

# THE ELEPAIO

Journal of the  
Hawaii Audubon Society



For the Better Protection  
of Wildlife in Hawaii

VOLUME 21, NUMBER 8

FEBRUARY 1961

## HONOLULU CHRISTMAS COUNT December 26, 1960

	AREAS												TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Brown Booby	45	.	.	.	8	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	53
Red-footed Booby	1315	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1315
Great Frigate Bird	750	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	77	.	.	.	827
Black-cr Night Heron	.	6	.	.	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	.	7
Mallard	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	4	.	.	.	4
Pintail	.	.	.	43	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	43
Am Widgeon (Baldpate)	.	.	.	45	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	45
Shoveler	.	.	.	6	.	.	.	.	8	.	.	.	14
Ring-necked Pheasant	.	7	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	7
American Coot	.	.	.	780	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	780
American Golden Plover	4	37	.	6	11	.	.	35	12	.	41	.	146
Ruddy Turnstone	.	10	.	.	1	.	.	42	9	.	.	.	62
Wandering Tattler	.	5	.	2	1	.	.	5	4	.	.	.	17
Sanderling	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	1	.	.	.	2
Hawaiian Stilt	.	21	.	2	.	.	.	17	64	.	.	.	104
Glaucous-winged Gull	.	.	.	.	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	2
Bonaparte Gull	.	.	.	3	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	3
Pomarine Jaeger	.	.	.	.	4	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	4
Spotted Dove	2	19	3	5	13	2	3	3	.	1	.	4	55
Barred Dove	10	54	8	6	3	2	25	5	10	4	5	3	135
Japanese Varied Tit	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	3	3
Red-billed Leiothrix	.	.	4	.	.	33	.	.	.	62	.	16	115
Mockingbird	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	2	.	2
Shama Thrush	.	.	2	.	.	2	.	.	.	3	.	1	8
Elepaio	.	.	6	.	.	2	.	.	.	19	.	19	46
Mynah	13	18	14	3	56	1	60	.	3	.	24	.	192
White-eye	1	6	13	.	.	10	.	12	.	50	.	17	109
Amakihi	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	10	.	14	24
Apapane	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	22	.	42	64
Ricebird	6	233	5	.	.	.	4	.	.	2	1	1	252
House Sparrow	.	12	.	.	5	.	30	.	.	.	62	.	109
Cardinal (North Amer)	2	11	17	2	2	.	.	.	.	13	1	5	53
Brazilian Cardinal	18	6	.	2	1	.	.	.	.	.	1	.	28
House Finch	.	9	.	.	.	2	.	.	2	6	.	7	26
No. of Individual Birds:	2166	454	72	905	107	54	122	121	194	192	137	132	4656
No. of Species:	11	15	9	13	12	8	5	9	11	11	8	12	34
Hours on foot:	30"	.	.1'30"	.	1'	.	1'	1'	7'20"	.	.	3' 15'20"	
Hours by car:	15"1'25"	1'	15"1'30"	.	10"	.	.	.	.	.	40"	.	5'15"
Miles on foot:	1	.	.	2	.	1.2	.	.66	.5	3	.	2.5	10.86
Miles by car:	2	4	5.5	1	3	.	1	.	.	.	2	.	18.50

The following areas (as listed on page 55) were covered in this year's count:

<u>GROUPS</u>	<u>AREAS</u>	<u>PARTICIPANTS</u>
A	1 <sup>1</sup> Moku Manu (Through telescope from Ulupau Head) & Ulupau Head	Mr. & Mrs. Frank Stephenson
	2 Kaneohe Marine Base	David Lupton
	3 <sup>2</sup> Kapaa Quarry & Old Pali Road	Paul Schaefer
	4 Salt Lake (Through telescope)	
	5 Sand Island (Through telescope)	
B	6 Manoa Falls . . . . .	Blanche A. Pedley
	7 University Campus	Al Labrecque
	8 Kuliouou Beach	Mr. & Mrs. Van Southwick
	9 Kuapa Pond	
C	10 Tantalus . . . . .	Grenville Hatch
	11 Punchbowl Memorial Cemetery	Margaret Titcomb
		Marion Zeitler
D	12 Aiea Trail . . . . .	Unoyo Kojima
		Ann Halsted
		Euphie Shields

