wales.

Following World War I there were private and governmental groups interested in exploring the possibilities of global air routes. d'Arcy joined one of these expeditions which opened up new lands and new birds as the ship proceeded through the West Indies to Panama, Manzanillo, Acapulco and finally to San Pedro. There were many opportunities for young men to see the world starting from the busy ports of California. Aboard tankers and cargo ships trips were made to Honolulu and down the west coast of South America, through Magellan Straits to Buenos Aires. For the first time he saw birds of the southern oceans - the wandering albatross in the South Pacific and diving petrels in Magellan Straits. The story of the observations of birds on these trips may be told when there is time to review and edit the voluminous diaries kept during the voyages.

In 1924 after several trips to Hawaii he decided to settle there and later became an American citizen. For the next twenty years he was with Ewa Plantation Company and Matson Navigation Company. There were new birds to see and trails to explore on Oahu, Kauai, and Hawaii.

In 1939 a group of people with similar interests was brought together by Charles Dunn and formed the Honolulu Audubon Society. d'Arcy was elected the first president. A journal, "The Elepaio", was published every month, bird walks and meetings were held regularly. Observing and recording information about the island birds led to organizing the material for a book, Familiar Hawaiian Birds. Its publication in 1940 was sponsored by the Hui Manu, a group interested in introducing exotic birds to the islands to replace the vanished native bird life.



The collecting of books, mostly relating to natural science, which had always been a hobby now grew apace. Bird books acquired at this time included Rothschild's Avifauna of Laysan and Wilson's Birds of the Sandwich Islands.

In 1941 a home was built in Woodlawn and the decision was made there to change an absorbing interest and hobby into an occupation. The National Audubon Society needed a representative and warden for their sanctuary in Okeechobee, Florida. This large expanse of lake and prairie included a federal refuge for Florida cranes. Two years were spent there before going to Cornell University as a special student with Dr. Arthur A. Allen. That was a stimulating year and what had been primarily an interest in birds expanded to include other animals, plants, conservation and nature education.

At about that time the New Jersey Audubon Society was developing a program including educational activities in schools, better protection for migrating birds in Cape May County and more field trips to the varied habitats in that region. d'Arcy became secretary-treasurer of the society, the membership was increased and a notable accomplishment was the purchase and establishment of Bennett Bog as a sanctuary. This area near Cape May contains many unusual plants, such as the snowy orchid and sclerolepis. As president of the Newark Museum Nature Club and the Montclair Bird Club there were many opportunities to interest groups in conservation. A considerable number of persons were introduced to the wonders of the outdoors through nature courses offered at the Adult School. Color photography brought to indoor audiences the beauty of the flowers and birds.

In addition to stories in newspapers, articles were published in "Audubon Magazine", "Nature Magazine", "Atlantic Naturalist" and in the "Journals" of the British Naturalists' Association and of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

In 1953 d'Arcy was appointed curator of Mill Grove, the first home in America of John James Audubon. That meant a move to Audubon, Pennsylvania. The beautiful old ivy-covered mansion is maintained as a memorial and contains a number of Audubon's elephant folio prints, his large oil painting, "The Eagle and the Lamb", and some fine murals recently completed depicting the journeys and historic episodes in the life of the first artist to show American birds life size and in their natural surroundings. The Perkiomen Creek and 120 acres of meadow, orchard and woodland provide nature trails and an ideal environment for nature education. Old lead and copper mines yield interesting and rare specimens for mineralogists. School children, teachers, scouts, garden and civic clubs come in increasing numbers to see, to enjoy and to learn.

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#### FIELD NOTES:

Bird Walk, January 13, 1957

This was a trip to check on waterfowl and inasmuch as the tide was low our first stop was at West Loch where the count was as follows:

Black-crowned Night Heron.	5	Pintail.....	3
Coot.....	18	Shoveller.....	19
Stilt.....	450	Pacific Golden Plover.....	53
		Black-bellied Plover.....	1
White-eye.....	3	Sanderling.....	1
		Turnstone.....	1

At the Haleiwa stop we saw 2 gallinule.

Our count at Kahuku was a disappointment inasmuch as the pond area was completely dry and so were the fields. A flock of 16 pintail flew over the dried pond and then sought another landing field. We knew just how they felt.



The count here was:

Coot.....	15	Pintail.....	16
Ricebird.....	40	Pacific Golden Plover.	105
Skylark.....	1	Sanderling.....	6
White-eye.....	2	Wandering Tattler.....	4
		Turnstone.....	12

At Kahana Bay we sighted 3 gallinule. Total gallinule for the trip - 5.

