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For the Better Protection of Wildlife in Hawaii

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ARE WE ASTRIDE A DEAD HORSE? By Robert Shallenberger

As an observer over the last two years, I have watched the Hawaii Audubon Society in action. My experience with other Audubon groups is not great, but together with knowledge gained as a zoology graduate student, I have some foundation upon which to consider the role of our local group and its relationship to the scientific community. Some of the remarks included here were presented at the October 19, 1970 meeting of the Society. It is hoped that this written presentation will make possible a more complete consideration of my opinions and comments.

The National Audubon Society is making great steps in conservation and wildlife protection in recent years, largely due to the dedication of relatively few individuals, but with the financial and letter-writing support of thousands. The national organization is committed to doing something constructive with each problem it attacks. Solely written concern has long since proven inadequate in itself to tackle the types of problems we face today. In Hawaii, many aspects of our conservation situation are unique, yet we can learn a great deal from the efforts of others.

In many respects, we have a lot working against us as dedicated conservationists in Hawaii. We have already lost more animal species, and presently have more endangered species than elsewhere in the nation. In addition, in view of our small land area, we have a relatively more immediately endangered habitat than most other locations. A conservationist in Hawaii must concern himself with the maximum variety of endangered habitat and species: from the destruction of rare endemic forests high on the slopes of our volcanoes to the misused marshland and shoreline, and further, into the ocean, where lack of adequate protection and concern leaves our reef fauna and offshore seabird colonies endangered. Unfortunately, we have the least adequate backlog of scientific data to draw upon when called to support our case. Part of this lack is caused by the related problems already mentioned, making scientific study in the Hawaiian situation more and more difficult. In addition, insular investigation on a comprehensive level is a recent phenonmenon among scientists and some of the most basic biological principles involved are as yet unexplained satisfactorily. Hopefully, the current International Biological Program investigations in Hawaii will help fill in some of the huge gaps in our knowledge. Unfortunately, even these scientists are finding it difficult to locate suitable natural areas in which to study, and will undoubtedly find themselves reporting, to a large extent, on man's effects on the ecosystem.

Continuing on the list of obstacles we face, consider the ridiculously overbalanced load of dollar-oriented developers with which we must contend. Paying tourists put the pressure on the developers and they, in turn, put the pressure directly on the land (and sea). It's a simple economic principle involved, but it is very difficult to change. Unless adequate legal and political pressure are put in the right places, developers will ever-increasingly fight for the buck, until another simple economic principle, "diminishing returns", takes over. At this point (one that we are already reaching), developers will take their dollars elsewhere (i.e. New Hebrides, Tahiti, etc.) and destroy one unique spot after another. Unfortunately, there won't be much left of old Hawaii at that point. Hopefully, there exists a compromise between the extremes where a suitable level of tourism will continue to bolster Hawaii's economy but will cease destruction of the environment. Even a decrease in this destruction will not be sufficient, because we are working within a finite system.

The fact that we must also contend with problems of introduced species and disease to such a large extent only magnifies our conservation job. Again we are working in the dark when it comes to predicting the effects of countless planned and accidental introductions of plants and animals. We are rapidly losing those natural areas which are our only source of information as to the effects of past invasions. There is really no accurate foundation on which to design criteria for controlling introductions, so we must continue to be overexclusive and maintain the status quo wherever possible. Unless there are overwhelmingly significant reasons for future introductions, they should be prevented. It should be up to those who propose such changes in our ecosystems to prove that nothing damaging will result, rather than up to conservationists to demonstrate conclusively that the effects will be undesirable.

To top off the list of obstacles in our way, we must add the noticeable lack of conservation-minded officials in all phases of our city and state government. Ultimately, each person must be guilty of a legitimate conflict of interests when it comes to conservation, as each of us has everything to gain by environmental protection, and so much to lose if we ignore it. Each official must realize himself, or be made to realize, that, in the long run, the environment will have the last say.

Fortunately, the Hawaii Audubon Society has some very significant points in its favor as well. Already well established, and a necessary information source for all interested in biology of Hawaii, is the society's publication, THE ELEPAIO. Largely through the dedication and hard work of a select few, the journal has accumulated an abundance of data over the last 30 years. Unfortunately, as yet, THE ELEPAIO has only scratched the surface of its real potential.

The Hawaii Audubon Society also has the cooperation of several persons in a wide variety of influential positions: in Fish andGame, the University of Hawaii, the Honolulu Zoo, theBishop Museum, and in the other conservation-oriented organizations in our state. Here again, the usefulness of such persons remains a largely untapped resource in many respects. There is room for a great deal more cooperation which hopefully can be inspired by a renewed vigor and effort of the Society itself.

