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HONOLULU CHRISTMAS COUNT December 21, 1958

	AREAS												TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Black-footed Albatross	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	2
Blue-faced Booby	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
Brown Booby	.	20	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	20
Red-footed Booby	460	1100	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1560
Great Frigate Bird	725	.	.	.	.	1	2	.	.	.	.	.	728
Black-cr Night Heron	.	1	2	.	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	4
Pintail	.	.	350	.	.	30	.	.	.	.	.	58	438
Am Widgeon (Baldpate)	9	9
Shoveler	.	.	42	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	42
Duck, Unidentified	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	2
American Coot	.	.	200	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	(2002)	(2202)
American Golden Plover	.	78	44	.	.	15	15	.	41	.	61	6	260
Ruddy Turnstone	.	31	35	.	.	18	.	.	.	.	2	.	86
Wandering Tattler	.	3	.	.	.	5	.	.	.	.	3	.	11
Sanderling	.	.	2	.	.	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	4
Hawaiian Stilt	.	27	58	.	.	35	.	.	.	.	.	4	124
Pomarine Jaeger	10	.	10
Rock Dove	3	.	3
Spotted Dove	.	7	.	3	28	.	8	2	3	.	17	13	81
Barred Dove	.	60	23	4	87	7	28	4	31	6	21	5	276
Japanese Varied Tit	3	.	.	3
Red-billed Leiothrix	.	.	.	37	23	.	.	49	.	54	.	.	163
Mockingbird	2	.	.	.	2
Shama Thrush	.	.	.	6	3	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	9
Elepsio	.	.	.	2	.	.	.	35	.	26	.	.	63
Mynah	.	17	47	2	179	1	3	.	35	.	14	13	311
White-eye	.	3	.	19	7	.	1	42	.	52	6	.	130
Amakihi	.	.	.	2	.	.	.	32	.	54	.	.	88
Hawaiian Creeper	1	.	.	1
Apapane	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	32	.	33	.	.	66
Ricebird	.	150	94	2	5	.	4	.	35	16	.	.	306
House Sparrow	.	51	60	.	38	2	.	.	134	.	14	12	311
Cardinal (North Amer)	.	12	1	11	1	.	15	18	.	11	2	.	71
Brazilian Cardinal	.	4	.	.	2	.	3	.	.	.	.	.	9
House Finch	.	7	.	.	.	.	34	3	1	15	1	.	61
TOTALS	1186	1571	958	89	373	121	113	217	282	271	154	(2122)	(7457)
Nr. of Species:	3	16	13	11	10	13*	10	9	8	11	12	9	35*

()--Estimated

*----Unidentified duck included.

Honolulu Christmas Count, December 21, 1958 - Continued

AREAS	1-3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	TOTAL
Hours on foot:	-	2'33"	38"	1'56"	1'00"	4'00"	-	5'00"	-	-	15'07"
Hours by car:	-	-	1'00"	-	1'02"	-	40"	-	1'00"	2'15"	5'57"
Miles on foot:	-	1.2	1	.7	1.5	2	-	5	-	-	11.4
Miles by car:	-	-	12	-	5.5	-	2	-	6	4	29.5

Same general area and coverage as the last four years. 6:15 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; clear scattered clouds; temp. 62° to 80°; variable wind-calm to 15 mph. Fourteen observers in four parties.

The following areas (as listed on front page) were covered in this year's count:

- Group A: Areas: 1) Moku Manu (Through telescope from Ulupau Head)
 2) Ulupau Head, Kaneohe Peninsula and Ponds
 3) Kaelepulu Pond and Kailua
- B: 4) Manoa Falls
 5) Residential Areas (Manoa, Kaimuki, and St. Louis Heights)
 6) Kuliouou Beach Area, Kuapa Pond
 7) Bellows Field
- C: 5) Residential Areas (Nuuanu)
 8) Tantalus Trail
 9) Punchbowl Memorial Cemetery
- D: 10) Aiea Trail
 11) Sand Island
 12) Damon Pond and Salt Lake (Through telescope)

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THE 1958 CHRISTMAS COUNT
 Compiled from the reports of each group

Group A: Areas 1-3: Moku Manu, Ulupau, Kaelepulu

As our party approached Ulupau Head just at sunrise, we found a great number of Red-footed Boobies aboard this U.S. Marine - protected colony. The view of the colorful sea and rugged shoreline was as inspiring and refreshing as ever. Moku Manu Island, one-fourth mile offshore, displayed her complements of Boobies and Frigate-birds, plus one Blue-faced Booby.

