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## CONTINENTAL MIGRANTS AND SHORE BIRDS ON OAHU

DURING 1958/59

By Miklos D. F. Udvardy 1/ 2/

During the fall and winter season of 1958/59 I spent 23 days on field observations of shore and water birds on Oahu. This field work resulted in the discovery of some rare migrant, or vagrant birds of continental origin. These data, and those rarities observed and published by others in the Elepaio, <sup>3/</sup> seem to indicate that many or most migratory water and shore birds of Pacific North America stray yearly in small numbers to the Hawaiian islands, even if their presence is rarely recorded.

Besides these rarities, we have a numerical picture about the migratory shore birds and resident marsh birds that aids in assessing their ecological and zoogeographical status. In the accompanying Table I have included the records of the Audubon Society bird walks as well, in order to complete the seasonal picture of the principal marsh areas. All these localities are found on maps of 1:250,000 or larger scale.

### Notes on the species:

Pintail (*Anas acuta* L.) Compared with Medeiros' six winter censuses of the early 1950-es, the estimated maximum number seen on the five major marsh areas, 575 birds, means a year of low pintail population on Oahu. The percentage of males in nuptial plumage, as calculated from my field notes, is the following:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Number counted</u>	<u>% nuptial males</u>
Oct. 7	39	0.0
Oct. 21	30	13.4
Oct. 28	80	13.8
Oct. 30	60	16.7
Nov. 4	93	22.5
Nov. 20	184	54.0
Dec. 4	170	41.0
Dec. 21	45	62.0
Jan. 8	358	48.0

1/ Contribution No. 000 of the Hawaii Marine Laboratory.

2/ University of Hawaii, Honolulu, USA and University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada.

3/ Fulmar, Semipalmated plover, Snowy plover, Black-bellied plover, Glaucous gull, Herring gull, Least tern. See Dunmire 1959; Hanson 1958B, 1959; King 1958A, B, 1959A; Riggs 1959.



Plotting these data on a graph, we can surmise that the sex ratio of pintails is slightly in favor of males; that about ten per cent of the males appeared in nuptial plumage before Oct. 21, and the main molting time of their majority was between Nov. 10 and Dec. 10, by which time about 50% of the pintail were nuptial males. A tentative interpretation of these findings would be that after the time of arrival in Hawaii, the adult males molt first in the beginning of October and the juvenile males molt in the latter half of November and early December. If this assumption would stand, then we could conclude that about 20 or 25% of the wintering pintails are adult birds that might have learned their route in the previous year or years. They might have led the young of the year to these Mid-Pacific wintering grounds. The only proof of such a conclusion so far is the fact that Hawaii-banded pintails returned to the islands one to four years after their banding (Medeiros 1958).

Shoveller (*Spatula clypeata* L.) The bulk of about 130 shovellers censused on Oahu spent the winter on the east side of Kaelepulu marsh. The only sex ratio taken (Jan. 8, 1959) shows roughly even distribution of the sexes (48% males).

Pacific golden plover (*Pluvialis dominica fulva* /Gm./) and Ruddy turnstone (*Arenaria i. interpres* /L./) It looks as if we had a number of plover passing through Oahu during the late fall, or else the marsh concentrations at that time dissolved into smaller bands that occupy the fields and meadows, since there was a peak in their numbers around Nov. 20, 1958 according to the combined census date of Kahuku and Kaelepulu.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Plover</u>	<u>Turnstone</u>
End of Oct.	320	260
Mid-November	500	336
Late November	255	100
Early December	30	50

Canada goose (*Branta canadensis*) On my visit to Kaelepulu I found an individual of a small Canada goose among the pintails, on October 30, 1958. I did not see it during my two previous October trips, so it is reasonable to assume that it arrived between Oct. 28 and 30 to the marsh. Subsequently it has been seen there on Dec. 11, 1958 and Jan. 8, 1959 by myself, and on Jan. 25 and Feb. 23, 1959 by others. April 30, 1959 I did not see it any more on Kaelepulu. Most likely it left the marsh between Feb. 23 and March 25, since on that date Medeiros (1959) noted a cackling goose on the Kanaha pond of the island of Maui, about 90 miles East of SE. from Kaelepulu. I find it highly probable that this was the same bird that wintered on Oahu. This is the ninth noted occurrence of the species on the islands, and the second for Oahu.

(Lesser) Snow goose (*Chen h. hyperbores* /Pall./) Found October 21, 1958 at the mouth of the Anahulu river, on the fish pond east of the bridge of the same river, in Haleiwa village, Waialua Bay, Oahu. When positively identified this bird was in the company of domestic (Pekinese) ducks, two pintails and an American widgeon. The pond further was populated by four moorhens and four-five coots. The juvenile snow goose was surprisingly tame and could be approached to within 40-50 feet when on the water or loafing with the white domestic ducks. I observed its presence on Oct. 21, 23, Nov. 4, 1958 and January 6, 1959. Hanson (1958B) also saw it Oct. 26, 1958, while MacClellan (1959) no longer found it on Jan. 25, 1959. The owners of the pond told me that the goose arrived about October 18, 1958 and left on or about January 20, 1959 without, to their knowledge, being molested. The only previous record of the snow goose on Oahu was in 1904, and altogether it occurred four times on the islands.