1. Moku Manu - 1,000+ Red-footed boobies	2. Old Pali Road - Barred dove	2
45 Brown boobies	Shama thrush	2
	Leiiothrix	4
	White-eye	4

#### THE 1960 CHRISTMAS COUNT

The rain was intermittent in most areas on December 26th, the day of the count, but almost continual in the Aiea area. Since there had been a week of cloudy weather, with much rain in the uplands, all trails, Manoa Falls, Tantalus and Aiea, were muddy and very slippery. The day was cool, with temperatures ranging from 68° to 79°; and there was virtually no wind, although Group A reported a light southerly wind for a part of the day.

The eucalyptus was in bloom on the lower stretches of the Aiea trail and in the adjoining valleys, so that Apapane were seen early on the trail. There was no blossom on either the Manoa Falls or Tantalus trail. It is interesting to look back over the Christmas counts of recent years, to see how the blossoming season varies from year to year. Since the count of Apapane and Amakihi depends so largely on the state of the trees, we find that only in the years when the flowering coincides with the count do we find large numbers of the two species mentioned. However, it seems noteworthy that their numbers have increased on Tantalus in recent years, since even without flowers, a fair count has been obtained.

Two other assumptions seem justified -- that both the Shama and the Japanese Varied Tit are increasing. This year the Shama is reported from four upland areas. The Tit is reported regularly from Aiea Trail, and has been seen at Halawa in recent months by Unoyo Kojima.

The most exciting finds of the count were reported by Group A -- Frank and Elizabeth Stephenson, Paul Schaefer and David Lupton, who found three Bonaparte's Gulls at Salt Lake, and two other gulls on the Sand Island section. The latter, after much discussion and study of the books, were labeled as Glaucous-Winged Gulls, but there is a possibility that they may have been Glaucous Gulls.

Group A also came back with good reports of the situation on Moku Manu and Ulupau Head, where the colony of Boobies seemed to fill the trees and shrubs as they used to do several years ago.

Both Groups A and B were fortunate in seeing large numbers of Frigate-birds. At Moku Manu they streamed past in seemingly unending numbers. At Kuapa they came across the mountains, circled about, then flew out to sea past Diamond Head.

(Cont'd on page 58)



