

# 'ELEPAIO

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## BIRDING IN NEW ZEALAND Milford Sound Walk By Walter R. Donaghho

26 February 1971: Was off again this morning, heading for Lake Te Anau, and the start of the Milford Track Walk to Milford Sound.

The bus broke down on the first hill heading south out of Dunedin. After a short wait, we were off again in another. The road descended into the fertile Taieri Valley, past Mosgiel, and past a hill on the left that was the first land sighted by Cook on his first trip. Grey Ducks and Mallards were in extensive marshes south of Mosgiel, along with White-faced Herons, and Pukekos were in the adjacent fields. The country became drier as we proceeded inland past Gore.

The scenery west of Gore was very much like the West, with willows, poplars, and evergreens dotted in the open brown grassy expanses, mostly sheep pasturage, and hemmed in by brown hills in the distance. A small village certainly had a Western look to it. There were wheat fields west of Balclutha. We had brunch in Lumsden, another small "Western" town, and the scenery changed dramatically as we passed between rugged mountain ranges and climbed up through native tussock grass to a divide. Below, in the near distance, were the rugged mountains west of Lake Manapouri.

We descended and proceeded north through a wide valley of open sheep lands that with the rugged ranges on both sides strongly resembled a valley in Montana. Soon, we got a glimpse of Lake Te Anau nestled at the foot of the Western Ranges, and were soon pulling into the grounds of the Te Anau Hotel.

I went to the Milford Track Office to check in, and re-arrange my stuff, then walked down to the dock on the lakeside a block away where the "Tawera" awaited. At 3:15, she pulled out and headed north up the lake. We had a 45-mile ride to the upper end where the track began. Rugged, snow flecked peaks rose above the head of the lake, and the scenery became more grand as we proceeded north. The scenery to the east was like Montana. The mountains to the west were heavily wooded, right down to the shore. Rugged peaks were visible at the heads of valleys and down the three fjords that bore their way in among them. One of the valleys running up inland from the lake shore contained Lake Obell, around whose shores lived the large *Notornis*, rediscovered here less than 10 years ago.

The last 15 miles we bore our way in among high, rugged ranges on both sides with heavily wooded lower slopes and rocky crags towering overhead, and ending in rugged, snow speckled peaks among the clouds. The forest was a dense beech forest, mainly red and silver beeches. Pigeons flew among the trees, and Black-billed Gulls and Pied and Black Shags were on the lake or on the shores.

We rounded wooded Foliage Peak with magnificent crags towering over it, crossed an open stretch of water, and came up to the dock. We all piled out and hiked through the dense beech forest to Glade House, several cream colored, red roofed buildings in a grassy meadow.

27 February 1971: We started about 9 a.m. to walk the six miles up the Clinton Valley to the 6 Mile Hut, where tea and coffee awaited us. The track crossed the meadow in front of Glade House and crossed the river on a suspension bridge. The trail was wide, a narrow road, really, to allow the tractor-trailer and Landrover to haul supplies up to the hut. It wound through the dense beech forest, following the wide, lazy flowing Clinton River.

The woods were full of Tuis, Bellbirds, N.Z. Pigeons, and Fantail Flycatchers, the last seen along the banks of the river, flying in and out of the foliage, and frequently darting out over the river after some flying insect, turning and twisting after it, till snapped up. Once I saw a black bird with two white outer tail feathers fly up towards me, and it turned out to be a Tom Tit, jet black above with a black head and a yellow front.

Another time I went out onto a small beach and sat down on a log to watch the forest on the other side for any birdlife. Suddenly I heard a movement in a Manuka bush near me, and turned to see a Robin, not six feet away. It dropped down on the ground and hopped towards me, not stopping till LESS than TWO FEET away! Movement on my part sent it scurrying away; but it returned, coming right up to me, well within reach of my hand, on my lap. I got out my camera and easily got a picture, with it close enough to fill it. No telephoto lens needed! \*parakeets

Three/flew across the river towards me. I didn't find them, but I soon saw others flying back to the otherside, and was able to see yellow on their foreheads, identifying them as Yellow-fronted Parakeets. When I returned to the track, more flew by, into a small beech on the bank, and I was able to study them.

Another time when I stopped to listen to strange notes, I caught sight of a tiny green bird. I came close and saw it creeping around moss covered beech limbs. It was dark green above and lighter below, with a short, stubby tail, a Rifleman, just one square inch of bird!

