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For the Better Protection
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BIRDS ON HAWAII'S "BIG ISLAND" By Warren B. King and David Bratley

From 18 through 20 April 1964 the authors covered nearly 500 miles on the island of Hawaii in an effort to see as many of the Big Island's native and introduced birds as a three day visit permits. With luck and some planning a surprising number can be seen.

Ten miles north of Pohakuloa State Park is Ka'ohe Game Management Area. This area covers an extensive open forest of Mamane and Naio trees on the flank of Mauna Kea. It is a haven for game birds as well as several of the native species. Coveys of California Quail, ten or twenty birds to a covey, greeted us at every turn of the jeep road which traverses the area. Ring-necked Pheasant were also abundant.

Introduced songbirds here play second fiddle to the vast numbers of Amakihi, the most plentiful bird in the area. An Amakihi's nest was found 18 April containing two small pyriform eggs with the larger end circled with reddish-brown spots. The nest was 15 feet above the ground in a small crotch of the outer branches of a Mamane tree. It was a carefully constructed $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch deep cup lined with soft material. Within two minutes after leaving the immediate vicinity of the nest the adults returned to incubate.

Shortly thereafter a Palila was spotted in a nearby Mamane tree, one of five seen in the area. We also had the good fortune to observe clearly an Akiapolaau as it perched 20 feet above our heads in a Mamane tree. It was seen for less than a half minute, but its sharply decurved upper mandible and straight, shorter lower mandible were visible to both of us. Several Creepers were also seen, although identification was usually difficult due to its similarity with the Amakihi on Hawaii.

Among the introduced birds here, Skylarks were abundant, as were Linnets and Leiothrix, while the ubiquitous White-eye was less common than might have been expected.

Neither of the red honey creepers, the Apapane or Iiwi, was found in this area of exclusively yellow flowering trees, although both were seen in the Ohia forest of Volcanoes National Park.

The last day of our visit was spent at the Dillingham Ranch at Puuwaawaa, where we looked in vain for the scarce Hawaiian Crow, although we were rewarded for our efforts with a view of the Hawaiian Hawk, in a light phase. Several species of game birds can be seen near the ranch headquarters: Mutant Pheasant, Erckel's Francolin, Turkey, and Peafowl. Toward dusk of our last day the Japanese Quail, or Coturnix, was searched for, but only its melodious song gave away its presence.

A SURVEY OF THE BIRDS OF KAUAI, HAWAII
 By Frank Richardson and John Bowles
 Bishop Museum Bulletin 227, 1964

"A three-months' study on Kauai during the summer of 1960, plus more recent brief trips and a review of the findings of other observers, has shown that all of the native species of birds, including rare endemic forms, still survive on the island. Numerous species of introduced birds flourish on Kauai, especially in man-made or modified habitats; but even where some foreign species are common in native habitats, native birds are surviving, some in remarkable abundance."

A 51-page report gives interesting details regarding 39 species of birds occurring regularly and naturally on Kauai (22 permanent residents and more than 17 summer or winter residents or transients), and about 25 species of foreign birds that have become established there. In addition, it outlines the types of habitats for birds on Kauai; analyzes their distribution, past and present, and the factors which have brought this about; and predicts the future of native passerine and nonpasserine Kauai birds. Pertinent literature is cited.

"Kauai now becomes unique among the Hawaiian islands in the continued existence of its native birds, and all possible efforts, state or national, should be made to insure the continuance or improvement of present habitat conditions which have enabled the survival of native species. The preservation of the fascinating complex native flora of Kauai with its many endemic species is no less important and, indeed, essential to the existence of the birds. Ornithologists and other biologists have been and will increasingly be attracted to Kauai from many countries, emphasizing the responsibility of preservation of the island's all-too-limited virgin areas."

The report is illustrated by an attractive color plate showing the four unique native birds of Kauai, from a painting by Zella M. Schultz, and by 16 text figures, including a map and representative habitat scenes, from the seacoast to the upland bogs and forests.