Green-winged teal (*Anas crecca carolinensis* Gm.) I have observed this species three times, but it is likely that the same group of four ducks occurred at Kahuku on Nov. 20 and on Dec. 4, 1958, while on Nov. 27 I only could find one teal on the Kaelepulu marsh. The party of four was composed of two pairs, the males partially molted on November 20. This was the eighth noted occurrence in Hawaii, and the third for Oahu.



American widgeon (*Mareca americana* /Gm./) Observed between Oct. 26, 1958 and Jan. 25, 1959 on all major marsh areas of Oahu, with its numbers varying from one to 20 at a time. It has been a regular wintering bird on Oahu since 1952, but its numbers are always very small.

Bristle-thighed curlew (*Numenius tahitiensis* /Gm./) Mr. G. Pearsall (verbal communication) saw two curlews at Kahuku on Oct. 18, 1958 and I was able to observe them at the same locality on Oct. 21, but they were no longer there on Oct. 26, 1958 (Hanson 1958B). Curlews, singles and couples are not seen every year on the main Hawaiian islands.

Greater yellowlegs (*Totanus melanoleucus* /Gm./) I saw one bird at Kahuku on Nov. 4, 1958. This is the fifth noted occurrence on the islands, fourth for Oahu.

Western sandpiper (*Ereunetes mauri* Cabanis) I saw one specimen at Kahuku on Oct. 21, 1958. Presumably the same bird was seen there by Hanson (1958B) on Oct. 26, but on Nov. 4, 1958 I no longer found it there. This bird was the first recorded from the Hawaiian islands.

#### Summary:

Detailed observations on migratory birds are summarized. Besides seasonal fluctuations of the common species attention has been drawn to the fact, that eleven rare species were observed (five by the author) during a single season.

#### Acknowledgements:

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TABLE I: MARSH AND SHORE BIRD CENSUSES ON OAHU, 1958-59

DATE	Black-crowned Night Heron	Pintail	Green-winged Teal	Am. Widgeon	Shoveller	Golden Plover	Ruddy Turnstone	Wandering Tattler	Sanderling	Hawaiian Stilt	LOCALITY OF OBSERVATION	REFERENCE
1958/ 59												
Jun 8	.	.	.	.	.	+	+	+	.	.	Moku Manu Is.	Hanson, 1958A
Aug 3	.	.	.	.	.	100+	20+	.	.	6-8+	Kaelepulu	Pyle, 1958
Aug 10	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	Salt Lake	Smail, 1958
Aug 23	.	.	.	.	.	1	5	1	.	.	Popoia Is.	King, 1958B
Oct 2	1	.	.	.	.	6	8	5	12	28	Kuliouou	*
Oct 7	.	39	.	.	.	(160)	23	.	10	34	Kaelepulu	*
Oct 21	.	120	.	.	2	(120)	(180)	4	.	129	Kahuku	*
Oct 26	.	+	.	+	+	+	+	.	+	+	Kahuku	Hanson, 1958B
Oct 28	.	155	.	1	3	+	+	.	.	.	Kaelepulu	*
Oct 30	.	60	.	13	14	(200)	(80)	.	.	3	Kaelepulu	*
Nov 4	.	93	.	.	1	(80)	(30)	.	6	15	Kahuku	*
Nov 4	.	50	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	Salt Lake	*
Nov 9	1	+	.	.	+	.	.	1	.	.	West Loch	Hanson, 1958B
Nov 9	.	+	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	Salt Lake	Hanson, 1958B
Nov 15	.	21+	.	.	.	.	.	2	.	+	Salt Lake	*
Nov 20	.	40	4	.	5	(300)	330	.	69	31	Kahuku	*
Nov 20	.	(350)	.	20	100	(200)	6	.	.	(60)	Kaelepulu	*
Nov 27	.	61	.	.	.	55	50	1	12	.	Kahuku	*
Nov 27	1	(350)	1	.	40	(200)	(50)	.	.	.	Kaelepulu	*
Dec 4	1	310	4	4	14	30	50	.	28	11	Kahuku	*
Dec 9	.	8	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	Salt Lake	*
Dec 9	5	5	.	.	.	2	.	1	.	.	West Loch	*
Dec 11	.	(250)	.	4	110	.	.	.	.	(60)	Kaelepulu	*
Dec 21	2	(350)	.	.	42	44	35	.	2	58	Kaelepulu	Hatch, 1959
Dec 21	1	30+	.	2	+	15	18	5	2	35	Kuliouou + Kuapa	Hatch, 1959
Dec 21	1	.	.	.	.	78	31	3	.	27	Kaneohe	Hatch, 1959
Dec 21	.	58	.	10	.	6	.	.	.	4	Salt Lake	* (also Rocka-fellow, 1959)
Jan 8	.	358+	.	3	60	(30)	1+	.	.	(30)	Kaelepulu	*
Jan 25	1	+	.	+	+	+	.	.	.	+	Kaelepulu	MacClellan, 1959
Jan 25	.	+	.	.	.	+	+	.	+	+	Kahuku	MacClellan, 1959
Feb 20	.	.	.	.	.	40	30	.	.	.	Kahuku	*
Feb 23	.	+	.	.	+	+	+	.	.	+	Kaelepulu	Hanson, 1959
Mar 22	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	Salt Lake	Riggs, 1959
Mar 22	1	.	.	.	.	+	+	1	.	+	West Loch	Riggs, 1959
Apr 21	9	.	.	.	.	(60)	(20)	4	1	(40)	Kahuku	*
Apr 30	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	Kaelepulu	*
May 1	2	1	.	.	.	3	(80)	2	1	(40)	Kahuku	*
May 10	1	.	.	.	.	2	.	.	1	.	East Loch	King, 1959B
May 23	.	.	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	.	West Loch	*

