T H E E L E P A I O

Honolulu Audubon Society

Honolulu, Hawaii.

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A RESOLUTION
passed by the Honolulu Audubon Society
at a meeting held June 9th 1941

WHEREAS, the provisions of Act 197 protecting certain birds expire June 30th 1941 and were not renewed by the last Legislature; and

WHEREAS, the non-migratory species protected by this Act, including the stilt, mudhen and coot, Hawaiian hawk and Hawaiian owl, are exceedingly localized and nearing extinction; are strictly Hawaiian, being found nowhere else in the world; are, in the case of the stilt(of which approximately only 200 individuals exist) definitely beneficial to man in its food habits, since it eats beetle larvae which attack the food of the mullet in fish ponds; and

WHEREAS, the migratory species protected by this Act, including the plover (kolea), turnstone (akekeke), tattler (ulili), sanderling (hunakai), and certain ducks, including the pintail, shoveller and mallard, rear only one brood a year, their natural increase, which has to withstand the odds of their long biannual migration to and from Hawaii, cannot repair the depletion caused by shooting in these Islands, and they are much reduced from their numbers of former years; and

WHEREAS, the plover, turnstone and related species are not only of great value to agriculture through the quantities of noxious insects they destroy but are also not known to be harmful to man in any way; and

WHEREAS, these migratory birds are completely protected in Alaska, Canada, the United States and Mexico by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, which Act, in the opinion of the Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service of the Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. applies to Hawaii; and

WHEREAS, since Hawaii is an integral part of the United States, it would be unwise to ignore federal and international legislation protecting these birds; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that this Society hereby requests the Commissioners of the Board of Agriculture and Forestry to reduce to a minimum the open seasons allowed on any of the birds above mentioned.

The Ao, Newell's Puffin
By George C. Munro

The Ao, Newell's Puffin (Puffinus newelli) is one of the least known of the Hawaiian seabirds or of species of the Petrel Order in Hawaii. Yet it must have been a well known bird to the ancient Hawaiians.

Mr. Francis Gay must have been well acquainted with it as on March 10, 1891 he informed me that the Ao laid its eggs "in May and June in holes in the earth near the sea". Also on April 15, of the same year Mr. W.E.H. Deverill at Hanalei, Kauai gathered from old natives the names of some Hawaiian birds which he passed on to me. One of them was the Ao which he described as "a black and white petrel the size of a mudhen". Of course at that time I knew little about Hawaiian seabirds. On the return of the Rothschild expedition from Midway in August 1891 after I had accumulated some experience of the seabirds, I had my first introduction to this species when approaching Kauai. On August 14 I noted in my journal: "A petrel that we have not sighted before was seen yesterday. It had been noticed some days before but we were not certain that it was not the white-breasted petrel. It differs in being shorter and stouter in proportion, a little larger, darker on the back, with no white on the forehead. A distinguishing feature is the pure white breast with the white coming round the sides of the neck and in front of the tail. This shows as a white spot near each end of the bird's body as it is dipping sideways and turning its breast away from the observer". The sharp line of demarcation between the black of the upper parts and pure white of the lower makes this more noticeable. The white spots are made more apparent because the outer feathers along the under part of the wing are black. It can be realized as the bird turns with steady unflapping wings how these white spots show.

In July 1900 Mr. Henry Wetherbee Henshaw described the ao as new. His description of the coloring of the bird is as follows: "Adult. Above, including upper surface of wings and tail, clear and somewhat glossy black. Border of under wing-coverts black. Beneath, including under tail-coverts, pure white". Henshaw named it Puffinus newelli after Brother Matthias Newell who worked to some extent on Hawaiian bird life and made a collection which is now in the museum of the St. Louis College in Honolulu.