We have the potential to reach an extremely large percentage of the people in Hawaii with a minimum of effort. Conservation-oriented activities continue to receive attention from the media, but there is room for an enormously expanded treatment if we become more effective in our conservation role. I am sure, even within the present Society membership, there exists a largely unused source of support and influential connections to help spread the word.

Also fortunate, depending on how you view the situation, is the large number of conservation organizations in our community: Audubon Society, Outdoor Circle, Conservation Council, Hawaii Wildlife Federation, Zero Population Growth, League of Women Voters, Sierra Club, FOE and several UH groups. On theother hand, this all presents a divided front and threatens to lessen the overall effect of our efforts. In addition, the inherent hypocrisy within each membership results in the establishments with only their specific interests at heart. Each organization would reply that efforts on specific problems yield the best results. To this I would generally agree, with the added provision that the overall goals in mind should be in the better interest of everyone. For example, when the consideration of the advisability of introducing a particular game animal to an area is biased by the desire to increase hunting areas, the resulting decisions are never impartial. On the other hand, recreation (including hunting) is an extremely important part of our lives, and an attitude biased by the desire to completely protect all animals is as much as stumbling block in seeking a suitable decision as the former. The recent consideration of the question of deer on the island of Hawaii by the Hawaii Wildlife Federation is a good example where all points of view were examined and a significant decision reached, despite the specific hunting interests of its members.

It is my hope that in examining the rift between the existing conservation groups, ways can be found to coordinate efforts. Possibly a council made up of two representatives from each group could serve to inform each of the individual efforts and work together on immediately pressing problems as a united front.

Now, having considered some of the obstacles as well as things working for us, it is necessary to examine the Hawaii Audubon Society as it exists today, and look for ways to improve its effectiveness.

First, let us start with the image. Fortunately, we, as a part of a large and respected national organization, receive a great deal of publicity. Recent Audubon efforts have helped to convince the public that the national organization is not a conglomeration of "old ladies in tennis shoes." It now has a record as an effective leader in the fight to save the environment. Unfortunately, however, the public opinion of many local Audubon groups is not always so favorable.

If an organization takes an effective stand on a variety of issues of public concern, respect for it will grow. There are two obvious ways to miss out on this public respect and support. One way is to become so wrapped up in a specific, narrow-minded set of interests that the overall outlook is biased beyond repair. If the Hawaii Audubon Society were to become so wrapped up in field trips and birdwatching, that other, equally or more important conservation activities were neglected, then we would be guilty of the first mistake. The other pitfall is the "all talk, no action" mistake. This is the area where we, as a group, need real improvement. General complaining about conservation in THE ELEPAIO or at an Audubon meeting is like telling a professional golfer to keep his eye on the ball. I get tired of repeated in-group discussions within conservation groups that never get beyond the general level, and only reaffirm problems we are already aware of. Of course, accurate knowledge of the problems is mandatory to be an effective conservationist, and we must perform the necessary functions in this respect. But much more time should be devoted to taking our concern outside the meeting hall. A conservationist should not be satisfied with thorough knowledge of the problems; this is only half the battle. After this comes the dissemination of knowledge to the public and to the officials making the laws. This should be our most important function in the community. We should draw more upon our membership and upon those well-versed in particular areas of concern. A once-a-month meeting to look at bird slides is just not going to do the job alone. We need question and answer meetings, providing an opportunity for us to meet with biologists, city officials, engineers, oceanographers, foresters, land developers and the like. For example, the meeting with Chapman Lam, discussing the underwater park at Hanauma Bay, was a very informative one. But this was a battle already won. Nothing was discussed about how the Society could help in the future.

Also in the area of improving our image, both in the public and scientific community, we must consider all possible means of improving the value of and respect for THE ELEPAIO as a scientific journal. To do this, we must separate casual nonrigorous observation from more scientific, factual data: especially if we continue to accept information from any observer. We must strive to make all reported observation as reliable as possible, but be sure to admit it if some data are questionable. We must determine methods by which to make all field trip data more reliable and useful. Each contributor should strive to confirm his reports and to avoid generalization where not warranted by his data. All this will require the increased support of informed biologists and others to assist in editing as well. A great deal of the accumulated data in THE ELEPAIO would be suitable for informative pubwere it not for the questionable nature of many reports, the lack of complete information recorded at the time of observation, and the difficulty in locating desired information within past issues of THE ELEPAIO. The yearly indexing of the publication has proven a major step in the right direction, but possibly a more organized and refined system of recording and presenting information would be even

more helpful.