HONOLULU CHRISTMAS COUNTS  
1951 - 1960

	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960
Black-footed Albatross	.	.	.	.	.	2	2	2	2	.
Laysan Albatross	.	.	.	.	1	3	.	.	.	.
White-tailed Tropic-bird	.	.	.	2	.	.	.	.	.	.
Blue-faced Booby	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	1	.
Brown Booby	.	.	5	9	33	6	66	20	50	53
Red-footed Booby	628	215	450	880	1150	1000	1230	1560	1013	1315
Great Frigate Bird	2	32	14	21	86	35	241	728	120	827
Black-crowned Night Heron	2	.	.	3	4	2	4	4	2	7
Mallard	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	4
Pintail	336	296	58	795	256	329	81	438	148	43
American Widgeon (Baldpate)	.	.	.	2	.	2	11	9	17	45
European Widgeon	.	.	.	.	.	.	4	.	.	.
Shoveler	.	2	.	200	.	87	60	42	43	14
California Quail	.	.	.	10	.	.	.	.	.	.
Ring-necked Pheasant	1	.	.	2	7	3	2	.	.	7
Common Gallinule	.	5	3	4	4	3	4	.	1	.
American Coot	17	153	30	449	224	245	1138	2202	1133	780
American Golden Plover	125	82	67	396	366	228	177	260	118	146
Black-bellied Plover	.	.	1	1	.	.	4	.	.	.
Ruddy Turnstone	9	47	66	196	208	115	110	86	2	62
Wandering Tattler	1	8	9	17	24	15	8	11	14	17
Sanderling	3	3	26	30	36	41	26	4	16	2
Hawaiian Stilt	66	69	28	12	24	211	24	124	124	104
Glaucous-winged Gull	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	2
Bonaparte Gull	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	.	.	3
Pomarine Jaeger	.	.	.	.	.	7	17	10	2	4
Least Tern	.	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Noddy Tern	.	.	.	1	.	.	12	.	.	.
Hawaiian Noddy Tern	2	6	1	.	16	4	.	.	.	.
Greater Yellow-legs	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	.	.	.
Rock Dove	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	3	.	.
Spotted Dove	46	73	32	352	195	141	59	81	106	55
Barred Dove	236	166	136	1033	614	216	218	276	176	135
Hawaiian Short-eared Owl	.	1	.	1	1	.	.	.	.	.
Skylark	2	.	.	.	6	.	.	.	.	.
Japanese Varied Tit	.	.	.	.	4	2	1	3	.	3
Red-billed Leiothrix	.	20	2	83	462	150	72	163	76	115
Chinese Thrush	.	.	.	.	5	.	.	.	2	.
Mockingbird	7	.	.	.	.	.	2	2	1	2
Shama Thrush	.	.	.	6	10	4	6	9	3	8
Elepaio	.	12	.	27	74	25	10	63	46	46
Mynah	241	150	114	1587	640	331	245	311	391	192
White-eye	6	37	7	209	402	221	102	130	89	109
Anakihi	.	.	.	27	102	77	24	88	56	24
Hawaiian Creeper	.	.	.	.	3	2	1	1	1	.
Apapane	.	.	.	33	159	506	241	66	23	64
Ricebird	260	279	119	281	421	176	178	306	179	252
House Sparrow	119	79	140	564	381	109	96	311	68	109
Cardinal (North American)	53	71	35	115	212	72	22	71	32	53
Brazilian Cardinal	19	13	11	51	94	29	8	9	18	28
House Finch	13	3	11	86	91	101	57	61	3	26
No. of Species	23#	24#	24#	34	34	35	39	34	34	34
Individuals	2194	2728*	1366	7485	6315	4500	4565	7457*	4076	4656
Observers	15	8	9	21	22	18	12	14	12	14

#Poamoho totals not included. \*Unidentified waterfowl included: 1952 - 906, 1958 - 2.



## THE 1960 CHRISTMAS COUNT (Cont'd from page 56)

Despite the two unusual gulls, the species count remained at the old level of 34. Notably missing from the list were the Black-footed Albatross, the Hawaiian White-capped Noddy, the Gallinule, the Owl, the Chinese Thrush and the Creeper. While we have never seen all of these on any one count, we always hope for one or more to swell the species total. The number of individuals was down this year. Large totals usually depend upon the counts of boobies, coots, doves and mynahs. The booby count was large, the coot count fairly so, but both dove and mynah counts were low. Last year the Stephensons' count of residential birds helped to increase the totals -- this year no one undertook that phase. It is unfortunate that we seem unable to enlist members to make counts which involve relatively little effort, but which would help present a more accurate picture of the bird population.

The day ended with the dinner at Coco's, at which most of the participants, all neatly scrubbed, exchanged experiences, and made the final tally.

Grenville Hatch

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## PAIKO LAGOON SANCTUARY PROJECT: A REPORT OF PROGRESS

A brief note may be of interest to all members as to happenings in our effort to capture the State-owned Paiko Lagoon as a sanctuary for water-birds, our main concern being a safe habitat for the stilt and aukuu, and the migratory birds: plover, wandering tattler, sanderling and turnstone, all of which are just as Hawaiian as any other birds. In fact, it is tremendously important that we remain hospitable to these dual-habitat birds, for their pattern of life was set ages ago, is unchangeable, and they depend on Hawaii as a landing place, a place to sojourn while resting and feeding before taking the long journey back to the north. Mullet are in the pond and it would be highly beneficial to them if we save this one-of-the-last fishponds. Therefore, more fauna than just birds are to be saved.

