

THE ELEPAIO

Journal of the
Hawaii Audubon Society



For the Better Protection
of Wildlife in Hawaii

VOLUME 23, NUMBER 2

AUGUST 1962

FROM RONALD L. WALKER
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Here are two field notes which may be of interest to your readers:

October 30, 1961

A female redhead duck (*Nyroca American*) in a weakened condition, was captured by a skindiver in Kailua Bay, Kona. An attempt was made to feed it, but it died soon afterward; and was made into a live mount. It had been banded by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife service, but to date no report as to the location of the banding station has been received.

January 18, 1962

ANNUAL WATERFOWL CENSUS - ISLAND OF HAWAII

Ducks:		Shorebirds:	
Pintail	205	Plover	420
Lesser Scaup	10	Wandering Tattler	17
Baldpate	19	Ruddy Turnstone	131
Shoveller	1	Sanderling	21
Coot	51	Aukuu	4
Unclassified	62	Noddy tern	1
Total	348		594

I thought it might be of interest to "Elepaio" readers to hear a report of our findings on a recent wildlife survey of Mauna Kea Game Management Area. This is an annual affair during which we attempt to count all animals, bird and mammal, game and non-game to determine the increase or decrease over the past year. Eight men participated walking from 6 to 15 miles a day for 5 days at elevations of 6,500 to 12,000 feet.

As the primary purpose is to note feral animal browsing pressure on the forest, it was encouraging to see a decrease in sheep numbers; and an increase in mamani (*sophora chrysophylla*), naio (*myoporum sandwicense*), and puakeawe (*stypheleis tameiameiae*) regrowth, both sprouting and seedlings. Apparently, constant hunting pressure, new access roads, and liberalized harvesting methods have resulted in a marked reduction, as only 1,835 sheep were counted. This represents a decrease of 583 over the 1961 count which numbered 2,418 animals.

Only 155 feral pigs were counted, and apparently drought conditions have forced these into the lower, wetter ranch areas where severe damage to the pasture lands is being noted.

Twenty-five feral goats were seen, mostly concentrated at the upper reaches of precipitous Pohakuloa Gulch on the south face of Mauna Kea.

Although Silverswords have been reported previously from the slopes of Mauna Kea, it was exciting to note at least 26 young plants growing along the protected shelf of Waiapahoehoe gulch above Hilo at about 10,000 feet.

As the group proceeded clockwise around the mountain from Puu Laau, flocks of plover were seen lifting off from grassy flats at the lower elevations. Male feral turkeys with substantial harems were noted on the way to Kemole. White-eyes, amakihis, Pekin nightingales, and California Valley quail were common in the open mamani forest. A little higher up in the pukeawe belt substantial numbers of Indian Chukar partridges were beginning to pair up and spread out. At Kaluamakani on the north slope two feral peacocks were seen courting a peahen near the ranch boundary fence. Ringnecked pheasants seemed most abundant on this segment of the mountain. Feral pigeons, apparently roosting in the rock caves above the prominent cinder cones, flew down over our heads into Parker Ranch to feed. Hawaiian owls skirted the forest edge in search of rodents in the early morning and late evening and a single Hawaiian Hawk was spotted through the glasses, perched on a dead snag above the cabin. After dark when the weary walkers retired, a single dark-rumped petrel (uau) was heard uttering its peculiar call from a nearby hill. Later during the week as we proceeded around to the drier leeward side, bird numbers decreased, but a number of interesting observations were noted. Several skylarks were seen fluttering above the Hopukani spring outlet at 10,200 feet just over the ridge from Lake Waiiau. Iiwis and apapanes were numerous in the trees above Kanakaleonui. Palilas were quite common in the flowering mamani, and sightings were recorded at Puu Laau, Pohakuloa Gulch, and the lower Halepohaku regions. It is this writer's belief that there has been an increase in Palila numbers during the past five years, as large groups are being seen over a wide area.

In general conditions are much improved on Mauna Kea from a vegetative reproduction standpoint. Most of the dead trees and eroded areas which can be seen now can be attributed to the ravages of 30,000 sheep 30 years ago, and not to the present population of perhaps 2,000.

GEORGE MUNRO GETS AWARD
From Honolulu Advertiser
June 28, 1962

"Pioneer Hawaii botanist George Campbell Munro, 96, last night received the Garden Club of America's highest award, the Medal of Honor.

"The medal was presented at a dinner in Lennox, Mass. Accepting for Munro was Mrs. Archibald A. Carswell, immediate past president of the Garden Club of Honolulu.

"Mrs. Thomas M. Waller of New York, chairman of the awards committee, said the Munro's contributions have been 'equally distinguished in both the fields of conservations and horticulture.'

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"MUNRO FIRST became nationally known for his work with water and soil conservation during a term as manager of the Lanai Co.'s cattle ranch on Lanai in 1911-1920.

"He also is known for writing 'Birds of Hawaii,' a handbook.

"He has campaigned for the protection of native and migratory shore birds and also for the conservation of areas for the preservation of endemic plants and trees.

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" AS A RESULT of his work, nine acres of the super slopes of Diamond Head were earmarked for a State park in 1958. The area will be a haven for native birds and plants."

THE UNUSUAL FINCH (Cont'd)

The yellowish male finch, with the long beak has been back to my feeding tray fairly regularly since last reported. I can almost time his visits - 6 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. He is still cautious but nevertheless very brave and tough when necessary. He's been bested by North American cardinals once or twice but is beginning to hold his own. In fact, they too are showing respect for that bill. Birds his own size did from the beginning. He sometimes fights other birds off by flying with them above the tray, wings going like a hummingbird's. Sometimes he has confidence enough to preen himself and stand on one leg for awhile on the cover above the tray. He doesn't even mind my music which ranges from West Side Story and Whiskeyhill Singers to Chopin and Rachmaninoff. In fact, I think he likes it as he sits and looks into the room and cocks his head.

Janet Bell

A hearty welcome to the following new members:

Dr. Paul H. Baldwin, Dept. of Zoology, Colorado State University, Ft. Collins, Colo.
 G. A. Hicks, Box 421, Honolulu 9, Hawaii
 Mrs. Maurice V. King, Jr., 2536 Olopuia St., Honolulu 14, Hawaii
 Harriet E. Linn, R.F.D. #1, St. James, Minnesota
 Dr. Frank P. Mathews, M.D., Box 492, Naalehu, Hawaii
 Mark Vossbrink, 3314 Halelani Drive, Honolulu 14, Hawaii

AUGUST ACTIVITIES:

- August 12 - Field trip to Mokapu Point to see the booby colony, led by Mike Ord. Meet at the Library of Hawaii at 8:00 a.m.
- August 14 - Board meeting at the Auditorium of the Honolulu Aquarium at 7:30 p.m. Members are always welcome.
- August 20 - General meeting at the Auditorium of the Honolulu Aquarium at 7:30 p.m. Mr. Edwin H. Bryan will discuss his "Check List of Birds of the Pacific" to be published by the Pacific Scientific Information Center.

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