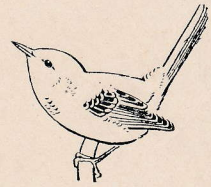


# ***The Elepaio***

Official Organ of THE HONOLULU AUDUBON SOCIETY  
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For the Better Protection of Wild Life in Hawaii



"Elepaio"

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We have received a letter from Walter Donaghho at Midway, dated August 16th, 1941, containing the following records:

July 29th. Black-bellied plover seen, this makes the third seen here.  
 June 15th. Greater yellowlegs seen.  
 Laysan albatrosses nearly gone, there are only a couple of handfals left.  
 Black-footed albatross left two weeks ago.  
 Sooty tern immatures are taking to the air, length of incubation 29 days  
 Frigate bird, red-footed booby and grey-backed tern have no young less than half grown and most are able to fly.  
 Blue-faced and brown boobies, all young are able to fly except the young of one pair of brown boobies, which are half grown. The first nest was destroyed.  
 Christmas shearwater, two young half grown.  
 White terns, very few still have eggs, most young are well grown.  
 Noddy tern season is in full swing, most birds sitting but some have not yet laid. First egg laid June 23rd., preceding the general laying by three weeks.

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The monthly report for July 1941 submitted by Paul H. Baldwin to the Superintendent of the Hawaii National Park contains findings of great interest on the presence of bird malaria (plasmodium) in Hawaiian birds. Twenty seven individuals of six species of native birds were examined and no infection was discovered. Malaria was found present in a Japanese hill robin and a valley quail out of fifteen individuals of these two species which were examined.

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The Hawaiian Planters' Record, Volume XLV No. 3, has an interesting article by Fred C. Hadden on Midway Islands, pp. 179-221. All aspects of the islands are dealt with and the birds are reported fully, with photographs and drawings. Assistance from George C. Munro and Walter Donaghho is acknowledged. On p. 194 the Laysan "finch" is condemned for doing "More damage to plants on the island than all other pests combined. It should be outlawed and destroyed at every opportunity". Such hasty judgment on a bird which is near extinction is to be deplored, the Laysan finch is a representative of the native Hawaiian family of Drepanine birds which has adapted itself to life on a coral island. Its nearest relatives are the iwi and apapane of our forests.

There is better news concerning the Laysan rail, which, like the Laysan finch, was brought to Midway from Laysan, when they were in danger of extinction there. The rail is only 5 inches long and stands about 4 inches high. It has such short wings that it cannot fly. The rail may be considered the most beneficial bird on Midway, it eats only flies, caterpillars, moths and maggots. "They pick flies right out of the air! But more often they stay around broken eggs or dead birds getting the flies that are attracted to the carrion. When the maggots are emerging and going into the ground to pupate, the rails dig them up by flipping the sand sidewise with the beak. They also diligently search all grass and other plants looking for caterpillars and moths which they relish.

- - - The baby rail, only an inch long when four or five days old, can run as fast as the older birds. - - - When only two or three days old the little rail looks like a black velvet marble rolling along the ground. Its little feet and legs are so small and move so fast that they can hardly be seen."

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BIRDS OF HAWAII  
and  
Adventures in Bird Study

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An Ocean Cruise  
By George C. Munro

In the Advertiser of August 19, 1941 appeared in reproduced items of news 50 years ago: "Schooner Kaalokai Captain Walker returns from shark-fishing expedition to Midway Island." I was a passenger on that memorable cruise and no one was more happy to set foot on solid land again. We had been 84 days on the trip and 24 out of sight of land coming back in a little 45 ton schooner not in the best seaworthy condition.

This trip was one of my greatest adventures in bird study. I was with Mr. H. C. Palmer, the Hon. Walter Rothschild's bird collector. His orders were to go to Gardiner Island. There was difficulty in arranging for a ship to take us there. We might have accomplished all we did accomplish by taking passage on the guano carrying schooner "Mary Foster" used less time and had a more comfortable trip. But we would have missed a great experience. Gardiner Island had to be visited, so Palmer got negotiations going with ship owners in Honolulu. There was no lack of sea captains without ships in Honolulu at that time but the trouble was to get a ship.