After presenting our statement to the State Planning Office in October, and sending copies to several conservationists and ornithologists, we waited for several weeks for a reply from the State Planning Office. In the meantime, all conservation groups in Hawaii backed our appeal. The conservation committee of the U.S. Department of the Interior, through Ross Leffler, expressed approval, together with Joseph E. King and Robert Pyle, old friends from Hawaii, now in Washington. Ornithologists Ernst Mayr, Dean Amadon and d'Arcy Northwood responded forcefully, as well as Conservationist Harold Coolidge, Chairman of the Pacific Committee of the National Research Council. Copies of their letters were sent to the State Planning Office. The Hui Manu, the Garden Club, and the Outdoor Circle have kindly urged that this sanctuary be set aside, sending their appeals directly.

The State Planning Office's reply was that they had turned over the matter to the Department of Agriculture and Conservation. This was good news indeed as Wayne Collins, Director, had expressed approval of the appeal. Then news came soon of his resignation from that Board, and our confidence in success was somewhat reduced. To date, his successor has not been announced. However, representatives of the Fauna Committee of the Conservation Council, Paul Breese, Kenji Ego and Ray Kramer, have given us copies of resolutions they have framed and sent to the Conservation Council for Hawaii, which will hold its annual meeting in February. We feel sure that that body as well as the Coordinating Committee for Conservation will receive attention from legislators.

A late appeal was sent to the Nature Conservancy, in Washington, and that body has been generous in its willingness to assist.

Mr. Breese suggested trying to see Mr. A.O. Seeley of the State Parks Department so as to go over the situation with him. He courteously reviewed it and suggested that a meeting be attempted with representatives of all parties who are interested in any use of



the lagoon, saying that if agreement can be reached by such a group it will greatly speed acceptance of any proposal made to the Legislature. We are glad to say that we have one friend in the Legislature, Mr. Percy Mirikitani. We hope to find many more. It is our task to make a larger number of the public aware of our natural treasures involved here: the birds, fish, and the lagoon itself.

A modification of the original appeal is now being prepared and a meeting of interested parties will be proposed. We hope for success by this route.

Deep appreciation is expressed for the help of all friends and groups above listed, as well as those not listed.

Margaret Titcomb, President

P.S. Further details might have been included if I were not separated from my notes and records at this moment, on the island of Hawaii.

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### GEESE IN HAWAII, RARE VISITORS

#### EMPEROR GESE ON OAHU

On Saturday, December 3rd, 1960, two Emperor Geese were found in Kailua by Laurie Dowsett. One, which was extremely thin, weighing only a little over two pounds, was taken in the yard of Mr. and Mrs. Welton Avery. This one died four days later, but the second, which seems in good condition, was in the drainage canal leading from Kawainui swamp, and in the bay, until it was caught on December 10th, to be released, for safety, at Kanaha Refuge, on Maui.

The Emperor Goose, Philacte canagica, is a handsome medium sized goose, with silvery grey plumage, barred with black and white. The head, hind neck and tail are white; the feet bright orange-yellow. Its range is so limited that it is the least well known of all our geese. It nests on the marshy coastal area between the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers of Alaska, and winters along the seacoast of southwestern Alaska. Occasional stragglers are found as far south as California.

This appears to be the fourth time the Emperor Goose has been seen here. One was reported from Puna, Hawaii, in 1903, by George C. Munro; another from Kauai, in 1940, also by Munro; another was found dead at Punaluu, by Joseph Redo, in February, 1957, the skin given to Bishop Museum; and now these two have come.

Grenville Hatch

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A further note of the Emperor Goose appeared in the Honolulu Star-Bulletin, of December 12th.

#### HUNDREDS SEE EMPEROR GOOSE HERE

An Emperor Goose was king for a day in Waikiki Sunday, and today was to be transferred to the Kanaha Waterfowl Sanctuary on Maui.

The hundreds who viewed it at the Honolulu Zoo saw, not an ordinary goose, but the first Emperor Goose ever publicly exhibited in Hawaii and the rarest variety of North American goose.

The Emperor Goose normally spends its entire life in Alaska. Just why this particular fellow made the voyage from 49th to 50th State is a mystery. It was caught midnight Friday, weak and hungry.