Henshaw in his "Birds of the Hawaiian Possessions" published in 1902 says: "This bird was first obtained by Mr. M. Newell on the island of Maui in the spring of 1894, several of them having been taken from their burrows by the natives and brought to Mr. Newell alive. Two specimens were saved." The type specimen from which the description was taken is now in the Bishop Museum and the other is in the museum of the St. Louis College in Honolulu. Mr. Alanson Bryan at the same time was also preparing to describe it from a specimen sent to the Bishop Museum from the Gay and Robinson collection but withdrew his manuscript description when he found that Henshaw had published his already. It seems strange that this bird should have been overlooked in the Gay and Robinson collection till Henshaw described it from Maui in 1900. The specimens must have been there in the eighteen eighties when the collection was made. I am familiar with any additions to the collection from 1892 to 1899. Mr. Bryan evidently discovered the specimens there about 1900 after I had left Kauai but was just too late to have the satisfaction of describing and naming the species. Again it seems strange that there were not specimens of this species in the consignment sent to the Smithsonian by Knudsen. It can hardly be realized that Dr. Stejneger would overlook them if they were there. Perhaps some more facts may crop up later and throw light on this. I cannot believe that those

specimens were added to the Gay and Robinson collection in 1900 when Bryan found the bird to be new. Mr. Alanson Bryan in "Some Birds of Molokai" 1908, tells something of the ao. He says: "The natives were quite clear as to the distinguishing features of the Uau and Ao, giving differences which an unobserving person would have passed over." The natives told Bryan that the call "ao" of the bird might be heard at different times of the year; indicating that it did not migrate. But it became plentiful in May when it came in to lay its eggs. He goes on to say: "They were commonly found colonized in the steepest part of the pali, 500 to 1,000 feet above the floor of the valley. The Uau as a rule had their colonies higher up, seldom less than 1,500 feet above the sea." Sometimes, however, he said the two species were found nesting in the same vicinity. Mr. Bryan, though he did not see the bird, heard the call of the ao when in the valleys on Molokai but concluded that it was much more rare than the uau. In this he was evidently correct. According to the information given him by the natives the nesting places of the ao were more easily accessible than those of the uau and man competed with the mongoose in their destruction. The kapus by which the young of these seabirds were reserved to the chiefs were gone and there were no laws to take their place. In 1936 I found traces of the mongoose all through the Molokai forest and the seabirds were almost or entirely gone from there. There is no record of this bird from the island of Hawaii. The mongoose has no doubt killed out all that nested on Maui and Molokai. We hope that it still may resort to some of the remote valleys on the north west side of Kauai or on the islands of Kaula and Lehua off the coast of Niihau or perchance the island of Nihoa 140 miles to the north west. I am almost sure that a large flock of petrel that I saw flying in the channel between Niihau and Kauai in November 1939 was of this species. I hope that these two islands and the islets off their coasts will have the seabirds of their neighbourhood well studied before long. There is much hope that this may be so as a number of youths are becoming interested in ornithological work. If encouraged they may help to unravel some of the mysteries of the seabirds of our waters.

April 30, 1941

Genus Chaulelasmus Bonaparte (1838) Gadwall ducks

37A. Chaulelasmus streperus (Linnaeus) (Anas strepera Linnaeus, 1758) — Gadwall. Chance migrant, Oahu (Perkins) Molokai, 1902. Northern Hemisphere.

Genus Spatula Boie (1822), Shoveller ducks.

38. Spatula clypeata (Linnaeus) (Anas clypeata Linnaeus, 1758) — Shoveller, koloa moha. Winter migrant to Laysan and main islands. Northern Hemisphere.

Subfamily NYROCINAE

Genus Bucephala Baird (1858), Golden eyes, Buffle heads.

39. Bucephala albeola (Linnaeus) (Anas albeola Linnaeus, 1758) (Charitonetta albeola) — Buffle head. Chance migrant: Maui (Perkins.) N.W. North America; winters in U.S., mainly on the Pacific coast.

Genus Histrionicus Lesson (1828)

40. Histrionicus histrionicus pacificus W.S.Brooks (1915) — Western harlequin duck. Chance migrant: Laysan, 1906. Eastern Siberia and N.W. North America; winters south to Japan and California.

Subfamily MERGINAE

Genus Mergus Linnaeus (1758)

41. Mergus serrator Linnaeus (1758) — Red-breasted merganser. Chance migrant: Hawaii, Oahu. Northern hemisphere.

Genus Nyroca Fleming (1822)

41A. Nyroca affinis (Eyton) (Fuligula affinis Eyton, 1838) — Lesser scaup duck. Chance migrant Lanai, 1917. N.W. America, south to Oregon-Nebraska; winters from southern U.S. to Panama and W.I.