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The Hawaii Audubon Society should strive to make its voice heard on the most pressing problems. While it is mandatory that public be aware of the general goals of the Society, much can be lost and time can be wasted if our efforts are spread too thin. We should look at issues about which we can do something: habitat preservation, land use policies, species introductions, etc. As soon as any member becomes informed on an issue of concern, it should be his or her obligation to find out all the facts and inform the membership, in preparation for consideration and effective action. Unfortunately, the area for which the Society has been most concerned (endangered species) is often not a fruitful area of concern. Assuredly, the loss of one bird species after another in Hawaii is an alarming and disastrous situation. But while we are blowing our horn (although we aren't even doing that) about extremely rare honeycreepers, developers and related industry are digging up marshland, dredging boat harbors, building groins, raising hotels, destroying forests and polluting our water. Somewhere along the line we have to admit defeat and switch our efforts to those problems which we can still do something about. There are countless aesthetic and moral and scientific arguments for the preservation of extremely rare, endangered species. But the same arguments, as well as all the unpredictable but potentially disastrous effects of continued tampering with our confusing ecosystems, make it more and more necessary to devote what time and efforts we have to avoid our former mistakes. We are quickly realizing that many animal species which appear successful and self-maintaining today are often gone tomorrow when man exploits his environment unwisely (e.g. brown pelican, osprey, peregrine falcon). Technology has changed our concern from long term to the immediate future. This is all the more reason to avoid major land changes wherever possible, even without the accumulated knowledge to predict accurately the effects of each new way we tamper with the environment. This whole argument may be likened to the suggestion to avoid crying "over spilt milk", with the provision, "let's don't spill any more" tacked on the end. We, as concerned conservationists, must look to the future, not have remorse for the past. Use the past results as evidence, but strive to examine what the future holds for us.

Finally, comes the necessity to tie this all together. As an organization made up of all types of people, the Society must strive to form a consensus upon which to act. I don't refer to a short paragraph in the constitution which is so general that it lacks meaning. What is needed is a concrete list of objectives, as specific as possible. Again, we must devote our efforts to those important causes for which we can be most effective. But it is also necessary that we have a set of guidelines to follow in all areas of conservation. A similar set of objectives would be the worthwhile product of a representative council of all Honolulu conservation groups, but it would inherently be much more difficult to agree upon. For example, each new question of planned introductions is a separate occurrence and requires detailed investigation of the particular situation. On the other hand, the Havaii Audubon Society should have a general policy, in writing, about the advisability of introductions in general, and the procedures by which each new situation should be considered. The same technique should apply when considering each new proposal involving our environment, whether it be marshland, shoreline or rain forest. If possible, a bibliography of reported data on other such results should be accumulated and periodically published for the benefit of the membership. This in turn, would add more support to any stand we take. We should consider the advisability of taking concrete stands on important issues as an organization. This will carry a great deal more weight, especially as our public respect and support grows. As for the prepared objectives of the Society, these should be created by and voted upon by the membership and then incorporated into the constitution or by-laws of the Society. The Hawaii Wildlife Federation method of adopting resolutions concerning areas of interest is a fine example of a similar method in action.

A discussion such as this really needs no conclusion, as it is only a collection of ideas for consideration. However, they all relate to the need for concerned people to make effective use of their knowledge and quickly reach as many others as possible. For the Hawaii Audubon Society specifically, we must realize that active

interest in and dissemination of knowledge about birds is only a minor part of our overall role in the community. Membership should be encouraged from all conservationminded people, whether birds are their bag or not. We've got far more at stake than honeycreepers.

A concluding remark made by Robert Rienow at the 10th Biennial Wilderness Conference on April 1967 serves to bring the whole problem to a head: "The conservation group that shies from the mobilization of public support for the particular area of crisis because it prefers the comfort of generalization, is astride a dead horse. It has sold out."