Later I came over the brow of a hill, and down a straight stretch of track was one of the hikers sitting in it with a large hen sized mottled brown bird in front of him. A Weka or large rail. I got out my apple and spit out small bites onto the ground, and the Weka came right over to pick them up, not six feet distant! I was able to get three photos of it. About 50 yards farther on, we scared up a flock of six by the track, but they didn't scoot far, and soon came up to mooch from us. The Pigeons were unwary, although not as tame as the Wekas. I saw them frequently sitting on branches within 20 feet of me, as I stopped to get good looks. Another time I came upon three hikers standing in a circle looking down upon a Robin that was hopping around their feet!

The valley became much more grand, the peaks closing in on both sides and towering over the track. There were patches of snow on their summits, and I could see a small glacier on Castle Mountain to the left and ahead.

The trail climbed up over a rise, the stream now cascading over pools and rapids, and suddenly there was a bright hole in the foliage ahead with a hut and members of the party standing by it. Coming out of the forest, the hut stood at the edge of an open expanse covered with brush and backed by high glacier-carved cliffs along the face of Castle Mountain up ahead.

A Weka was bumming food off the hikers eating lunch on the grassy slope in front of the cabin. The Ranger, Phil Turnbull, showed us a Kiwi that had been killed on the track by the Landrover. I took a picture of it, thinking it the next best thing to getting a live one (which I never saw).

Lunch over; we walked on. The track passed through open areas covered with low forest of holly, wineberry, manuka, tree fuschia, and other trees with an undergrowth of hard shield fern. Once a Weka was on the track ahead and calmly got off into the shield fern at the side. I saw the ferns move not six feet away and stood to see what it would do. Suddenly I saw its red eye peeking out of a hole among the fern fronds, right at my feet! It came out on the track and walked about, peering up at me, and wondering why I wasn't going to give it anything. I was truly sorry that I hadn't saved anything for it!

These low trees proved a favorite habitat for the Bellbird, and I saw them most frequently in here. I soon found that a crude imitation of their short songs would bring them up, and they frequently sat not six feet away singing long stretches of whistles, flute-like notes, and squeaks; many notes seemingly forced out as if regurgitated.

The track passed right under the cliffs towering up on the left, and I passed by a number of cascades coming from the snows and glaciers out of sight above.

Soon, after more climbing with better and better views down the canyon, I came to the Pamplona Hut, our stop for the night. It sat on top of a cliff 50 feet above the stream which curved by below around to the right. Three Blue Ducks sported in a pool just below.

One of the party called my attention just beyond the cabin, saying "Come here and look at this." and pointing up to the left. I went over and saw two Keas sitting in a small beech tree over the end of the cabin. Later, more flew down until there were eight

of them sitting on the rocks of the stream below and also on those of the bed of a stream coming down from a waterfall cascading down the cliff to the rear from the Glaciers on Castle Mountain.

28 February 1971: A beautiful morning! I took photos of the three Blue Ducks which were still in the stream below. After breakfast we set out. The way led across the swinging bridge across the stream from Castle Mountain and wound through low scrub forest climbing ever upwards. We passed several more beautiful cascades down the steep 2000 foot cliff to the left.

Soon we entered a patch of beech forest and presently came to Lake Mintaro and the Mintaro Hut overlooking it. A number of Paradise Ducks called from the lake. We were now in a rain forest with bright green moss draped from all the limbs.

We crossed another swinging bridge, and the track soon attacked the cliff, atop which was the McKinnon Pass. The view of the canyon became more magnificent as we climbed, and the view of the great cirque at the head with a circle of rugged snow-speckled peaks was grand; in the other direction, the spire of Mt. Ballon with mists playing about its summit.

We left the forest and were zigzagging up through grassy open country where delicate alpine flowers grew. These were mostly over with, but there were still some daisies, a blue flower resembling harebells, and a dainty white one. There were the round leaves of the large ranunculus, but blossoming was all over for the season. Keas called far below, and I saw them flying by.

A most spectacular view of jagged snow-spotted peaks in all directions was my reward on reaching the summit. Dominating the north was towering Mt. Elliott with a glacier on its shoulder. To the right, towering over the Pass, was Mt. Balloon. East, the 3000 foot cleft of the Clinton Canyon curving out of sight to the left. To the west, the Arthur Valley, between impressive crags and snow-capped peaks. Mt. Pillans around to the southwest, and the upper Arthur Valley (or Staircase Valley) leading past Mt. Hart, which dominated the Pass to the south. The narrow summit of the Pass was open grassy meadow, dotted with small ponds and lakes, forming a beautiful foreground to the rugged peaks in every direction.