Up to a few days ago, ornithologists never heard of an Emperor Goose landing in Hawaii.

Another one that recently arrived on Oahu died. On Molokai, State Fish and Game people have gone on a literal wild-geese chase for three birds tentatively identified as Emperor Geese.

The Emperor Goose breeds only along the shore between the mouths of the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers of Alaska. In winter it normally migrates only to the Aleutian Islands or another part of Alaska.

All other Alaska geese fly south of Alaska, but not the Emperor - except for an occasional straggler that may show up on the California coast.

Paul L. Breese, Honolulu Zoo director, thinks that the goose exhibited yesterday may have flown five times further than the 1,000 miles needed to get here.

The goose found here was exhausted from a combination of lack of food and exertion. It was able to rest by landing on the ocean but probably had nothing to eat en route.

Breese says, however, that the goose is doing well and is no longer weak although it's exceptionally thin.

It was shown yesterday in the waterfowl enclosure at the zoo, where it mingled with other geese, ducks and swans.

The goose is probably a male, Breese said. But the sex of the species is known but to geese. Ornithologists often can't tell.

The Emperor is identified by his white head and tail, and gray body with little black lines. His feet are orange.

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#### Other Geese

In the Honolulu Advertiser of December 6th, two other rare geese visitors were reported: Black Brant geese. They were "taking their ease in the sea off Kihei and Maalaea." It had last been reported by James C. Munro on Molokai in 1938, when three appeared. An earlier report was in 1891. The two present-day visitors were seen first by Carroll E. Lindley, identified by him, and reported to Biologist Joe Medeiros. These geese are small but "considerably bigger than ducks."

A lone Cackling Goose was discovered November 1, by Jim Freeman, HC&S field service section operations foreman, in the plantation's mud-settling ponds near Puunene Village 6, Maui. This visitor from Canada was first sighted on Maui on Kanaha Pond in 1957, and again in 1959, in the same pond, according to Joe Medeiros, local wildlife biologist.

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#### SHEARWATER CALAMITY ON KAUAI

During the heavy rains on Kauai in late October a distressing number of dead wing-\*tailed shearwaters were seen on the highway skirting the shoreline between Kealia and the Wailua river. In three mornings I counted a total of 48 shattered birds within a distance of about five miles, and in one spot no larger than the shadow of a car there was a cluster of eight. Every fall a few shearwaters are found dead on the highways or grounded with exhaustion, but in all my years here I have never seen such slaughter as there was last month.

The shearwaters nest along the cliffs of the north coast near the Kilauea lighthouse, and the adult birds abandon their young about this time of year. They all apparently take



to the air during stormy nights, and their catlike cry is a familiar portent of bad weather. They follow the coastline from Kilauea and have clear sailing until they reach Kealia where the highway from Anahola first joins the oceanside. Here is where the slaughter begins as the young birds (?), dazzled by their first glimpse of shining headlights and glaring street lamps at plantation road crossings, dive straight into them. It was under one of those street lamps that I saw that pitiful cluster of eight, and counted ten more within a hundred yards.

There must have been a bumper crop of young ones this year. There is no way of knowing how large the flocks are since they seem to fly only at night. Three years ago there was a great to-do about one that was picked up on the beach, since they were considered to be quite rare; so Hui O Laka had it stuffed and put in the natural history museum at Kokee.

There have been several heavy storms in the last three weeks, but I have not seen a single dead shearwater on the road since that week in October. One wonders why.

\*Editor's Note: May be wedge-tailed shearwaters.

Thelma H. Hadley

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Field Trip, November 13, 1960, to Kahuku.

The Hawaii Audubon Society conducted its November bird walk on Sunday, November 13, primarily in search of shore and water birds. Originally the trip was planned for a walk along the Aiea Loop Trail in search of forest birds, but wet and slippery conditions postponed these plans to a later date.