Any comments? Please send comments to Kojima, 725-A 8th Ave, Honolulu, Hawaii 96816. *****

			JU	N E	1970
SPECIES	LOCATION	10	13	19	26
Stilt	Kanaha Kealia Total	231 48 279	304 57 361	195 49 244	208 123 331
Coot	Kanaha Kealia Total	108 58 166	100 47 147	79 91 170	120 74 194
light Heron	Kanaha Kealia Total	25 31 56	41 26 67	21 34 55	9 49 58
Shoveler	Kanaha Kealia Total	19 69 88	10m,4f 9m 9f 32	llm,7f 7m 5f 30	4m,2f 10 16
luddy Turnstone	Kanaha	4	4	10	10
olden Plover	Kanaha	0	2	2	1
anderling	Kanaha	0	7	7	4
ranklin's Gull	Kanaha	0	1	0	0
attle Egret	Kealia	0	2	4	5

WEEKLY CENSUS FROM KANAHA AND KEALIA PONDS. MAUT

		3	J U 8	L Y 15	1970 21	25
Stilt	Kanaha Kealia *	240(11) ^a 102	109(5) 147	146(8) 262	102(5) 326	251(7) 217 468
Coot	Total Kanaha Kealia	342 81 31	256 89. 37	408 110 22	428 110 4	116 4
Night Heron	Total Kanaha	112	126	132	114	120
NTPHO HELOH	Kealia Total	64 67	81 86	12 15	78	1 5

a- number in parenthesis is the number of immature Stilt observed.

f- female m- male

* At this time of the year Kealia attracts as many or more Stilt as Kanaha.

WEEKLY CENSUS FROM KANAHA AND KEALIA PONDS, MAUI (Continued)

WEIGHT OF CONTROL FILON	RUMULTU THE	TURDIN			¥ 1070	
SPECIES	LOCATION	_ 3	J 8	U L 15	Y 1970 21	25
Cattle Egret	Kanaha	0	6	0	0	0
	Kealia	2	1	3	3	0
	Total	2	7	3	3	0
Shoveler	Kanaha	3f	2m,2f	lm,7f	lm,3f	lf
	Kealia	9m,11f	0	lm,3f	0	0
	Total	23	4	12	4	1
Pintail	Kanaha Kealia Total	0 4m,9f 13	0 0 0	0000	7f 0 7	0 0 0
Ruddy Turnstone	Kanaha	41	23	42	21	35
	Kealia	4	3	0	0	0
	Total	45	26	42	21	35
Sanderling	Kanaha	9	8	10	0	5
	Kealia	2	0	0	0	0
	Total	11	8	10	0	5
Golden Plover	Kanaha	1	0	1	3	0
Blk-bellied Plover	Kanaha	1	0	1	1	0
Wandering Tattler	Kealia	0	0	0	0	3
Pueo	Kanaha	0	1	0	0	0
		_1	AU 7	G U 13	S T 19	1970 24
Stilt	Kanaha	478	463	498	441	441
	Kealia	69	dry	dry	dry	dry
	Total	5 47	463	498	441	441
Coot	Kanaha	131	145	133	137	169
	Kealia	1	0	0	0	0
	Total	132	145	133	137	169
Night Heron	Kanaha	2	4	5	1	1
Cattle Egret	Kanaha	0	0	2	2	0
Shoveler	Kanaha	6	0	2	0	7
Pintail	Kanaha	3	8	5	9	4
Ruddy Turnstone	Kanaha	31	85	151	158	131
Sanderling	Kanaha	11	16	27	32	49
Golden Plover	Kanaha	11	90	80	153	130
	Kealia	1	0	0	0	0
	Total	12	90	80	153	130

0

Kanaha

Wandering Tattler

0

0

0

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THE SURVIVAL OF A PETREL By Jerome J. Pratt

The Dark-rumped Petrel (Pterodroma phaeopygia), an endangered bird, has been under study in Haleakala National Park for a number of years. During the past year a more plenary examination of the species breeding biology and conservation has been made by Warren B. King.

Mr. King is a PhD candidate in wildlife management at Cornell University. Included in his work has been collecting predators that may be a factor limiting the

petrel population, such as feral cats, rats, and mongooses.

Predators are live-trapped without injury. However, Mr. King is temporarily away from Hawaii at Cornell and the Park Rangers are continuing the trapping during his absence. Recently due to personnel schedule changes one trap inadvertently was not checked for an extended period. When a check was made a juvenile petrel was found in the trap. The bird was exhausted and emaciated from lack of nourishment.

When the bird was brought to the park headquarters there appeared little hope for survival. Albeit I took this near-lifeless mass of feathers home and with the help of my wife we force-fed it sardines at about hourly intervals at first and then less frequently for about 24 hours. Hy wife has to have a name for her charges, so this one became Gilbert.

Gilbert soon took water voluntarily and I placed some tropical fish in a large pan hoping he would take food without help, but he showed no interest in the fish. After each feeding he gained strength and was soon bathing and preening his feathers. When he became aggressive we allowed him to test his wings. Finally, Gilbert took to the air, gaining altitude and circling back toward the Haleakala Crater.