I saw the stone cairn of the McKinnon Memorial with a cement cross on top and went to photograph it, then walked along the track to the A-frame hut in a hollow under Mt. Balloon.

The party were sitting on a rocky mound eating our "cut lunch" (sandwiches). In front of them were at least fifteen mooching Keas. I sat down to eat and couldn't resist sharing mine with the Keas. One in particular was very tame and sat right in front of me, waiting like a dog at the table. I broke off bites of sandwiches and reached out to it, and it calmly took them right out of my fingers just like a tame parrot in a cage! Soon I was taking bites from a sandwich, "one for me, and one for you." When I got to my fruitcake, I told the Kea, "None of this now, that's all for you." Famous last words! Who can resist a bird sitting there like a dog at the table, giving you that pleading, hungry look?

Lunch over, it was time to go. The track descended down a long steep slope into the great cirque formed by Mts. Elliott, Wilmur, and Balloon Peak. The Jervais Glacier on Elliott gave rise to nine waterfalls that poured over a high precipice below the glacier. There was a large talus cone under the precipice where glacial till had piled up in the years past. In the winter this was covered with ice from the streams below the glacier.

A Blue Duck called from far up the main stream as we zigzagged down. It was an ascending two noted whistle, like the call of a shorebird. Another swinging bridge crossed the stream and the track proceeded down a long easy slope on the opposite side entering a scrubby vegetation. I could see the glistening top of the mighty Sutherland Falls up the Staircase Valley on the left side beyond Mt. Hart.

The trail plunged into the high beech forest again and became much steeper dropping down to the Quintin Hut which we had seen from the Pass, seemingly just a short jump below, near the banks of the Arthur River. An airfield had been constructed by it, extending down to the river, and I thought it a pity that we had to have such a scene marring things in this wild canyon. Yet, I suppose, it makes access much easier.

The track was soon following Roaring Creek, down past Dudleigh and Lindsay Falls to the hut turnoff, and we crossed the swinging bridge over Roaring Creek to the hut.

1 March 1971: Left this morning led by our Polish guide, one of the rangers working on the track, up the Anderson Track to view the great Sutherland Falls. We plunged into scrub bush of wineberry, holly, ribbonwood and tree fuschia that was alive with Bellbirds,

then came to the Staircase Creek, crossed by a crude bridge consisting of two paralleled logs with pieces of wood hammered in between them as steps. You held on to a guy wire as you stepped down. The two logs were nailed to a tree leaning out over the stream, and you first climbed up it to the top of the logs.

We crossed a small islet and the guide stopped at a small pool on the otherside where a pair of Blue Ducks swam, as fearless as barnyard ducks, allowing a close approach for photography. I had purposely left my telephoto lens at the hut, but certainly didn't need it to get photos of these! We herded the ducks up the pond before us like barnyard fowl, and like barnyard fowl they simply and calmly swam before us.

The trail plunged into deeper rain forest and climbed steeply, following a watercourse of mossy, liverwort-covered boulders. The trees' limbs were all festooned with long fronds of dripping moss. Presently, we arrived at the viewpoint and looked across the valley to the 2000 foot green wall, where the three mighty cascades of the Sutherland Falls plunged 1904 feet to the valley floor. A rainbow glistened in the spray that drifted down from the bottom of the second cataract. A grand sight indeed! Of course, its roar dominated the area, drowning out lesser sounds.

We scrambled down the slope towards the falls, crossed a swinging bridge over Staircase Creek, came to the main track to the falls, and walked along it to the base. The waters fell crashing into the pool at the base and threw up spray in all directions.

A New Zealand Falcon flew by me, as I sat on the rocks in the bed of the Arthur River this afternoon admiring the beautiful Sutherland Falls towering over the head of the valley to the rear of Quinton Hut and Airfield. It disappeared downstream around the bend, but not before I got a good view.

I went out at twilight along the track to see if I could see any Kiwi. I heard nothing that sounded like one, but upon returning in the dark I was startled by the loud snorts of an Elk in the depths of the forest. Glowworms shone in several places on the trail, usually on some rocky wall among the fern covering.

2 March 1971: Off again, in mist and rain, for the last stage of the walk down the Arthur Valley to Milford Sound. The mists lifted a bit after a while and there were blue blobs of sky occasionally, but it never really cleared.

Bellbirds were common, especially in the frequent areas of scrub forest of wineberry, tree fuschia and ribbonwood, and at one time I came to a tree with over 15 Pigeons sitting in it and feeding on the clusters of dark blue berries.