E. H. Bryan, Jr.

REPORT ON THE NENE
 By Margaret Titcomb

The Hawaii Audubon Society, having accepted the responsibility for raising a necessary \$2,000 for the importation of this year's nene from England, reports that \$1,500 has been received and turned over to the Department of Fish and Game. We are extremely grateful for all the contributions, great and small, turned in by patriotic well-wishers. Our State bird deserves all the help we can give to its abundance and well-being. A certain abundance seems necessary for survival, according to Madame Nature. Those who are not aware of the story may be interested to know that the nene was threatened with extinction, its numbers having dwindled to a very low figure. Through the efforts of the Federal Government, money was given for its rehabilitation at Pohakuloa, on the island of Hawaii, where the rearing of them has been successful, but slow. Federal funds were matched with State funds, often with a struggle. (Why there should be any hesitancy on the part of the State to preserve our own bird is a mystery!)

This particular fund for which appeal has been made is for the sole purpose of bringing from England a number of birds to augment what we have. Several years ago, Peter Scott, of the Severn Wildfowl Trust at Slimbridge, England, took some nene from Mr. Herbert Shipman, of Hawaii, who had cared for them in a crisis. Mr. Scott reared them at his wildlife refuge, and now has some to spare. Last year, the Hui Manu did a service for the State of bringing 19 back to Hawaii, by plane. The

Hawaii Audubon Society is shouldering the task this year.

Gifts to any amount will be gratefully received. We have \$500 "to go." If the impossible should happen and an excess of funds accumulate, they will be set aside for next year's task. It is quite likely that next year's importation is all that will be needed.

The 1964 birds are being established at Paliku, at the verdant edge of Haleakala, on Maui, where they have been seen by many hikers through the crater.

TROPICBIRD GROUNDED ON THE ISLAND OF HAWAII

By Richard McBride

Park Naturalist Staff Member

Hawaii Volcanoes National Park

There is still a question as to whether a white-tailed tropicbird can take off from level ground. In the past, several of these birds have been found in or near the caldera of Kilauea Volcano. At least one of these was fed until it regained strength and was released in Halemaumau.

On April 23, of this year, I found a "crater bird" in the devastated area, one-half mile south of Keanakakoi Crater. The bird may have been down only a short time, because I did not see it until my return along the same route 15 (?) minutes later. The bird was only a few yards off the trail in a place of undisturbed pumice. The bird seemed unafraid and struggled very little when I picked it up and examined it. Judging by its plumage and size, the Ko'ae was an adult with few black markings and long white tail feathers. The bird seemed larger than one I had handled before and bigger than those in our museum. It reluctantly permitted me to extend a wing and kept trying to retract it while I measured from the wing tip to the middle of the back by hand spans. In this manner the wing span was figured at about 57 inches.

Having been told that the white-tailed tropicbird could not take off from level ground, I intended to assist it to become airborne. I tossed the bird into the air with both hands and it dropped to the ground before it had more than partially extended its wings. The trade wind was blowing in gusts up to 25 mph, and to take advantage of it I climbed to the top of a tumulus for the second attempt. This time the bird was launched successfully into the wind, and beating its wings rapidly, headed in a sweeping northerly curve toward Halemaumau and home.

READERS' NOTES

HONOLULU STAR-BULLETIN, June 17, 1964, page 20, In War on Midway, Gooneys Losing Ground

The article claims that the U.S. Navy appears to have found the solution for its twenty-year battle against Midway Island's gooney birds. The supposed solution to the approximately \$250,000 a year damage caused by collisions between birds nesting on the air strips and the Navy planes is to pick up the birds and move them. The Navy engineers are paving strips of nesting sites along the airfield for the birds to use instead of the runways.

HONOLULU STAR-BULLETIN, June 22, 1964, page 10, Nene Fund Drive

This article is illustrated with a picture of the nene at Pohakuloa. It says \$2,000 is needed to bring the British-raised nene to Haleakala Crater. These birds were raised at the Severn Wildfowl Trust and will be released on Maui to mate with the wild ones. The article also states that since the 1959 Congressional appropriation of \$15,000 a year for the five-year nene restoration program expires this year, a new bill to extend the project for five more years and to increase the

stipend to \$25,000 is under consideration, but the State Legislature has refused to appropriate more funds since the initial Congressional appropriation.