Order FALCONIFORMES
Suborder FALCONES
Superfamily FALCONOIDEA
Family ACCIPITRIDAE, hawks, osprey.
Subfamily BUTEONINAE

Genus Buteo Lacepède (1799) Soaring hawks.

42. Buteo solitarius Peale (1848) — Io, Hawaiian hawk. Endemic. Island of Hawaii.

Subfamily CIRCINAE
Genus Circus Lacépède (1799)

43. Circus cyaneus hudsonius (Linnaeus) (Falco hudsonius Linnaeus, 1766) Marsh hawk. Chance migrant(?): Oahu (Wilson). Northern N.America; winters as far south as Central America and Cuba.

Subfamily PANDIONINAE

Genus Pandion Savigny (1809), Osprey.

44. Pandion haliaetus carolinensis (Gmelin) (Falco carolinensis Gmelin, 1788) American osprey. Chance migrant: Oahu, perhaps on other islands. Northern N. America; winters south to West Indies and South America.

Family FALCONIDAE
Subfamily FALCONINAE

Genus Falco Linnaeus (1758)

45. Falco sp. Falcon. Escape at Hilo, May, 1929; not identified and not established.

Order GALLIFORMES
Suborder GALLI
Superfamily CRACOIDEA
Family CRACIDAE, Curassows, Guans, Chacalacas.

Genus Crax Linnaeus (1758)

46. Crax rubra rubra Linnaeus (1758) (Crax globicigera Linnaeus) Curassow. Introduced to Hawaii from Panama, 1928; not known to be breeding. Native of Central America.

Genus Penelope Merrem (1786)

47. Penelope purpurascens aequatorialis Salvadori and Festa (1900) (Penelope cristata auct.) (P. aequatorialis Salvadori & Festa) Guan. Introduced to Hawaii from Panama, 1928; not known to be breeding. Central and northern South America.

Genus Ortalis Merrem (1786)

48. Ortalis garrula cinereiceps G.R.Gray (1867) Chacalaca. Introduced to Hawaii from Panama, 1928; not known to be breeding. Central America.

Superfamily PHASIANOIDEA
Family TETRAONIDAE, Grouse, Ptarmigan.

Genus Pedioecetes Baird (1858)

49. Pedioecetes phasianellus columbianus (Ord) (Phasianus Columbianus Ord, 1815) Sharp-tailed or Pin-tailed Grouse. Introduced to Hawaii, 1932. British Columbia to northern California, to Utah.

Genus Tympanuchus Glover (1842)

50. Tympanuchus cupido americanus Reichenbach (Cupidonia americana Reichenbach) Prairie chicken. Introduced to Kauai and Oahu; not known to be established. Central North America.

Family PHASIANIDAE, Quail, partridges, pheasants.

Genus Oreortyx Baird (1858)

51. Oreortyx picta palmeri Oberholser (1923) Mountain quail. Introduced from California to Hawaii and Kauai, 1929; not known to be established. Pacific coast, Washington to central California.

Genus Lophortyx Bonaparte (1838)

52. Lophortyx californica vallicola (Ridgway) (Callipepla californica vallicola Ridgway, 1885.) Valley quail, manu kapalulu. Introduced from California to Oahu prior to 1855; now common on Hawaii and Molokai, rare on Oahu, Maui, and Kauai. Subarid interior of western U.S., Oregon into Lower California.

53. Lophortyx gambelli gambelli Gambel (1843) Gambel's quail. Introduced from California, 1928; established on Kahoolawe. Southern Nevada and Utah to northern Mexico and western Texas.

Genus Colinus Goldfuss (1820)

54. Colinus virginianus virginianus (Linnaeus) (Tetrao virginianus Linnaeus, 1758) Bobwhite. Introduced some years ago; established on Hawaii. Eastern U.S.

Genus Alectoris Kaup (1829)

55. Alectoris graeca chukar (J.E.Gray) (Perdix Chukar Gray, 1830) Chukar partridge. Introduced from the Orient to Oahu, 1923 and since; established on Molokai and Kahoolawe. Native of Himalayas, India.

Genus Perdix Brisson (1760)

56. Perdix perdix perdix (Linnaeus) (Tetrao Perdix Linnaeus, 1758) Hungarian partridge. Introduced to Hawaii, Kauai, Maui several times; not known to be established. Native of central Europe; naturalized in the U.S. and southern Canada.