I didn't notice Tui at all and wonder how common they were in the Valley. I am not sure now whether I could tell a Tui's song from the Bellbird's. The two are very similar when the Bellbird really sings; both having the same regurgitating effect of squeezing out notes with plenty of squeaks and sighs, but the short snatches sung by Bellbirds are not at all like the Tui. I certainly didn't SEE any Tui, but saw PLENTY of Bellbirds!

We lunched at the Boathouse near the banks of a small lake, crossed downstream by a swinging bridge. We were attended by the usual mooching Weka.

The trail climbed up along the west bank overlooking a series of swamps and small lakes, from one of which came the honks of a couple of pairs of Paradise Ducks. It passed through deep beech forest, under which grew many tree ferns, generally absent on the other side of the divide.

Finally we came to the Doughboy Hut on Lake Ada; a lake caused by a landslide blocking the Arthur River. A tractor trailer awaited us to carry out our packs. The trail passed through cool woods. We crossed Mile Creek, and a mile farther on, we came out on Sandfly Point, where a launch awaited us at the dock. Hot tea also awaited us and really hit the spot!

It started pouring as the launch pulled out of the Arthur River mouth and crossed the Sound to the crawfish fishing fleet harbor on the other side. We could see the great cliffs towering over the Sound, including 5500 foot Mitre Peak, but got a poor impression of their magnificence in the mist caused by the rain. Also visible was Bowen Falls, which tosses water up into the air halfway down as it crashes against the obstruction in the streambed. Soon, the Milford Sound Hotel came into view, and we could see the fishing fleet tied up farther on against the far cliff. Black-billed and Black-backed Gulls were flying about.

The launch slid into its dock, and we got out and walked over to the road where a green bus soon came for us. It drove along the shore, skirting tidal flats on which rested gulls, passed the hotel entrance, drove around the shoulder of the mountain rising

in the rear of the hotel, then started up the Cleddau Valley, passed the airstrip, and several hundred yards on, it turned off on the driveway to the Johnson's Hostel.

Our 33 mile hike was over!

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#### OBSERVATIONS AT THE NEST OF A HAWAIIAN HAWK

By Robert J. Shallenberger

My wife and I have made several visits to the Mauna Kea ranch land leased from the State by Mr. Carl Meyer, but until our trip in early August, we had seen only one flying hawk on the property. Mr. Meyer leases 3100 acres of land on the northeast slope of Mauna Kea. His land is bordered on the makai boundary by the county road and Kukaiiau ranch land at approximately 5000', by Parker Ranch land on the south side and Kukaiiau Ranch on the north. The mauka boundary is forest reserve. Vegetation varies from relatively dense stands of large koa on the makai portions to open māmane-pūkiawe scrub near the forest reserve boundary.

On August 11, while traveling by jeep from the upper pasture area, we (Robert and Annarie Shallenberger and H. Douglas Pratt) observed one dark phase hawk in flight. While discussing this sighting with Mr. Meyer, he told us about a possible hawk nest on his property at about 5400' in elevation. As there was still some light left, we immediately drove by jeep to the site and discovered an adult light phase hawk crouched near a nest containing a well-developed chick. We decided to return to the area early the next day.

August 12, 1976: We returned to the nest area at 0800. The adult light phase hawk was in the nest tree at the time. The nest itself was a large platform of thin koa branches covered with a dense mat of koa leaves. The platform was approximately 30" long by 15-18" wide. The sticks and leaves together made a 6-8" thick platform. The nest was placed on a koa limb approximately 20-24" in diameter. The limb turned horizontally from the main trunk at about 25-30' off the ground. Judging from fecal deposits under the nest, adult birds probably moved along the length of this horizontal limb with some regularity. We almost certainly would not have located this nest without directions from Mr. Meyer's ranch hand, Geno Brunson, as the birds blended well into the background of koa branches.

Approximately one hour after we arrived on the morning of August 12, a dark phase adult hawk flew into the nest tree, with a nestling passerine bird clutched in its talons. When it moved to a new perch, it dropped the prey, which turned out to be a nestling house finch. The dark bird (presumed male) was distinctly smaller (estimate 14-15") than the light phase bird (estimate 16-18"). The chick was mostly white, with extensive down interspersed with darker contour feathers on the back, breast and head. It was preening frequently, often pulling out clumps of white down. It spent about one third of the observation time erect on the nest platform, particularly when both adults were in the nest tree. The high pitched, throaty call of the chick was barely audible from more than 10-15 yards. Two distinct call types were recognized in the adults. A repetitive screeching cry was given by both birds, particularly when the dark bird entered the tree for the first time. The light bird was apparently aware of the approaching dark hawk long before we first spotted it, and began an exchange of calling that continued for more than a minute after the dark bird had landed. A second call type, more abrupt and pure in tone, was repeated at shorter intervals. The second call type was most common between flying birds, although it was occasionally heard from one or both members of the pair while they perched in the nest tree or in other tall koa trees nearby.