THE HONOLULU ADVERTISER, June 24, 1964, page B-1, Nene: The Story of a Miracle of Survival by Bob Krauss

Despite the indifference of the State Legislature Hawaii's school children and parents have continued to support the nene program. Last year the 19 nene from England released on Haleakala increased the flock to 58. This year 20 more from England are needed to strengthen the flock, and the Hawaii Audubon Society is sponsoring the drive to raise the necessary \$2,000 to cover the cost of shipping, three-weeks quarantine in New Jersey, and getting them started on Haleakala.

He says, "Over the past five years, the Federal government has put up \$15,000 a year to support Hawaii's nene program. This year, next month in fact, this appropriation runs out.

"Hawaii's congressmen have been unsuccessful in getting it renewed, mostly, they say, because the State Legislature has refused to make an appropriation as evidence of continuing interest in the program.

"If Hawaii isn't interested in preserving its State bird, why should the rest of the nation be?..."

He tells in detail how the birds get started in Hawaii. "Wildlife conservationists clip the wings of the nene, then put them into a release pen in the Paleku area of Haleakala. The release pen is about an acre in extent, surrounded by a six-foot-high fence.

"By the time the nene's flight feathers have grown back, the birds will have accepted their new environment and are willing to settle down in Hawaii.

"In time they will fly out of the pen, but they often return."

He continues, "About half a dozen birds have wandered out of the crater down to Kula, a farming area. Here the rare nene are fair game for cats, dogs and careless humans, so they have to be caught and taken back to the safety of the enormous crater, a bird sanctuary."

Unoyo Kojima

Field Trip, July 12, 1964, Koko Head

Because it was feared that several days of rain on the Poamoho Trail had left it soggy enough to make a trip along it exceedingly unpleasant, a trip to Koko Head was chosen to see if the Fairy Tern could be viewed.

The trip was made by five members and eight mainland visitors.

When we reached the top of Koko Head we were not sure just where the terns would be found, so the party split, about half in company with Tim Burr went to the little crater, while the rest, along with the leader, went toward the gulch that runs up from the south side.

In almost no time both groups spotted terns flying and there was considerable speculation as to where the nesting site might be.

In all at least nine birds were seen; part of them soaring against a stiff trade wind blowing past the headland at the southeast side. While they were being observed at a range of perhaps 100 feet, one of them would occasionally fly up to within eight to ten feet of an observer.

The rest of the birds were flying in and out of the crater, so all of the party collected on the wall between the crater and Hanauma Bay for lunch and to watch the birds. Three of the party, Miss Kojima, Mr. Cooper of Muncie, Indiana, and Mr. Starr of Los Angeles went down into the crater where they were able to photograph two terns on a branch from a range of less than ten feet.

Also seen while at the crater were a pueo and two white-tailed tropicbirds.

Two carloads of the party went to Makapuu where the visitors were able to study the great concentration of birds over Rabbit Island.

On the way back to Waikiki with the visitors one car stopped at Kuapa Pond where 75 stilts, 60 cattle egrets, and 3 tattlers were seen.

Maurice V. King, Jr.

ALOHA to our new member: Mrs. Jackie Johnson, 1319 Wilder Ave., Honolulu, 96822

WANTED: (1) An editor for THE ELEPAIO
For details, please call Miss Margaret Titcomb, telephone 855-951.

(2) Materials for THE ELEPAIO

- (a) Field notes
- (b) Scientific papers
- (c) Interesting conservation or wildlife experiences
- (d) Interesting publications

Please mail articles to the editor, P.O. Box 5032, Honolulu, Hawaii, 96814.

(3) December, 1963, issue of THE ELEPAIO, Volume 24, Number 6.
If you have a copy to spare, please mail it to the editor.

AUGUST ACTIVITIES:

AUGUST 9 - Field Trip to Poamoho if the weather permits. Bring lunch, water, and if possible, your own car. Transportation cost (75¢) to be paid to the drivers. Meet at the Library of Hawaii at 8:00 a.m.
Leader: Maurice V. King, Jr., telephone: 983-248.

AUGUST 10 - Board meeting at the Honolulu Aquarium Auditorium at 7:30 p.m.
Members are always welcome.

AUGUST 17 - General meeting at the Honolulu Aquarium Auditorium at 7:30 p.m.
Program for the night: Mr. William V. Ward will play his records of the songs of the apapane and talk about the studies that have been made from these records at Cornell University.

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