Eventually after much ado the little schooner Kaalokai, then lying idle, would be refitted and sent to sea with us on consideration of a substantial down payment by Palmer for our passage. Captain F. D. Walker was to be in command. Palmer told me Walker had signed an agreement to land him on each island of the northwest chain as we passed along. Landings on oceanic islands depend on the weather. So it happened we landed on four islands or groups of islands and passed four without landing. All have had landings made on them since. On one of the islands missed we would have secured two new birds, on another we would have found interesting relics of former native occupation. That was our bad



luck. The Kalokai was old and even after refitting she was not in good seaworthy condition. The pump had to be kept going for a considerable time every day. It seemed to us there was something lacking in the condition of the sails. Old sea captains shook their heads. Did not Captain Walker lose the barque "Wandering Minstrel" on the same kind of a trip (he was sharkfishing) and on the same route. We put it down to jealousy of Walker getting the trip. Bickerings soon arose between Palmer and Walker. Sailing seemed unnecessarily delayed and eventually Friday put us back another day. The Captain refused to leave port on that day.

At last we were ready to sail. A large surfboat occupied most of the deck of the little craft and the rest of the space was littered with provisions for the trip that were dumped aboard at the last minute. The three Hawaiians of the crew were aboard, but where was Bill the only white man? He was rounded up from a saloon in the town and was ushered aboard in the clothes he stood in. An old sea captain said to me on parting "Keep your weather eye open". That would not have availed me much as our boat would have had little chance to weather a gale if one had overtaken us. Fortunately Captain Walker kept on deck. He was the only navigator aboard and if anything had happened to him the voyage might have had a different termination. He was a good navigator. Instead of beating up against the northwest trade winds he took a course north till he caught the westerly winds and then steered for the north coast of Kauai which he struck rather neatly. This took us through waters little frequented by ships and permitted a study of birds we might otherwise have missed.

We got under way and cast anchor off Barber's Point to spend the night, get provisions stowed and be ready for the open sea. Bill found an old sail which he cut up for a bed. We were becalmed in the channel between Oahu and Kauai. Nearly everyone aboard was sea-sick and more or



less out of humor. Palmer and the Captain had a little tiff which never seemed to heal during the whole trip. This did not add to the comfort of the voyage. The Captain's two youthful sons were first and second officers. They were, for their age, seasoned sailors but had a great deal to learn about navigation. The steward Dennis Cashman was a sail-maker and an indifferent cook. Bill was an old whaler and knew his work and so did one of the Hawaiians. One of the other two was a youth, willing to learn; the other did not know much of anything and as he could not read the compass or steer, one of the others had to take his watch at the wheel, giving him a double watch. The officers, however, took the wheel and relieved him for his meals.

The weather favored us, though the Captain pronounced it too rough to attempt landing on Nihoa, Necker and Gardiner Islands and too dangerous threading the way amongst coral patches in the lagoon at the Pearl and Hermes Reef. So no landing was made on any of these. We had a fair time on islets of the French Frigate Shoal, our first landing place. On Laysan we had 10 wonderful days among 23 species of birds and the genial company of Captain Freeth, Manager of the guano works and Governor of the Island. How I grieved years afterwards when I read of the devastation of that unique bird paradise by plume hunters and rabbits. I hope the time will come when Nihoa and Laysan will be given proper care and kept as near their primeval condition as possible. They will be wonderful show islands of the future as will also be some of the islands off the shore of Oahu. The public use of these places at proper times and under proper rules can add much to the pleasures of the human race and be of no injury to the birds. Islands unguarded and uncared for may be visited by irresponsible persons at the wrong times with much more injury to the birds than if open to the public under proper regulations.

September 13, 1941



## Checklist of Hawaiian birds - E. H. Bryan Jr - 15

## Genus Lobipes Cuvier (1817)

94. Lobipes lobatus (Linnaeus)  
 (Tringa lobata Linnaeus, 1758) Northern phalarope. Chance migrant, (Kauai). Breeds in arctic regions; winters at sea in northwestern Indian Ocean, off coasts of Peru and West Africa, between New Guinea and Bismarck Archipelago, and in the Banda Sea.