On several occasions, both adults circled high above the nest area, each intermittently folding its wings and diving steeply for short distances. At one time when the birds flew  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile from the nest, three more hawks joined this flight pattern. Several calls were exchanged for a short period.

At approximately 1200, after more than one hour away from the nest tree, the dark bird returned to the area with prey in its talons. We could not get a good look at the prey, which the dark bird promptly consumed at its perch. It appeared to be either an adult passerine bird or a small rodent. We left the nest area on this day at 1300 hours.

August 20, 1976: While driving the Hamakua coast highway, we spotted a dark phase hawk makai of the road at 1500 hours, in the town of Laupahoehoe. The bird was less than 30' above the sugar cane when first observed. Clutched in its talons, a large rat hung below the bird. The hawk circled over the road and continued to climb in elevation until it passed into the clouds 10 minutes later at an estimated 500' in altitude. We speculated at the time that this bird may have been nesting at much higher elevations, as Laupahoehoe

is almost directly makai of the Meyer property on Mauna Kea.

August 21-23, 1976: We returned to the Meyer Ranch property to continue observations at the hawk nest. The chick at this stage was noticeably changed. Most of its white down was now gone. It appeared to be assuming the plumage of a dark phase bird, although its feather color had a distinctly reddish brown tint, not so evident in its dark phase parent. When I walked under the nest to search for remains of prey, the chick gave a short series of screech calls, similar to its parent's calls, but quieter and more throaty in quality. The call, however, was considerably louder than that recorded ten days earlier.

I found the remains (breast and wings) of two very young turkey chicks under the nest. Many of the feathers attached to the bones were still partially sheathed. At least three rather large turkey flocks are known to frequent the area within a mile of the nest, so this prey is not particularly surprising. We also found three regurgitated pellets below the nest. Two of these measured  $3/8$ " by  $5/8$ " and the other was 1" by  $1\frac{1}{2}$ ". The pellets were composed largely of feathers, with no evidence of rodent hair. Each of the three pellets contained one or more (1, 2 and 4) gizzards of small birds. A dense mass of grit and small seeds (unidentified) filled each of the gizzards. In one pellet, the tarso-metatarsus of a small passerine (possibly White-eye) was found.

During the day, the chick spent a considerably greater amount of time erect on the nest than was observed 10 days earlier. Preening was an almost non-stop affair, interspersed with occasional wing stretching and flapping. Occasionally, the chick picked up a koa leaf and held it with its talons while biting at the other end. Twice during my observations, the chick walked to the front of the nest, turned and defecated clear of the branch. Pre-flight behavior was observed (and filmed) during these observations. Flapping wildly, the chick jumped around the nest, reaching as high as 6" above the platform. It moved laterally as it flapped, back and forth across the nest and onto a small branch nearby. Judging from this behavior, we estimated that the chick was between one and two weeks from fledging.

During these three days of observations, the light phase adult was in the nest and tree area far more regularly than the dark hawk. They occasionally flew together in the area, repeating the interaction of calls and circling pattern we had observed earlier in August. We spent much of our observation time more than 100 yards from the nest tree, but we only saw an adult bring in food to the nest once during our observation periods (approximately 5-6 hours per day). In this case, the light bird had captured its food during a 25 minute period away from the nest tree. This bird flew directly to the nest, dropped the food on the platform and moved 4-5' away to pick at its talons for 10-15 minutes before moving to another perch. The exchange of calls between chick and the adult with food continued until she dropped the food at the chick's feet. The chick rapidly consumed the food and soon went to sleep. Surprisingly, the light phase bird also appeared to sleep in the tree for extended periods, often when we were in a tent blind less than 40' from the nest tree trunk. Our activity in and around the blind did not appear to disturb the birds.

