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BIRDING ON "THRUSH ISLAND" By Helen Shiras Baldwin

Part II

Of course thrushes were not the only birds we saw or heard on Kauai. Mynahs chattered around all areas inhabited by man, gleaning bits of food and scraps of foil or paper for nests. They seemed about as plentiful per square mile as in similar habitats on Hawaii Island.

We almost stumbled over the little ground doves on the hotel walks and flushed them frequently from the lowland roadsides. It seemed incredible that the confiding little fellows were introduced as game birds. They seemed as plentiful as in leeward areas of the Big Island.

The Chinese doves were well distributed, too, but did not seem as numerous, or at least were not so conspicuous, as the little doves. Obviously they would be more sport to hunt with either camera or gun.

It was fun to watch the Pacific golden plovers scamper over the Kauai Inn golf course hunting for their breakfasts while we quietly sat in the dining room and waited for ours to be brought to us. Over half the plovers had already put on their black-white-and-gold summer suits for the annual flight to Alaska. No radio beams would guide their flight; no Coast Guard or Navy rescue teams would come to aid them if anything went wrong on their flights, nor would the Army or local police protect them from attacks or keep thieves from their homes. How much safer and lazier is a man's life than a plover's!

House finches, sparrows, ricebirds and cardinals frequented the various golf courses. On one we saw a small group of ruddy turnstones, also in summer plumage, gathered about a rain puddle. Golf courses are excellent places to do birding for ground-feeding species. We recommend Kauai's courses to all visiting bird lovers.

In a thicket of ekoa beneath Java plum trees near Lihue we glimpsed a grayish bird of a cardinal's size marked with red. We presume it was a Brazilian cardinal but are not familiar with the species as it is absent from our island. We also heard calls somewhat like a cardinal's, yet different.

In the same kind of thicket and not far distant from it we flushed a dark winged grayish bird a little smaller than a Chinese dove. Its under parts and outer tail feathers were white. Was it a mockingbird? Our bird books did not say this species is present on Kauai. Certainly this deserves study.

A small group of black and white birds on a distant pond in a pasture along the southern shore of the island also puzzled us. The pond was in a depression, so visi-

bility was not good and so far away that we could tell little more with our binoculars than with our naked eyes. We are still not sure what they were, but wondered if they were stilts in water so deep that it covered their legs. Their heads were pointed down, so the length of the necks was not easy to tell either.

But we were sure of the apapane which sang to us in the forest around Kokee. He seemed identical with our familiar Hawaii Island form. We also saw and heard amakihi, but they were against the sky and so active among the koa leaves we could not see any difference between them and our Hawaii Island kind.

We recognized the coots, too, that splashed among the reeds along the Wailua River, and I think we heard them calling about the edge of the Menehune fishpond, too.

Did we miss anything? Yes. We neither saw nor heard iiwi though we were told they are present in the mountains. Nor did we see owls or elepaio. Neither did we get a good rendering of the western meadow lark's song, only call notes, though we had a good look at one. We neither saw nor heard skylarks.

Tropic birds and sanderlings eluded us, too, and we noted only one wandering tattler, though the species is common enough on the Big Island. But a graceful frigate bird soared and swooped over the sea near the Hanalei lookout, giving us a good show of swift maneuverable flight.

Most of all I think we missed the cheery voice and multicolored plumage of the red-billed Leiothrix so common everywhere in town, forest and brushland on Hawaii Island. His absence was conspicuous.

If your time is limited, as ours was, where are the best places to see birds on Kauai? The Menehune Fishponds area, the region between Puhi and Lihue along highway 50, highway 501, the Kukuialono golf course and park, Makaweli Valley, Kokee, the road to Wailua Ranch Hotel, and the roads and parks from Kilauea to Hanalei and Haena.

There may be better places. We just stumbled onto these. Ask the folks who live on the island. We were told to go to Kilohana crater but did not have time as it is not very accessible with an ordinary car. Anyway, in five days time we had a lot of fun, covered a lot of different kinds of country and saw a lot of birds.

Letter from Helen Shiras Baldwin: June 27, 1960

... We were not hurt ourselves in the tsunami of May 23. I am afraid the koloa planted at the Wailoa ponds in Hilo did get killed either directly by it or indirectly. Their wings had been treated so they could not fly far, to keep them near the ponds. These ponds were terribly messed up with houses, fishing boats, heavy machinery, sewage and rubbish of all sorts stranded in them by the retreating waves. Crude oil and the insecticide spray put over the place as a health measure would have finished the birds off if they survived the waves themselves. Coots were there before the waves came, too.

We had a delightful evening as guests of the Robert Barrels and Bill Dunmires at Hawaii National Park to meet with Roger Tory Peterson and Mr. Eisenmann during their brief stay on this island. We did not go birding with them but understand that the National Park rangers and Ronald Walker of the Pohakuloa Game Refuge showed them most of our species. They even saw an ou, so you see their birding was really good.

If you or any of the rest of the Honolulu birders plan to come to this island this summer, please let us know. We have a car now and can get around better than before.

Aloha,
/s/ Helen S. Baldwin

Letter from Jean Morley: April 28, 1960

... In case you want to hear about what I saw after my pleasant day with the Hawaii Audubon Society on March 27 ...

When I went to the island of Hawaii, I explored Bird Park and nearby area by myself. There were some good views of Apapane, Amakihi, Red-billed leiothrix; and a glimpse of a Green Pheasant. Then I spent one splendid day (thanks to your introduction) with Helen Baldwin. In the kipukas on the Saddle Road she squeaked up Iiwis. I had a perfect view of one of them, singing above our heads, and of the Hawaiian Thrush. We ended our day at the shore, with the Hawaiian Noddy Tern and the Wandering Tattler.