The trippers numbered 10 including 1 nine year old boy. The Doctor from Canada and the retired professor from California each added 2 species to their Life Lists.

Ruth R. Rockafellow

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Field Trip to Poamoha Trail, February 10, 1947

Earlier than the traditional early bird, seven Audubon members met at six o'clock February 10th, to set out for Poamoho Trail. The early start happily got us up into the apapane country early enough to catch the first flutter and song of the active birds of the forest. Surprisingly, the trail was much drier than we anticipated, and with an assist from a jeep and its able driver we were soon on the trail. The day was alternately cloudy and sunny, and the early hours were not particularly suited for birding with binoculars. Instead, we listened to the symphony of sound of birds feeding on the paper bark eucalyptus bloom. "The apapane is certainly holding its own," declared Miss Hatch, as she totted up the bird count. We listened in vain for the garrulax, for its song had been reported on this trail. But bush warblers and amakihi we heard, and a saucy elepaio came down to investigate the visitors.

The lush beauty of the vegetation, and the lure of the trail ahead was too much for us - we decided to try for the summit. A landslide and a fallen tree or two to crawl around and under, an overgrown trail in places, a slippery and muddy one in other places - all added a little spice to the adventure. Suddenly it was almost noon, and we were on the wind-whipped summit and below us the white surf curled in Kahana Bay. Two Chinese doves surprised us, almost at the summit, and after lunch a single iiwi was seen, clearly and distinctly. Back we went to the waiting jeep; since early morning we had seen no sign nor sound nor sight of human habitation, except for the brief glimpse of the shoreline villages far below us at noon. But we had seen another side of crowded Oahu - a mountain wilderness solitude where bright birds abound. And as we drove down through the fallow fields above the pineapple plantings, we caught a skylark's song.

The count was as follows:

Amakihi.....	12	Chinese Spotted Dove.....	4
Apapane.....	110	Leiiothrix.....	12
Elepaio.....	2	Skylark.....	1
Iiwi.....	1	Bush Warbler.....	4
		White-eye.....	14

Lucille C. MacClellan  
2/13/57

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On the Makapuu-Tom Tom hike with the Hawaiian Trail & Mountain Club on February tenth 12 white-tailed tropic birds were seen flying around Marconi Pass, where the Tom Tom trail begins. This is roughly opposite Waimanalo Beach Park.



While swimming at the beach after the hike two red-footed boobies were seen flying just above the water a few yards from shore.

Al Labrecque  
2/10/57

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FROM THE MAIL BAG:

Message on a Christmas card from Richard Kleen - excerpt

"Your new birding area (Puuloa) sounds great - I'm sorry I missed the curlew when I was on Oahu. Perhaps some day I'll get another chance. The Wilsons have echoed praises of Hawaii from one corner of the state to the other. They are causing all eyes to turn longingly Westward. Things are fine here (St. Michaels, Maryland). Our county chalked up 224 species this year which ties our high. Had a Christmas count on the 29th. 30 mph winds and 30 degree temperatures. Only 86 species but 4 Baltimore Orioles, 1 Wilson's Warbler and 1 Chat. My best to everyone."

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IN MEMORIAM

Our long-time member, Bernice Kuhns, died on February 1st. We have lost a good friend, and a staunch supporter of our Society and our aims. Interested in all nature, a great lover of flowers, plants, and seeds, as well as of birds, her influence for conservation has gone further than anyone can know, for she also loved the children to whom she devoted her life, and led them into an appreciation of the out-of-doors. She was ever ready to give herself and her energy to the causes in which she believed, and to those who needed her. She will be sorely missed, and long remembered with deep affection.

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MARCH ACTIVITIES:

FIELD TRIPS: March 10 - Waikane Ditch Trail, guided by Mr. and Mrs. Tom McGuire. On this beautiful trail, which we haven't hiked for some time, we will see an interesting variety of native vegetation, and investigate some strange bird calls heard there recently by Mr. McGuire.

March 24 - To check on shore birds on Salt Lake, Keehi lagoon, West Loch and Puuloa Rifle Range, near Ewa.

For both trips, meet at the Punchbowl side of the Library of Hawaii at 8:00 a.m.

MEETING: March 18 - At the Aquarium Auditorium at 7:30 p.m. Mr. Charles McWayne will show his slides of Midway birds. This program originally was scheduled for January, but postponed because of the storm.

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