## Suborder LARI

## Family LARIDAE, Gulls, terns.

## Subfamily LARINAE.

## Genus Larus Linnaeus (1758)

95. Larus delawarensis Ord (1815) Ring-billed gull. Chance arrival (Molokai, Maui); breeds in northwestern North America; winters throughout United States & Mexico.
96. Larus argentatus smithsonianus Coues Herring gull. Chance arrival (Laysan). Breeds in northern North America; south to Florida, Yucatan and West Mexico.  
 (Larus smithsonianus Coues, 1862)
97. Larus californicus Lawrence (1854) California gull. Chance arrival (Maui?). Breeds in northwestern and west-central North America; winter south along the Pacific coast to S.W. Mexico and occasionally along coast of Texas.
98. Larus occidentalis Audubon (1839) Western gull. Introduced, but not established. Breeds on Pacific coast of North America, from Washington to northern California; ranging south to southern California.
99. Larus pipixcan Wagler (1831) Franklin's gull. Chance arrival (Maui). Breeds in western central North America; winters on Gulf coast and on the western coast of South America.  
 (Larus franklini Authors)
100. Larus glaucescens Naumann (1840) Glaucous-winged gull. Occasional straggler (Hilo, Oahu, Laysan). Breeds in northeastern Asia and northwestern North America; winter southward to the coasts of China, Japan and Aleutian Islands to Lower California.



101. *Larus hyperboreus* Gunnerus (1767) Glaucous gull, Point Barrow  
 (*Larus glaucus* Brunn (1764) gull. Chance arrival (Lanai,  
 (*Larus barrovianus* Ridgway, 1886) Maui, Kauai, Laysan). Breeds  
 about Bering Sea and north-  
 ward to Point Barrow; in  
 winter to Japan.
102. *Larus novae-hollandiae* Stephens Silver gull. Escape from cage,  
 (1826) not established (Honolulu).  
 Breeds on coasts and lakes of  
 Australia and Tasmania; races  
 in New Zealand.
103. *Larus philadelphia* (Ord) Bonaparte's gull. Chance arrival  
 (*Sterna philadelphia* Anon. (Kauai). Breeds in northwestern  
 Ord (1815) North America; winters on the  
 Pacific coast from S.E. Alaska to  
 Lower California, and on the Atlan-  
 tic coast from New England to  
 Florida and the Gulf of Yucatan.

Genus *Rissa* Stephens (1826)

- 103 a. *Rissa tridactyla pollicaris* Pacific kittiwake. Chance arrival  
 Ridgway (1884) (Laysan). Coasts of N. Pacific,  
 Bering Sea, etc.; south in winter  
 to northern Lower California.

## Subfamily STERNINAE, terns

Genus *Sterna* Linnaeus (1758)

104. *Sterna paradisaea* Pontoppidan Arctic tern. Chance arrival (Hilo  
 (1763) and Oahu). Breeds throughout arctic  
 regions; winters in Antarctic ocean  
 south of latitude 74° south.
105. *Sterna sumatrana sumatrana* Black-naped tern. Chance arrival  
 Raffles (Hawaii, Kauai). Breeds on small  
 (*Sterna Sumatrana* Raffles 1822) islands in Pacific and Indian  
 (*Sterna melanauchen* of authors) oceans, from Andaman to Gilbert  
 and Phoenix Is.
106. *Sterna lunata* Peale (1848) Pakalakala, Gray-backed or bridled  
 tern. On most of main and N.W.  
 Hawaiian islands. Breeds through-  
 out Oceania from Midway to Fiji,  
 and from the Tuamotu Is. to the  
 Moluccas.
107. *Sterna fuscata oahuensis* Bloxam Ewaewa, sooty tern. Breeds in  
 (*Sterna Oahuensis* Bloxam, 1826) Oceania, from Hawaiian, Marcus  
 (*Sterna fuliginosa* of authors) and Bonin Is., southward. On  
 most main and N.W. Hawaiian Is.



114. *Streptopelia decaocto* (Frivaldszky) Indian ring dove. Introduced (Kauai) 1920 and (Oahu) 1928 (*Columba risoria decaocto* Frivaldszky) probably established. Native of eastern Europe and western Asia.