

THE ELEPAIO

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For the Better Protection
of Wildlife in Hawaii

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1963 CHRISTMAS COUNT

The Christmas bird count this year will be held on Sunday, December 29, 1963, and will take the place of the regular monthly field trip.

It is hoped that we can get a good turn out of watchers this year, particularly within the residential areas. During the past few years the total number of individual birds seen has diminished greatly--regrettably, due to so few interested observers participating.

For the last two years we have managed to equal the record for number of species ever seen on our count, so let this be an incentive for you birders to come out and join us and better that record.

Participants are requested to pay 50¢ per person because of the high cost of publishing Audubon Field Notes.

For further information call Mike Ord--Tel. 587-328, or attend the special General Meeting on Monday, December 9th, at Honolulu Aquarium.

BIRDS OF THE MONTH

By W. M. Ord

While the number of species seen between October 1st and October 31st was not as impressive as the preceding month, migratory waterfowl and shorebirds continued to arrive in the islands.

A field trip up the new road on Mount Kaala proved very disappointing, due mainly to a continual line of heavy trucks going to the summit.

White-tailed Tropicbird	5	10/15/63	Chinaman's Hat
American Widgeon	10	10/19/63	Waipio Peninsula
Black-bellied Plover	1	10/6/63	" "
Common Snipe	1	10/6/63	" "
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	10	10/19/63	" "
Pectoral Sandpiper	1	10/19/63	" "
Dunlin	1	10/27/63	" "
Apapane	5	10/26/63	Mount Kaala
Amakihi	7	10/26/63	" "

Contributors: W. Banko, W. King, and W.M. Ord.

FROM THE EDITORS' MAILBOX:

Re: Owls

"I read with interest the reprint of "Owls Are Indeed the Oddest Birds" in the October, 1963, issue of ELEPAIO.

"I must apologize for not keeping you up-to-date- on Barn Owl (Tyto alba) introductions.

"In May, 1963, four (4) mature barn owls were received from the San Diego Zoo and released in the Mana area (Kekaha Sugar Co.) on Kauai.

"In June, 1963, an additional four (4) mature barn owls were released on Molokai Ranch lands, West Molokai.

 "T. alba appears, from periodic reports, to be fairly well established in most districts on Kauai and apparently covers a wide range on Hawaii - from Hilo along the Hamakua Coast to Waipio Valley and around to Kona. On the evening of August 2, 1963, twenty-six (26) barn owls were counted from the highway by Hawaii Island Resident Entomologist Yoshioka between Puu Anahulu to Hale Piula, North Kona District."

Alan Thistle, Head
 Division of Plant Industry
 Department of Agriculture
 Honolulu, Hawaii

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Re: Stilt

From a letter from George Loomis writing for the Secretary of the Bernice P. Bishop Estate to George C. Munro, September 3, 1963.

"Incidentally, you may be interested in knowing that we have recently found 23 Hawaiian Stilt in a little pond at Makalawena. Your book on "Birds of Hawaii" stated that this bird was common on the Island of Hawaii. We feel that the Hawaiian Stilt must be nesting in this particular area and perhaps in the coming year, we may be able to prove this."

THE FORESTS OF MOLOKAI

By George C. Munro

Article by Noah Pekelo in THE ELEPAIO of October, 1963, interests me, especially his notes on birds and forest regression on East Molokai. I traversed the forests on the west side to some extent from 1899 to 1906 and collected birds there for a few days in 1907. The forest was at that time in good condition and the birds plentiful.

I made a bird survey on both east and west sides of the forest in 1936 and found on both sides large areas of forest, principally ohia, was dead or dying and the birds gone. Of the endemic birds I saw but one, a lone apapane.

It would seem that the forests deteriorated, recovered, and are now deteriorating again. This certainly calls for study.

Following are some of my notes taken at the time on West Side March 14, 1936:

"One is impressed with the large areas of ohia forest that has died out in the last thirty five years, probably thousands of acres. The forest is covered with young growth mostly ohia and Byronia." March 26 on East Side: "...on which I had

gone up some years ago. But it had greatly changed. The forest had most died out; the ieie vine through which I had cut my way was all dead." I could quote much more on the same subject.

Large areas of forest on Molokai had died out before 1899. Cattle were blamed for killing the trees. But the trees evidently died naturally and the cattle browsing on the young growth prevented their regrowth and grasses that were also blamed erroneously for killing the forest took up the ground.

THE LANAI FOGDRIP EXPERIMENT By George C. Munro

In AMERICAN FORESTS 1961 I see a statement that a number of institutions named began in 1955 the cooperative study called the "fog-drip experiment." This was not really the experiment. It was an investigation of the results of an experiment started in 1922. In 1919 an experiment was made to find if the Norfolk Island pine (Araucaria excelsa) would grow on the Lanai mountain.

This was when those two fine men Frank and Harry Baldwin were owners of nearly all of Lanai and I was their manager. They were developing Lanai as a cattle ranch, and it was my business to see that the cattle had a reliable supply of food and water. This tree gave good promise and in 1922 I started definitely the Lanai fogdrip experiment.