One observation of apparent disturbance is worth noting, although it is as yet unexplained. Approximately 150-200 yards from the nest tree, a dry stream bed supported an extensive growth of banana poka on koa trees. The area was frequented by an abnormally large concentration of 'I'iwi, 'Amakihi and White-eyes, as well as a smaller number of 'Apapane. After an extended period in the hawk nest blind, I walked to this area to photograph 'I'iwi. Surprisingly, the light phase hawk left the nest tree and flew to a low perch above my head, where it called loudly, off and on, for 10 minutes. Then it returned to the nest tree. Then, the following day, my wife, Annarie walked through the same area and was dive bombed by both adult hawks, while I sat undisturbed in a branch of the nest tree. Why the hawks chose to defend a site nearly 200 yards from the nest remains unanswered. Could it be they had a second nest? Or might they have been defending a source of prey? We were cautious about disturbing the birds, and were pleased when they accommodated rapidly (with the above exception) to our presence in the area. We did note, however, that a helicopter passing more than  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile away started all three birds calling, and caused both adults to leave their perches and fly off together.

Hopefully, this pair will return to nest at this site next year, and we can fill some of the large gaps in our sketchy knowledge of this unique bird.

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Those who view nature only from the standpoint of usefulness and materialism will never grasp the greatness and beauty of creation. - Hugo Richter

## NEW YORK CITY BOY VISITS KAUA'I

By Jim Walsh

I'm a high school student from Manhattan, New York. This past August, I had a chance to tour Kaua'i for a day during a visit to my sister and brother-in-law who live in Honolulu. I never really paid much attention to birds in New York, but with my brother-in-law's help I learned quite a bit about Kaua'i's birds in one day.

The day started out with a long drive to Kōke'e State Park. It was a very clear day as we looked off into Waimea Canyon and saw some White-tailed Tropicbirds gliding in the wind. My brother-in-law, Bill Burke, who is familiar with the birds of Hawai'i, clued me in on most of the names since I am certainly no authority on any birds. We then walked off on a short path near the canyon and saw Japanese White-eyes through the binoculars. As we walked further, we heard some of the Hawaiian birds such as the 'Amakihi, 'Apapane, and 'Elepaio. Being very discouraged at not seeing them because of the thick forest, we patiently listened trying to get a glimpse of them. I then spotted a bird above us in a tree. After looking through the binoculars, we discovered that it was an 'Elepaio.

We then continued our trip until we got to Wailua Falls where we got a chance to see some more White-tailed Tropicbirds dipping in and out of the falls as if it were some sort of game.

After that, we headed toward the north side of the island to Hanalei. At Princeville, we stopped along the road as a Pueo flew right over our heads. I got a real delight in watching how the owl fluttered across an open field and landed on a wooden post. He looked as if he were trying to catch something as we watched him dip quickly. While he was resting on the post, I tried barking to get his attention. He seemed to stare curiously each time I tried to imitate his sound.

Well, it was just about time to start heading back toward Līhu'e, but we stopped the car first to take in casually the sights of Hanalei Valley. Bill, who is presently studying the Hawaiian Stilt for his PhD, jokingly told me to look for some stilts down in the valley below thinking first of all that I might not recognize them and secondly that there would not be too many anyway. Much to his surprise, I told him that I saw at least 20-25 stilts in just one of the many taro patches. At first, he thought I was just kidding. He found it hard to believe the number I had spotted since they are an endangered waterbird. With that, Bill felt we should go down closer to get a better look. We were able to get within 60 to 80 feet watching them feeding in the patches of taro. We counted about 14 of them in the small area we were observing. We also spotted some Koloa or Hawaiian Ducks and some Hawaiian Coots feeding in the same patch. Bill was surprised at how close we were able to get and took some photographs. We also got the chance to see another Pueo flying across the taro patches making a barking noise similar to the grunt of a dog.

By now it was getting late and we had to catch our plane back to O'ahu. It was an enjoyable experience in which I watched more birds in one day than I have in my whole life.

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Field Trips by William F. Burke: Wa'ahila Ridge, 13 June 1976--The Hawaii Audubon Society field trip for June 1976 was held to study forest birds on O'ahu. The Wa'ahila Ridge trail at St. Louis Heights was selected because it offers a good diversity of birds and yet is located close to town. On June 13 at 7:00 a.m. nine of us gathered at the public library downtown and then proceeded to Wa'ahila Ridge State Recreational Area to begin our expedition. The weather was excellent--sunny with clear skies.

In the park itself, there were several Barred Doves and Spotted Doves present. In the tree tops, we saw House Finches flying about. Red-crested Cardinals were also observed.

As we proceeded up the trail, we saw and heard many Japanese White-eyes at all points in our hike. It was without question the most numerous we observed. At several points, we heard the melodious call of the Shama. Quite often, Japanese Bush Warblers would be heard off to the side of the trail, but as is typical for this species, we never actually sighted the birds.