It was with a feeling of sadness that we saw the Kaelepulu Pond area already in the process of excavation for the planned housing development. The water was high, and ducks were there in force - chiefly the Pintails. -- Al Stoops, recorder; Larry Davidson, Carol Horning, Hal Horning, Bob Miller.

Group B: Areas 4-7: Manoa Falls, Residential Areas (Manoa, Kaimuki, and St. Louis Heights), Kuliouou Beach, Kuapa Pond, Bellows Field

In common with past years we heard the exciting and unmistakable song of the Shama Thrush on the Manoa Falls Trail before sunrise, but did not catch a glimpse of the birds. Apapane and Amakihi were much less in evidence than a year ago, perhaps because there were no trees in flower on this occasion. Also the virtual absence of Elepaio was particularly noticeable.

The Kuliouou Beach area yielded the usual shore birds but no rarities. By looking offshore with the telescope, however, we sighted 2 Black-footed Albatross, which may have been attracted inshore by the number of fishing boats in the area.

At Kuapa Pond Pintail were numerous and there were also a few Shoveler (outside our area, however). We found a single pair of ducks which by the rusty color of the breast and dark area in the tail were probably American Widgeon, but they sat quietly with head under a wing and did not give us a full view.

Bellows Field was a disappointment in that once again we failed to see or hear the Chinese Thrush, and we were saddened to find that the vegetation had been cleared from the canal where we invariably find Gallinule. The birds were gone. -- Margaret Titcombe, recorder; Joseph E. King, Blanche A. Pedley.

Group C: Areas: 5 (in part), 8 and 9: Residential Areas (Nuuanu), Tantalus Trail, Punchbowl Memorial Cemetery

This year we began our count at 6:45 on Tantalus, with the thermometer standing at 62°, and virtually no wind blowing. The birds were just beginning to stir. Within five minutes we heard Elepaio, Leiothrix, and White-eye. We were greatly surprised to hear Amakihi and Apapane within half a mile of the beginning of the trail. This was the more remarkable since there were no blossoming trees other than an occasional ohia in very poor bloom. The birds frequented the Albizzia, but we could not determine what the attraction was. The few remaining flowers on the Melaleuca and Eucalyptus grove still attracted a number of birds. We were disappointed not to hear the Shama in the bamboo thickets where we have been accustomed to find it.

The Guard home in upper Nuuanu yielded a large count of Leiothrix, Doves and White-eyes. We searched for the Shama in vain, but accepted Mr. Guard's count of two which had been close to the house in the early morning. On the old Pali Road we heard a Shama at some distance, but were unable to coax it nearer.

The lawns at Punchbowl Cemetery were covered with House Sparrows, some Ricebirds and Plover. We drove slowly, counting section by section. The cemetery also provided the Mockingbird count. One of these was feeding on the ground, his long, white-edged tail catching the sharp eye of Mary Riggs. -- Grenville Hatch, recorder; Al Labrecque, Mary E. Riggs.

Group D: Areas: 10-12: Aiea Trail, Sand Island, Damon Pond, Salt Lake

Aiea Trail: On arriving on the trail at 6:45 little bird life was to be noted, however, we did witness the en masse awakening of the Leiothrix early on the trail and were greatly surprised to find our one and only Creeper. We were greatly disturbed at the absence of food for the Apapane, hence our low count. We had heard shooting and later discovered some 24 shotgun shells which were not on the trail when we started our count. Much litter and damage to flora was noted. Such Apapane as we did find thrilled us with a variety of calls.