Officially Gilbert is identified by a number--B SF & W 554-282-16. This is an example of one of many ways Man can help endangered wildlife species survive.

Excerpts from the minutes of the Hawaii Audubon Society general meeting, 21 Sep.1970: ...Mr. William Mull reported on the September 13 field trip to study shorebirds.

Twenty-four members and guests gathered at the Punchbowl Street side of the State Library. Mr. Mull explained a new system of bird observing and recording in which all trip members would take part. Participants volunteered, or were assigned in pairs, responsibility for finding, observing and counting one or two species expected to be seen on the trip. Slips of paper were passed out and at the end of the trip the species counts were turned in. Mr. Mull found this method worked well in stimulating interest and in more accurate observations and counts. With three telescopes in constant use, everyone had a chance to observe birds closely and become familiar with less common species. Of the migrants, vestiges of breeding plumage were observed in some golden plovers, black-bellied plovers, ruddy turnstones and sanderlings. The pintails and the shoveler were in eclipse plumage.

	West Loch mudflats	Walker's Bay	Waipio settlement basin	Salt Lake
Cattle Egret	3		125	
Black-crowned Night Heron	5	4		
Pintail		1	108	
Shoveler			1	
American Coot	12	4		45
Golden Plover	183	4	28	59
Black-bellied Plover	1		1	
Ruddy Turnstone	4	1	405	4
Wandering Tattler	4	2		5
Sanderling	11		131	
Black-necked Stilt	91	7	180	35
Spotted Dove	+	+	+	+
Barred Dove	+	+	+	+
Hynah	+	. +	+	
White-eye	2	4		
Strawberry Finch	6	7	34	
Ricebird			2	
Black-headed Hannikin		9	47	
House Sparrow	2		1	
North American Cardinal			1	
House Finch			6	
= not observed	+ = pre	sent, not cou	inted	

President Kaigler announced the appointment of Miss Christine Jones as Program Director...The president announced with regret the resignation of Mrs. Virginia Cone as Secretary of the Society...He expressed the Society's appreciation to Mrs. Cone for the work she has done. Mrs. Mae Mull will serve as Acting Secretary until the end of the year.

Dr. Walter Arnell, professor of engineering at the University of Hawaii, presented the film "Peoples of East Africa," for which he was the photographer and Mrs. Arnell the narrator. This professional-quality film tells the story of the Arnell family expedition that started in Nairobi and traveled through Kenya and Uganda to Lake Rudolf and to the Indian Ocean coast of Kenya. Encounters with animals and birds in wildlife areas were attractively filmed and described. The Arnells visited several tribes, including the well-known Masai, whose life style is beginning to change, recording their customs, methods of food production, dress, ornamentation, music and dance.

Mae E. Hull, Acting Secretary

Field Notes from Mrs. Mabel R. Becker, Kailua, Oahu, March 1970:

Flocks of cattle egrets fly daily between pastures along the swamp in Kailua to the roosting grounds on the edge of marsh near Marine Base between Kailua and Kaneohe.

I feed all left over rice and spaghetti on my tray--cutting spaghetti into "worm" lengths--the birds love them. Commercial wild bird seed contains radish seeds. The birds push them off into my flower bed and I have radishes in my salad. Nice cooperation!

ALOHA to the new member:

William P. Dunbar, 3000 Nicol Avenue, Oakland, California 94602.

To the outgoing officers: Thank you for your generous contributions and work well done.

To the incoming officers: Thank you for accepting the responsibilities. To both: MAHALO NUI LOA and ALOHA.

HAWAII'S BIRDS, a field guide, available for \$2.00. Send in your orders to: Book Order Committee, Hawaii Audubon Society, P.O. Box 5032, Honolulu, Hawaii 96814.

JANUARY ACTIVITIES:

10 January	 Field trip to	tudy shorebirds. Bring lunch,	water, and if
	possible your	ar. Transportation cost (\$1.0	0) to be paid to
	the drivers.	eet at the State Library on Pu	nchbowl Street
	at 8:00 a.m.	eader: William P. Hull, telep	hone: 988-6798.

11 January - No board meeting.

18 January - General meeting at the Waikiki Aquarium Auditorium at 7:30 p.m. Program for the night: MULTIPLY AND SUBDUE THE EARTH, an artistic and beautiful film on man and his environment. It discusses among other things, the land use law in Hawaii.

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Waikiki Aquarium-Hon

Waikiki Beach Press-Hon

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