

# THE ELEPAIO

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## CATS

Cats are a problem to bird lovers, especially the neighbours' cats. Any direct action against these will probably result in strained relations or reprisals, which it is best to avoid. A friendly discussion will probably result in a solution and one suggestion has been offered by Mr. Manro. A correspondent sent him a clipping which stated that Lake Bluff, Ill. has passed an ordinance requiring all cat owners to hang little bells around the necks of their pets. The tinkling of the bell gives warning to the birds when the cat pounces and since wild creatures act first and think afterwards, that split second is enough to allow the birds to escape. Such an ordinance here would be welcome but legislation is slow and other methods can be tried.

Under common law, according to "The Audubon Guide to Attracting Birds", p.174 (a copy of which is in the Society's library) the owner of a cat is not liable for trespasses or for injuries by it. Seizing and holding of trespassing cats and dogs is not lawful, as the courts have held that they are not subject to distraint even when taken in the act of trespass.

Stray or wild cats can be trapped. The box trap which is used in Hawaii for trapping mongoose is very suitable. The entrance should be made a little larger and a fish head is a sure bait. Any yard man knows how to build one. When a cat is caught a telephone call to the Humane Society will take care of its disposal.

Feeding tables should be at such a height from the ground that the cat cannot leap onto the table. Five feet should be sufficient. Tables which are suspended from the branches of trees should also be protected from cats by placing a guard around the trunk of the tree to prevent cats climbing it and hiding in the branches above the table. A band of tin can be nailed around the trunk about five feet from the ground and painted a neutral color so that it is not unsightly. Its smooth surface offers no hold to the claws of the cat.

Food for the birds should not be thrown on the ground. This will attract rats and mice and much of it will be wasted. Cats may also lurk in nearby cover and pounce on the birds as they feed.

J. d'A. N.



BIRDS OF HAWAII  
and  
Adventures in Bird Study

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An Ocean Cruise  
By George C. Munro

In the Elepaio of October the little schooner Kaalokai had taken the Rothschild expedition to Barber's Point on the southwest coast of Oahu. At 6 AM on May 26, 1891 the anchor was hauled up and we steered for the channel between Oahu and Kauai. Here we were baffled by calms nearly all day but in the evening we caught a good trade wind. Albatross Petrels and Terns were numerous in the channel. The black-footed albatrosses generally known as goonies were very tame, settling on the water close to the stern of the boat during the calm spells.

Next day we sighted Kauai shortly after daylight and lost sight of it early in the afternoon. We did not sight Niihau, Kaula or Lehua. The two latter have never had their bird life properly studied. A good investigation would, I am sure, bring to light some interesting facts.

On the 26th we sighted Nihoa and two tern new to us came out to greet us, the little white and the little grey terns. We also saw the first Laysan albatross in the vicinity. Nihoa is about 140 miles from Kauai. It is roughly half a mile long by a quarter of a mile wide. It has perpendicular cliffs about 480 feet high on all sides except the southeast where it slopes down to the water into a small shelly beach. There are two or three small valleys or hollows which shelter several groves of small trees closely allied to the Hawaiian Hawani (Prichardia the tree that furnishes the material for the Hawaiian "lolu" hats. The sloping hill like face seemed to be covered with short grasses or vegetation of some kind. The cliffs are hollowed out into immense cavern one on the north side is opening right through. Narrow dykes run up from the bottom to the top of the cliff. The area is approximately 156 acres. Every part of the island seemed to be inhabited by birds for which it



is admirably suited. Each species can find nesting places to suit itself.

We made no attempt to land as the Captain said it was too rough to do so. This did not disturb us much at the time as we were sure we would find all the sea birds represented there on other islands we intended to visit. We judged also that there would be no land birds on this one. But to our loss never again on the voyage did we sight the little grey tern. And after our return we learned that there was at least one land bird on the island. On our trip to Hawaii on September 5, 1891, the Hon. Judge Sandford B. Dole was a fellow passenger. He told us of a finchlike bird that was seen on Nihoa when an excursion visited the island some years before. The island was not investigated ornithologically till Dr. Wetmore of the Whitney expedition visited it in 1923. I have not yet seen his publications on the birds.

There is an interesting story in regard to the Telespiza of Nihoa which I might as well tell now as any time. I quote from my journal: "April 29, 1892; I talked with Mr. Francis Gay about a finch Mr. Wilson had taken alive with him to England. He says it was procured from Nihoa and is different from the Laysan bird." On finding this recently in my 49 year old journal I went to the Bishop Museum library and saw the "Ibis" 1890 and on page 341 I read Wilson's account of how he procured his type of Telespiza cantans. The story is as follows: The ship "Mary Bohm", Captain Bohm, Master, was heading for Honolulu in a more or less unseaworthy condition. A landing was made, as stated in Ibis, at Midway Island. About 50 small birds were caught by hand amongst the brush that covered the island. They were carried in a large case and fed ship's biscuit. Provisions ran low and a call was made at Niihau. Mr. George Gay manager of the island furnished the ship with provisions and the Captain gave him some of the birds. The rest, about 40, were sold in Honolulu. Mr. Wilson happened to be on one of the other islands at the



time and was able to secure only one of the birds. Others he planned to get from a friend cut through the wooden bars of their cage with their strong beaks and escaped. Evidently the information that the birds were procured from Nihoa came from George Gay to his brother Francis. It is certain that they did not come from Midway Island as there were none there at the time. If it is a fact that Wilson's *Telespiza* came from Nihoa then Rothschild's *Telespiza flavissima* of Laysan is a good species and not a synonym of *T. cantans* as Rothschild admitted. The plate in the book of *T. cantans* has very much the appearance of the immature of the Laysan species as shown in Rothschild's book though I have not compared them together. I know of no evidence that Wilson's *T. cantans* came from Laysan and there is some that it came from Nihoa. Additional facts may yet come to light to show more definitely where Wilson's bird was procured.