In Japan, with Art's help, I added 60 species to my life list. One of the birds most frequently seen (and puzzling at first because of the variety of its calls) was the Japanese Bush Warbler. There were also lots of Brown-eared Bulbuls, and Wagtails (Grey, Pied, Japanese). Around habitations and in parks we saw Grey Starling, Dusky Thrush, Teal, Mandarin Duck, Meadow Bunting, Japanese Bunting, Great Tit, Japanese Waxwing, Japanese Hawfinch, Japanese Grosbeak, White-Rumped Swift, House Swallow, Japanese House Martin. While most visitors were gazing at temple architecture, we were trying to find out what swallow-like bird was nesting in the eaves. We had good views of the Pale Pallas Dipper and Japanese Wren in the Lake Chuzenji region above Nikko. It was there, too, that we saw Woodpeckers (Hondo Spotted, White-backed, Pygmy), Tree-creeper, Goldcrest (like our Golden-crowned Kinglet), Russet Sparrow. We hiked through snow for some of these. Early one morning near Gohra (near Lake Hakone at the foot of Mt. Fuji) we saw a flock of Chinese Bamboo Pheasant. In the Kyoto Botanic Garden Art identified a Red-cheeked Mynah. On the boat trip from Ito to Tokyo via Oshima Island the Streaked Shearwater was the common bird. Can't recall the places we saw the Brambling, Stonechat, Siberian Blue-tail, Chinese Tree Pipit, and Tits (Varied, Long-tailed, Willow, Coal). The only Kingfishers we saw were three colorful stained-glass ones -- at the entrance to the Yamashina Bird Museum in Tokyo.

Birders in Japan can learn a lot by peeking in cages. I saw my first Meadow Bunting in a cage at the door of a home. There was a fine specimen of a Spectacled Teal in a zoo, and stores displayed Japanese Robin, Temminck's Robin, and Blue Flycatcher. We found several good natural history museums such as the one at Meiji Shrine in Tokyo or at Gohra Park where specimens were displayed with habitat groupings. We recommend botanic gardens, on weekdays, as good places to bird.

Best Wishes,
/s/ Jean Morley

Field Trip, June 12, 1960, Lower Pa Lehua Trail and Shore Birding.

Sunday, June 12, 1960, brought forth a sunny day with mauka showers. Five club members and five visitors, managing to steer clear of the mauka showers, enjoyed a pleasant day in the field with a morning on the lower Pa Lehua Trail and an afternoon in various spots about Ewa and West Loch of Pearl Harbor. The trip proved to be an interesting lesson in botany as well as rewarding list of bird life. Birds included in the day's list were Elepaio; Amakihi; Apapane; Leiothrix; Skylark; Kolea; Akekeke; American Coot and Ring-necked Pheasant. Substantial numbers of Hawaiian Stilt and Mockingbird were also observed.

Paul W. Schaefer

Communications received and answered by the Secretary were from:

Mary-Lyle R. Rempel, Menlo Park, Calif., re bird walks to be held in September when she expects to visit Hawaii.

David H. McAlpin, Princeton, N.J., asking for check list and articles about birds.

and as to our rainy season.

Shore Hodge, Honolulu, as to what the State of Hawaii is doing to protect the birds.
 Mrs. D.G. Willis, Bay Village, Ohio, inquiring about sightseeing trip.
 Miss Myra I. Luce, Somerville, Mass., re arriving on Lurline July 8.
 Mrs. Ralph Lindley, Montesano, Washington, re bird walks and lists of birds.
 Jeff Creamer, Columbus, Ohio, asking for a check card.

NEW MEMBERS: We are pleased to welcome the following new members:

Dr. H. McClure Johnson, Institute of Geophysics, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, Haw.
 Mrs. Peter Ota, 538 Kaha Street, Kailua, Hawaii
 Dr. Roger Tory Peterson, Old Lyme, Conn.

Our president, Charles Hanson, left Honolulu on June 21 to make his home in San Bernardino, California. He joined the Hawaii Audubon Society in April 1955 and served as an officer of the Society each succeeding year. He was president for the years 1956 and 1957, was vice-president in 1958 and 1959, and served as president again for the first half of 1960. He was an enthusiastic birder and he managed while in Hawaii to get to some of the bird islands difficult of access, such as Midway and Laysan. He was generous of his time in showing the Society his Hawaiian bird pictures at our June meeting, which was the evening before his departure. We shall miss his leadership, his knowledge of birds and his keen interest in our Society.

AUGUST ACTIVITIES:

FIELD TRIP: MARGARET TITCOMB WILL LEAD THE TRIP.

August 6, Saturday. Our annual trip to POPOIA to see and hear the Wedge-tailed Shearwaters. Bring picnic supper, sweater and flashlight. We will return from the island about 9 p.m. Boat fare is \$1.00 per person. Meet at the Library of Hawaii at 4 p.m. or at the Lanikai end of the Kailua Beach at 4:30 p.m. The boatman will take us to the island at 5 p.m.
There will be NO OTHER FIELD TRIP in August.

MEETING: August 15 - At the Honolulu Aquarium Auditorium at 7:30 p.m.

Paul L. Breeze, Director of the Honolulu Zoo, will tell us about his "Quest for the Bird of Paradise in New Guinea."

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