The group of 7 members and 3 visitors (one from Washington and two from Wisconsin) met at 7 A.M. on the Punchbowl Street side of the Library of Hawaii and was led by Unoyo Kojima. From 7 to 9:30 A.M. a few Skylarks were seen at Wheeler Field and a flock of 60 - 75 Rice-birds were seen at Waialeale. North American Cardinals and Brazilian Cardinals were also seen along the way to our destination - Kahuku - where we arrived at 9:30 A.M. Weather conditions were relatively poor at Kahuku, the sky being overcast most of the time. In the stream at Kahuku, 8 Pintail and 2 Coot were observed, while in the surrounding grassy mud flats the following birds were seen: 6 Pintails, 8 Shovelers, 12 Ruddy Turnstone, 17 Sanderlings, 3 Wandering Tattlers, 8 Sharp-tailed Sandpipers, 6 Hawaiian Black-necked Stilts, 1 Black-crowned Night Heron, 10 Cattle Egrets, and many Golden Plovers. In the nearby dump, 43 Ruddy Turnstones, 3 Sanderlings, 2 Sharp-tailed Sandpipers, Golden Plovers, Mynahs, Barred Doves, Chinese Spotted Doves, and English Sparrows were seen. From 11:30 A.M. to 12:30 P.M. the group continued on to the ocean shore near Kahuku and ate lunch. During this time 1 Sanderling was observed walking along the beach and 1 Red-footed Booby was seen flying out at sea.

From 12:30 to 3:30 P.M. the group returned to Honolulu by way of Kapaa Quarry and the Old Pali Road. White-eyes were frequently seen and the Red-billed Leiothrix and Chinese Thrush were heard singing.

David W. Lupton

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Field Note: Barn Owl

A barn owl was observed by Gordon Pearsall on November 27, at Puohala Village, Kaneohe. It flew into a wire and then landed on a garage roof unhurt. It flew up onto a high window ledge, stayed all day, left for the night, came back the next night, then disappeared.

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The following new members are welcomed to our Society:

Bea Green, 5330 Oio Drive, Honolulu 16, Hawaii

Lt. Gen. Oliver S. Picher, 2124 Mott-Smith Drive, Honolulu 14, Hawaii

## OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN, 1961

At the Council meeting, January 4th, the officers for the year were elected:

President	Margaret Titcomb
First Vice-President	H. McClure Johnson
Second Vice-President	Alphonse Labrecque
Secretary	Ann Halsted
Treasurer	Blanche A. Pedley

Committee chairmen, 1961, were appointed:

Trails	Alphonse Labrecque
Membership	Laura Draper
Program	Carl Sims
Ecology and Behavior Study	H. McClure Johnson
Conservation	Margaret Titcomb
Publicity	Ruth R. Rockafellow

The large Editorial Committee remains unchanged, for which we are appreciatively thankful:

Editor-in-Chief	Margaret Newman
Editor	Charlotta Hoskins
Editor	Euphie Shields

Technical assistants: Unoyo Kojima, Hannah Richards, Irma Botsford.

Mr. A.O. Marrack has kindly consented to audit the Treasurer's books.

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## FEBRUARY ACTIVITIES:

FIELD TRIP: AL LABRECQUE WILL LEAD THE TRIP.

Feb. 12 - To Kahuku to study shore birds. Meet at the Library of Hawaii at 7:00 a.m.

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MEETING: Board - Feb. 13, at 3653 Tantalus Drive at 7:30 p.m. Members are always welcome.

General - Feb. 20, at the Honolulu Aquarium Auditorium at 7:30 p.m. Mr. Herbert Yamamura of the U.S. Soil Conservation Service will speak on, "The Role of Birds in Conservation."

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## HAWAII AUDUBON SOCIETY OFFICERS:

President:	Miss Margaret Titcomb
Vice-Presidents:	Dr. H. McClure Johnson
	Alphonse Labrecque
Secretary:	Miss Ann Halsted
Treasurer:	Mrs. Blanche A. Pedley

THE ELEPAIO: EDITORS

Miss Margaret Newman, Editor in Chief
Miss Charlotta Hoskins
Miss Euphie G.M. Shields

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DUES: Regular - \$2.00 per annum  
 Junior (18 years and under) - \$1.00 per annum  
 Life - \$50.00

DUES FOR 1961 ARE NOW PAYABLE