Nihoa is an island wonderfully well suited for an inviolable bird sanctuary and should be given every protection as such. If kept in primeval condition it will be an interesting island for generations to come. Predacious animals cannot reach it. No bird collecting should be allowed there except under the strictest supervision and then only for exceptional national purposes. Dr. Wetmore when there in 1923 thought he saw a land rail on the island, if present it is rare and should be jealously guarded. The other two land birds Wetmore found there in 1923 should have careful protection also. A picnic party at Nihoa in the eighties on leaving left a fire burning in the vegetation which must have killed off many birds. The rail then much reduced in numbers has since had to compete with the other numerous land birds and probably made slow progress in increase. If this is the case it might be in danger of extermination by collectors if permitted to operate on the island.

October 14, 1941



Checklist of Hawaiian birds - E. H. Bryan Jr - 18

115. *Streptopelia chinensis* (Scopoli) Turtle, laceneck or Chinese  
(Columba chinensis Scopoli, 1786) dove; "ehako". Early introduction from the Orient. Native of eastern Asia.

Subfamily GEOPELIINAE

Genus *Geopelia* Swainson (1837)

116. *Geopelia striata striata* (Linnaeus) Barred dove. Introduced,  
(Columba striata Linnaeus, 1766) probably from Singapore,  
since 1922; established on  
Kauai, Oahu, Molokai, Lanai, Maui,  
Hawaii; in places very abundant.  
Native of Indo-Malay region.
117. *Geopelia striata tranquilla* Blue eyed or peaceful dove. Intro-  
or *placida* Gould (1844) duced from Australia, 1922; perha-  
not established, or confused with  
No. 116. Native of Australia.
- (*Geopelia humeralis* (Temminck) Bar-shouldered dove, is reported  
as introduced from Australia, 1922;  
but if so, it is not now known.)
118. *Geopelia cuneata* (Latham) Diamond dove. Introduced to Oahu,  
(Columba cuneata Latham, 1801) 1928, and Hawaii, 1929. Not known  
to be established. Native of  
Australia.

(Subfamily PHABINAE)

Genus *Chalcophaps* Gould (1843)

119. *Chalcophaps indica* (Linnaeus) Green-wing or beetle-wing (dove).  
(Columba indica Linnaeus, 1758) Introduced from Singapore to  
Oahu, 1924; probably not estab-  
lished. Native of India, Burma,  
Malaya, P.I.

Genus *Phaps* Selby (1835)

120. *Phaps chalcoptera* (Latham) Bronze-wing dove. Introduced from  
(Columba chalcoptera Latham, 1790) Australia to Oahu, 1922; probabl-  
not established. Native of  
Australia and Tasmania.

Genus *Ocyphaps* G.R.Gray (1842)

121. *Ocyphaps lophotes* (Temminck) Crested bronze-wing "pigeon",  
(Columba lophotes Temminck, 1822) Australian crested dove. Introduc-  
from Australia to Oahu, Molokai  
and Lanai, 1922; probably not  
established. Native of Australia.



## Genus Lophophaps Reichenbach (1852)

122. *Lophophaps plumifera* (Gould) Plumed bronze-wing or spinifex  
 (*Geophaps plumifera* Gould, 1842) pigeon. Introduced from Australia to Maui and Lanai, 1922; probably not established. Native of north and central Australia.

## Genus Geophaps G.R.Gray, (1842)

123. *Geophaps smithi* (Jardine & Selby) Squadda pigeon, naked-eyed  
 (*Columba smithi* Jardine & Selby, 1830) partridge pigeon. Introduced from Australia to Maui and Lanai, 1922; probably not established. Native of N.W. Australia.

## Genus Oreopeleia Reichenbach (1852)

124. *Oreopeleia montana* (Linnaeus) Ruddy ground dove. Introduced from San Francisco to Maui, 1933.  
 (*Columba montana* Linnaeus, 1758) Native of tropical America.

## Genus Leptotila Swainson (1837)

125. *Leptotila verreauxi* Bonaparte Blue ground dove. Introduced to Maui from San Francisco, 1933.  
 (1855) Native of tropical America.

## (Subfamily GEOTRYGONINAE)

## Genus Gallicolumba Heck (1849)

126. *Gallicolumba luzonica* (Scopoli) Bleeding-heart dove. Introduced from Philippines to Kauai, 1922, and to other islands more recently. Not known to be established. Native of Luzon, Philippine Is.  
 (*Columba luzonica* Scopoli, 1786)

## Genus Leucosarcia Gould (1843)

127. *Leucosarcia melanoleuca* (Latham) Wongawonga pigeon. Introduced to Maui and Lanai, 1922; probably not established. Native of eastern Australia.  
 (*Columba melanoleuca* Latham, 1801)  
 (*Columba picata* of authors)

## Genus Starnoenas Bonaparte (1838)

128. *Starnoenas cyanocephala* (Linnaeus) Blue-headed quail dove. Introduced, 1928; not known to be established. Native of Cuba.  
 (*Columba cyanocephala* Linnaeus, 1758)