Symbols: (60) - estimated number  
 + - present, not censused  
 20+ - minimum number  
 \* - observed by the present author



## LETTER CONCERNING CATTLE EGRETS - December 1, 1960

I was very pleased to read in the December 1960 issue of ELEPAIO the report of the discovery of the Cattle Egret Rookery at Kahuku, Oahu.

The reporter appears to indicate that the birds released in July 1959 at Kaaawa and Koko Head all located at Kahuku. I have had these birds under observation since they were released. It is my belief that six birds from the Kaaawa release located almost immediately at Kahuku and reproduced in 1959 or early 1960 although I could not locate their rookery.

A few of the birds from the Koko Head release are still in that general area and are reported from time to time.

Early this year nine birds were observed for three or four months in the paddocks behind the Kahua Ranch slaughterhouse at Honouliuli, Oahu. Later these birds disappeared and may have joined the colony at Kahuku.

I do not believe that our mongooses or wild domestic cats will kill many of these birds. They are well established in many parts of the world where predacious species are far more numerous than in Hawaii.

Alan Thistle, Head  
Division of Entomology and Marketing  
State of Hawaii Dept of Ag & Conserv.

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## LETTER FROM CHARLES LAMOUREUX REGARDING PLANTS IN PAIKO LAGOON - November 28, 1960

Pursuant to a conversation with Miss Titcomb, I visited the proposed sanctuary for shore birds at Paiko Lagoon on November 25. At this time I collected most of the plant species growing there. I did not have time to make an especially complete collection of the area, and further species can undoubtedly be found. However, the list below includes all the species of higher plants which form conspicuous elements of the vegetation.

## Algae

## Rhodophyta

Acanthophora sp. - the only alga observed which was at all abundant.

## Vascular plants

## Gramineae

Cenchrus echinatus - sandbur

Chloris paraguayensis - swollen fingergrass

Panicum maximum - Guinea grass

Sporobolus virginicus - beach grass

Tricholaena repens - Natal redtop

2 additional species of grasses were found only in sterile state and could not be identified.

## Batidaceae

Batis maritima - 'akulikuli kai or pickleweed

Another Batis with extremely small leaves, which may represent an undescribed endemic variety.

## Aizoaceae

Sesuvium portulacastrum - 'akulikuli

## Portulacaceae

Portulaca oleracea - 'akulikuli kula

## Leguminosae

Acacia farnesiana - klu

Leucaena glauca - koa haole

Prosopis sp. - kiawe

Euphorbiaceae

Euphorbia heterophylla var. cyathophora - Mexican fire plant

Euphorbia hypericifolia - graceful spurge

Malvaceae

Sida fallax - ilima

Thespesia populnea - milo

Rhizophoraceae

Rhizophora mangle - American (or red) mangrove

Convolvulaceae

Ipomea pentaphylla - hairy morning glory

Jacquemontia sandwicensis - pa'uohiaka

Compositae

Pluchea indica - Indian marsh fleabane or puchea

Most of these plants are the common plants found in such areas anywhere along the coast of the islands, and as such are the plants with which the shore birds are normally associated. However, the mangrove presents a problem, since if it is allowed to multiply unchecked, eventually the relatively clean lagoon will be replaced by an evil-smelling mangrove swamp. The mangrove could be removed with relative ease if it is done within a short time. In 5 years it would be an extremely difficult and expensive task. It seems to me that the property owners around Paiko Lagoon would demand that this be done whether the area is set aside as a sanctuary or not.

I did not find any rushes growing there, but I think that they could be transplanted with relative ease, and would probably grow well there.

You may use this information in any way you see fit.

Charles H. Lamoureux  
Asst Prof of Botany, Univ of Hawaii

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JANUARY ACTIVITIES:

FIELD TRIP: UNOYO KOJIMA WILL LEAD THE TRIP.

Jan. 8 - To Aiea Loop Trail if the weather permits. Meet at the Library of Hawaii at 7:00 a.m.

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MEETING: Board - Jan. 9, at 3653 Tantalus Drive at 7:30 p.m. Members are always welcome.

General - Jan 16, at the Honolulu Aquarium Auditorium at 7:30 p.m.  
A nature movie will be shown.

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