The observers suggest working backward on this trail inasmuch as the blossoming trees are near the summit.

Damon Pond: This area is now a complete mass of mangrove; upon suggestion we tried another entry but were informed we needed a pass -- results of the count here do not warrant a pass and the observers suggest the abandonment of this area insofar as the annual count is concerned.

Salt Lake: Here we drove to the peninsula and found picnic parties as well as coots aplenty. Dr. Udvardy's scope is a dandy but not quite strong enough to identify positively the ducks seen. We passed out of the circle to make the definite identification.

Sand Island: It was low tide so the Pomarine Jaegers were feeding far out, though visible with the scope. Here too many people were enjoying various kinds of water sport -- the area is very worthwhile.

In all instances an early A.m. visit would be recommended. The birding companions were delightful and I thank them sincerely. -- Ruth R. Rockafellow, recorder; Unoyo Kojima, Miklos Udvardy.

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GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

The 1958 Christmas count, our 17th, seems to be largely remarkable for being unremarkable. Only one "first" was recorded, the Blue-faced Booby, which has been reported before from Oahu, but never on a Christmas count. The only other unusual record was the coot count of 2,202, largest of any year.

The total number of individuals, 7,457, almost reached our peak year of 1954, when 7,485 were counted. The unusually large number of Coot, Boobies and Frigate-birds is largely responsible for this figure.

The total number of species was disappointing. We had hoped to better our last year's high point of 39, but only 34 were recorded. This may have been due in part to the beautiful weather, which made our day a delightful one, but which had blown in no stragglers. However, this is not the whole story. Extensive draining and clearing have destroyed habitat for Gallinule and Pheasant, and doubtless also for Chinese Thrush and the Short-eared Owl, among others. This trend, unfortunately, will probably continue, with greater reduction in numbers, as well as in species, of many birds.

The Shama and the Japanese Varied Tit are definitely increasing, as is clearly shown by the count, and borne out by our daily observations. The relative abundance of the native passerines is not so clear. When large numbers of Apapane and Amakihi have been seen, the count day has coincided with the peak of the flowering of ohia or melaleuca. This year the season had already passed, with a consequent drop in our figures. One does wonder, though, whether the report of Creepers annually for the last four years is indicative of a slight increase in this rare species. If so, that is good indeed. The absence of Iiwi on our last counts has no significance, as I can find no record of Iiwi ever having been seen on Aiea trail. The last Iiwi on our count were seen in 1952, when Kipapa trail was included in the 15 mile circle.

Our greatest handicap, it seems to this participant, is lack of personnel. We need more ground covered in the early morning; more Mynahs included to make a balanced report; more areas covered where we might find the Chinese Thrush, the Owl, perhaps even the Orange-breasted Bunting!