Unfortunately, our observation of native birds did not fare too well. We heard 'Amakihi several times during our hike and caught just a fleeting glance of one as it flew toward Manoa Valley. While most of the group was resting, Geri Burke, who went on ahead, thought she saw an 'Apapane flying through the forested area. On our return, we heard the distinctive call of the 'Elepaio, but were unable to see them. We tried imitating the call in an attempt to attract them, but to no avail. Despite our misfortune in not observing native species, the brief morning hike was an enjoyable and educational one.

Manana (Rabbit) Island, 15 August 1976--The Hawaii Audubon Society field trip to Manana Island on August 15, 1976, was, according to the participants I spoke with, one of the most enjoyable birding expeditions of the year. Not so much because of any unusual sightings, but simply due to the fact that a trip to Manana is an unusual event in itself. Twenty-three people went on the excursion. One gentleman from the Mainland who was visiting Hawaii and was interested in birding had the good fortune of joining us just before our departure. He had no prior knowledge of the field trip and was simply in the Makapuu area looking at Manana from the shore when he noticed our group gathering and asked if he could join us. Several boat trips were required to bring everyone over starting at 7:15 in the morning. The weather was excellent and the seas calm making the trip and unloading quite smooth.

The sightings, while not overly unusual, were interesting. Concerning the birds which use Manana as a primary breeding site, Wedge-tailed Shearwaters, Sooty Terns, and Common Noddies were all seen in varying numbers. Several Wedge-tailed Shearwater burrows were examined; some of which contained chicks. Only a few adult and a few grown young Sooty Terns were observed. August is well past the breeding period for these birds and most have left Manana and flown out to sea to unknown destinations. There were many Common Noddies present, however, and all phases of their breeding biology were in evidence--active nests, many eggs lying about the island, and chicks in all three phases of plumage. Unfortunately, no counts were made of these species, so one can only speak in relative terms.

A fourth species of bird, Bulwer's Petrel, which also uses Manana for breeding purposes, was not seen. However, two small (1-1 $\frac{1}{4}$  inches), pure white eggs, which could have been petrel eggs, were found. One was seen at the edge of a cave and the other at the mouth of a small, tubular hole which could serve as a petrel residence.

Three to four Wandering Tattlers were seen along the shore. Both Brown and Red-footed Boobies were observed. The Brown Booby (an immature) was seen following a boat on the seaward side of the island. The Red-footed Boobies, several adults and immatures, were seen flying in the vicinity of the island. There was also one report of a Great Frigatebird flying overhead.

Inside of the crater, several Black-crowned Night Herons were observed--one perched in a palm tree, one on the ground, and two to three in flight.

Both Red-tailed and White-tailed Tropicbirds, always a delight to watch, were sighted. Five Red-tailed Tropicbirds were seen flying over the peak of Manana Island. A Red-tailed Tropicbird was also observed nesting on the north side of the island on a cliff ledge and was later joined by another (which may have been one of the five observed over the peak). No courtship flight was seen. The two White-tailed Tropicbirds sighted were flying along the Waimanalo cliffs, started to fly toward Manana, and then turned back to O'ahu.

In addition to our ornithological sightings, other interesting observations were made. Botanically, the preponderance of tobacco plants in some spots of the island came as surprise to many. Concerning other animal life, several noteworthy events occurred. A female Green Sea Turtle, identified as such by one of the group members, was observed in the clear, blue ocean below us as we hiked around the crater. As we neared the peak of Manana, I spotted a small, dead rodent on the ground. Thinking that the animal might be a young rat and considering the dire effects on the bird populations if rats were to be present on Manana, we decided to take this specimen to Dr. Zeigler at the Bishop Museum who subsequently identified it as simply a common house mouse. Finally, perhaps one of the most exciting and noteworthy events of the day, even though it didn't concern birds, was the sighting of at least two rabbits hopping across the crater floor kicking up dust behind them as they went. Yes, Virginia, there are rabbits on Rabbit Island.

We made the return trip to O'ahu at approximately 11:15 in the morning having enjoyed a few hours of exploration on Manana and looking forward to another possible trip sometime in 1977.

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Field Notes from Charlotta Hoskins: Please Identify--Priscilla Harpham saw feeding at her feeder not ten feet from her window at St. Francis High School in lower Manoa, on December 14 at 10:10 a.m., an iridescent black bird, size of a bulbul but a slightly larger crest and with a white breast and asks for possible identification. It has come again but for brief periods only. Also in her Kahala home garden they saw last week a black bird, size of a myna but with an orange-yellow breast, and they wonder about that one, too. Incidentally, the grounds at St. Francis High School which is adjacent to Manoa stream and among



large, old trees, is a haven for many birds and Priscilla and the whole student body are very active bird-watchers. They have several pairs of resident Shama nesting on the grounds.