The Araucaria tree at Koele, brought from Australia by Hillibrand and planted by Hayselden in 1875, condensed a considerable amount of water in fogs, so trees of the same species would condense more at a higher elevation and there would be no runoff. It was from these trees that the investigation was started in 1955.

The trees were kept in the nursery till about three feet high and planted by the cowboys without any clearing or other preparation of the ground. The forest ranger in his rounds saw that the end shoot was kept clear. Few if any of the trees died.

It was mainly due to the efforts of the late Victor Thalman, then Conservationist with the Hawaiian Pineapple Company on Lanai, that the investigation was started. I had tried in vain to draw attention to the experiment, as clippings from the newspapers can bear witness.

Field Trip to Lyons Arboretum, November 10, 1963.

Braving a strong, gusty northeast wind, six Audubon members and two guests, Dr. and Mrs. Frank Freeman, of New York state, fared forth to the Lyons Arboretum, in upper Manoa Valley. There we were met by Mr. Donald Anderson, the superintendent, who very graciously took us on a tour of the arboretum.

The arboretum consists of 124 acres and is situated near the very end of Manoa Road. It was established in 1918 by the Hawaii Sugar Planters' Association as an experimental station under the direction of Dr. Harold L. Lyons. At one time some 30 acres were devoted to trial plantings of sugar cane. However, the location was found lacking sufficient sunshine for this purpose and the project was abandoned after some 15 years. The area was then devoted to tree planting. Seeds were obtained from various parts of the world, some 5,000 species being tried. This project was also directed by Dr. Lyons, who was the botanist for the H.S.P.A.

Through Dr. Lyons' efforts the property was conditionally deeded to the University of Hawaii Foundation about 1955. In 1961 the University officially accepted the property

into their program under the Dean of agriculture. It is supported principally by income from the estate of Dr. Lyons. It receives only token support from the State. It is administered by the Board of Regents of the University. Dr. Lyons died in 1957.

Among the trees which came to our attention were several species of eucalyptus, banyan, including one from Okinawa, albizzia, Norfolk Island Pine and one large cypress. Other plants: guavas, both lemon and strawberry; Cecropia peltata, with its papaya-like leaves, which curl up like a fist as they dry after falling. Although this is usually a small tree there was one huge specimen, probably 70 feet tall. There were many Macaranga, with two-foot round leaves and long stems fastened to the center of the leaf. Areas were being cleared of "Fiddlewood," with clusters of small orange-colored berries which Leiothrix have carried to Pauoa Flats, above the valley. There were many palms, among them the tall cabbage palm and a planting of betal-nut palm (Areca catechu). There were small plants of awa (Piper methysticum), ape, dry land taro, many species of ginger and a Guam hala. Along some of the walks were palm grass, maiden-hair fern and impatiens.

Owing to the stormy weather, it was a very poor day for birding. Mr. Anderson told us of a pair of Shama thrushes, the female of which is very tame, leading to the belief that she might have been a caged bird at one time. We had a glimpse of this bird along the trail and heard the song of her mate, a wild bird that is seldom seen. Farther up the valley is another pair, of which it is the male that is tame--very tame. Mr. Anderson told us that when he is working in that pair's kuleana this male will follow him around like a barn-yard fowl to eat the insects that his work uncovers. This male will also perch within arm's length of Mr. Anderson and sing his song. Still farther up the valley is a pair of wild birds. There are other Shammas in the area of the former Carter estate, on the other side of the valley. We heard Leiothrix and Elepaio but didn't see any of them.

A species of tree frog was introduced here a few years ago and is thriving. They are quite small, green with black markings. Mr. Anderson says he often sees them. The tadpoles fasten themselves to a parent, probably papa, and are carried around that way, one on each side.

The wood of the beautiful, tall, widespreading albizzias breaks easily. Just as we were leaving the arboretum and nearing our cars a strong gust of wind broke a 20-foot branch of one, which fell alongside the roadway, too near for comfort.

Because the arboretum is surrounded by Water Reserve it is not open to the general public. Only scientists and students are permitted to visit it.

Al Labrecque

Welcome to new junior member: Beth Rhoden, 623-B Cedar Drive, Pearl City, 96782.

DECEMBER ACTIVITIES:

December 9 - General meeting at the Honolulu Aquarium at 7:30 p.m. (PLEASE NOTE DATE)

Speaker: Dr. Clifford Carl, Director of the Provincial Museum of Natural History, Vancouver, B.C., Canada.

Topic to be announced in newspaper.

On December 10 at 1:00 p.m., University Campus, 155 Spalding Hall, Dr. Carl will speak on the "Essence of Life," illustrated with a movie on water conservation.

On December 11th at 4:00 p.m., same location, Dr. Carl will speak on the "Secrets of the Sea," with a movie. Both talks at the University are open to the public.

December 29 - Christmas bird count.

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