Grenville Hatch

HONOLULU CHRISTMAS COUNTS

1949 - 1958

	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958
Black-footed Albatross	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	2	2	2
Laysan Albatross	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	3	.	.
White-tailed Tropic-bird	.	.	.	.	.	2	.	.	.	.
Blue-faced Booby	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
Brown Booby	4	7	.	.	5	9	33	6	66	20
Red-footed Booby	387	811	628	215	450	880	1150	1000	1230	1560
Great Frigate -bird	82	1	2	32	14	21	86	35	241	728
Black-crowned Night Heron	7	3	2	.	.	3	4	2	4	4
Black Brant	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Pintail	815	278	336	296	58	795	256	329	81	438
American Widgeon (Baldpate)	.	.	.	.	.	2	.	2	11	9
European Widgeon	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	4	.
Shoveler	.	.	.	2	.	200	.	87	60	42
California Quail	.	.	.	.	.	10	.	.	.	.
Ring-necked Pheasant	.	.	1	.	.	2	7	3	2	.
Common Gallinule	.	.	.	5	3	4	4	3	4	.
American Coot	641	652	17	153	30	449	224	245	1138	2202
American Golden Plover	196	219	125	82	67	396	366	228	177	260
Black-bellied Plover	.	.	.	.	1	1	.	.	4	.
Bristle-thighed Curlew	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Ruddy Turnstone	116	141	9	47	66	196	208	115	110	86
Wandering Tattler	22	25	1	8	9	17	24	15	8	11
Sanderling	15	.	3	3	26	30	36	41	26	4
Hawaiian Stilt	86	31	66	69	28	12	24	211	24	124
Pomarine Jaeger	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	7	17	10
Bonaparte Gull	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	.
Least Tern	.	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	.	.
Noddy Tern	.	.	.	.	.	1	.	.	12	.
Hawaiian Noddy Tern	11	.	2	6	1	.	16	4	.	.
Greater Yellow-legs	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	.
Rock Dove	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	3
Spotted Dove	203	272	46	73	32	352	195	141	59	81
Barred Dove	263	201	236	166	136	1033	614	216	218	276
Hawaiian Short-eared Owl	2	.	.	1	.	1	1	.	.	.
Skylark	.	.	2	.	.	.	6	.	.	.
Japanese Varied Tit	.	.	.	.	.	.	4	2	1	3
Red-billed Leiothrix	6	20	.	20	2	83	462	150	72	163
Chinese Thrush	.	5	.	.	.	.	5	.	.	.
Mockingbird	1	.	7	.	.	.	.	.	2	2
Shama Thrush	.	.	.	.	.	6	10	4	6	9
Elepaio	6	9	.	12	.	27	74	25	10	63
Mynah	291	520	241	150	114	1587	640	331	245	311
White-eye	30	39	6	37	7	209	402	221	102	130
Amakihi	2	.	.	.	.	27	102	77	24	88
Hawaiian Creeper	.	.	.	.	.	.	3	2	1	1
Apapane	.	2	.	.	.	33	159	506	241	66
Ricebird	136	233	260	279	119	281	421	176	178	306
House Sparrow	289	293	119	79	140	564	381	109	96	311
Cardinal (North American)	42	93	53	71	35	115	212	72	22	71
Brazilian Cardinal	11	16	19	13	11	51	94	29	8	9
House Finch	39	10	13	3	11	86	91	101	57	61
Nr. of Species	28#	23#	23#	24#	24#	34	34	35	39	34
Individuals	3705	4032*	2194	2728*	1366	7485	6315	4500	4565	7457*
Observers	15	13	15	8	9	21	22	18	12	14

#Poamoho totals not included. *Unidentified waterfowl included: 1950-151, 1952-906, 1958-2.

HERRING GULLS SIGHTED ON HAWAII

By William W. Dunmire

Park Naturalist, Haw. Nat. Park

While camped overnight at Hapuna Beach on Kawaihae Bay (northwest coast of the Big Isle) over the Thanksgiving holiday, my wife and I noticed a pair of gulls fly in over the beach, land on the sand, and take off again shortly. This did not particularly excite us at first, since we are quite new to the islands, coming from California where gulls of several species are common. However, after a quick glance through the checklist, we realized that gulls of any sort are accidental over here. It was then past sundown, so we had little opportunity to pursue the birds.

Happily, next day just after noon the gulls returned, landing up the beach from us. One was a first year bird and the other an adult in winter plumage.

With glasses we got a clear look at the adult with its grey mantle tipped with white mirrored on the black primaries. A moderately heavy bill with a red spot on the lower mandible is diagnostic, and the pink legs and feet coupled with the above were conclusive to us: this was a Herring Gull (Larus argentatus). Dusky neck feathers on the otherwise immaculate white plumage indicated that the winter moult had already begun. The first year bird (these are always difficult to positively identify) was of a uniform grey-brown color with a heavy black bill and pink legs and feet. Since the two were identical in size, I judge that both were Herrings.

For about twenty minutes the birds stood quietly side by side on the sand just beyond reach of the water. Occasionally a large wave would cause a retreat upslope. Three times the younger gull snatched some small object from the edge of the surf; we could not tell what it was feeding on, but crabs seem likely. The adult remained motionless except for an occasional blink of its eyes. Finally the pair took to the air and flew out of sight down the coast.

Herring Gulls are listed as chance arrivals on Laysan in Byran's (1958) checklist, and two possible records for Oahu in 1943 and 1957 have been cited in The Elepaio. Apparently they have not been recorded as far south as Hawaii.

Early storms this year sweeping southward from their Aleutian centers may have caused the birds to deviate seaward from their normal fall migration down the west coast of the mainland from Alaska. Storms are known to upset navigation in birds. It would certainly be valuable to learn whether birds such as these can ever return to their former haunts or whether they are doomed to perish on the islands. It seems doubtful that the gulls could ever adapt to this completely strange environment, yet it is even less likely that they could navigate back across the ocean.

FIELD NOTES:

Field Trip, January 11, 1959, to Manoa Cliff and Pauoa Flats.

A party of 10 persons enjoyed a pleasant 4 to 5 mile walk over the Manoa Cliff Trail, including a side trip to Pauoa Flats and to the Nuuanu Valley lookout. The weather was fine, although a little humid. There was no rain but considerable cloud cover and a heavy haze made things difficult for the photographer.

While parking one of our cars at the end of the trail so we would not have to walk the highway between the beginning and end of the trail, we heard what was first thought to be a crying puppy, but was later identified as a Shama Thrush singing in the wooded area below the road.¹ Since it is recognized that these birds are great mimics it would be interesting to know if there is a puppy in the neighborhood.

1. Frank and Elizabeth Stephenson, lingering behind the group, later reported that they saw the bird clearly, that it was black and white, almost certainly the Dyal, or

Magpie Robin (*Copsychus saularis*). -----

Elepaio, Leiothrix and White-eye were heard and seen all along the trail; Amakihi were heard frequently and a few were observed in bright yellow plumage. About midway on the trail and at Pauoa Flats, Apapane were found in fair numbers. As part of their vocalizing they included a very fine warbler or vireo-like song which some of us had not previously associated with the Apapane.

While eating lunch at the lookout over Nuuanu Valley we were entertained by a view of a White-tailed Tropic-bird against the far mountainside, the song of Apapane and Amakihi in the background and we obtained a good look at a blood-red Apapane and a yellow Amakihi as they flew by at close range.

Twice on the Pauoa Flats area we were led off the trail and into the forest by the tantalizing song of the Shama, but failed to obtain more than a fleeting glimpse of the bird. When we reached the end of the trail, where we had earlier in the morning parked one of our cars, we again heard the Shama, probably the same bird sighted earlier in the day.

Along the way we noticed blossoms on some of the Koa trees, but none on the Ohia or Melaleuca.

The count for the day, supplemented with what others reported, amounted to the following:

Amakihi	15	House Finch	2
Apapane	12	Red-billed Leiothrix	23
Elepaio	16	Ricebird	4
North American Cardinal ...	10	Shama Thrush	2
Barred Dove	4	White-tailed Tropic-bird	1
Spotted Dove	2	White-eye	29

Joseph E. King

FEBRUARY ACTIVITIES:

FIELD TRIPS: CHUCK HANSON WILL LEAD FEBRUARY TRIPS.

February 8 - To Kalena. We had wonderful success here last time, and look forward to seeing many native birds.

February 22- A shore bird trip, going around Koko Head, stopping at Kuliouou Beach, Bellows Field, Kaelepulu and the Kaneohe Marine Air Base.

Meet at the Library of Hawaii at 7:00 a.m. for each trip.

MEETING: February 16- At the Waikiki-Kapahulu Branch of the Library of Hawaii, at 7:30 p.m. (Please note the change in place of meeting)
Two colored films will be shown: "Behind the Flyways" and "Honkers Prepaid". Both are put out by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and have good information on the waterfowl, as well as being beautiful pictures.

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