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Comments from H.R. McKenzie, New Zealand, 11 October 1976--In 'ELEPAIO, Vol.37, No.1, p.8 there is an account of a first Hawaiian record of a Black-tailed Godwit. It was indeed unfortunate that it could not be definitely identified. ...

Here in New Zealand we have had numbers of sightings of single Hudsonian (*Limosa haemastica*) and of Asiatic Black-tailed (*Limosa limosa melanuroides*) up to four at a time and the more frequently seen.

We have found that the bill is not a reliable feature for identification with these two species. The only definite feature is the underwing. The Hudsonian, 15", has it sooty dark, somewhat less dark on the underside of the primaries,...while the Asiatic, 15", has according to Falla, Sibson and Turbott A FIELD GUIDE TO THE BIRDS OF NEW ZEALAND Revised Edition, p.136, "a gleaming white underwing narrowly edged with black." I have observed these points of difference several times. Both species have the habit of raising the wings and showing the underside when feeding. Patience is required here. This identifying mark can be seen also on birds in flight. We have not been able to find any other means of separating these two. If the underwing on your bird was not observed I would say that you were right in not claiming a definite identification. Geographically I think that your bird could have been either Hudsonian or Asiatic, more likely the latter. ...

Reply from Robert L. Pyle, 31 October 1976--Thank you very much for your letter of October 11th discussing the Hudsonian and Black-tailed Godwits. Unfortunately, the underwing of our bird was not adequately observed. The pond is enclosed within a high fence preventing our free movement around the shore, and each time the bird flew he moved low over the water. We did not notice him raising the wings while feeding. The dark underwing is a good mark for the Hudsonian, and perhaps I should have mentioned in the note that this feature could not be observed well. In any case, we feel it safer to leave the identification as either Hudsonian or Black-tailed Godwit. ...

The Hudsonian Godwit does occur regularly in Alaska each summer in small numbers, so its occurrence in Hawaii as a vagrant is a distinct possibility. In Alaska and the eastern U.S. we use the underwing color as a good quick mark to separate Hudsonian Godwit in flight from Marbled or Bar-tailed. ...

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NOTES: THE CONDOR, Vol.78, No.2, Summer 1976, pp.224-229: Aspects of House Finch Breeding Biology by Charles van Riper III

p.224--I undertook to determine if, in the past 100 years, any changes have occurred in the breeding habits of the House Finch in Hawaii. ...Courtship feeding of the female by the male occurs frequently during incubation, but I have observed it only twice prior to egg laying.

p.227--As none of the extant native birds has the same dietary requirements as the House Finch, and because they nest at different times of the year, superficially there appears to be no competition between House Finches and other Hawaiian species. ...Of the six passerine species that use sheep wool at Pu'u La'au, the House Finch probably uses it the least. Some species, such as the 'Elepaio, have nests made almost entirely of wool. It is surprising that the House Finch does not utilize this nesting material more as it is used in certain areas of North America. ...One of the most striking similarities between Hawaiian and North American House Finches is the number of introduced plants from North America used in construction of the nest....

p.228--The abundance of the House Finch on Hawaii appears to have been enhanced by two factors. First, there being no seed-eating native birds, this niche was open for the House Finch. The second major factor appears to be the spread of ranching in Hawaii. Water troughs for cattle are now present over the entire island. House Finches depend heavily on these troughs. ...Summary: The House Finch was studied on the island of Hawaii from 1969 through 1973. The breeding season here extends from early March through late July. ... Both native and introduced trees are used as nesting sites.... Favored areas of nest placement were found to be in the inside region of the tree; a shift in placement may be occurring to the outer branches in Hawaii. Nests are constructed by females, taking from 6 to 11 days. ...It appears that in the past 100 years the breeding biology of the House Finch in upper mountainous areas of Hawaii has changed little from that of the birds in western North America.

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HONOLULU STAR-BULLETIN, 17 November 1976, page A-1: Huge Shark may be New Species by Bruce Dunford--...A huge, deep-sea shark caught by accident off Kane'ohe is thought to be a new species...The 12-foot, 1500-pound shark was hauled in Monday from a depth of 500 to 1000 feet about 1000 yards out from the Kane'ohe reef. He had become entangled in the parachute-like anchor lines of a Navy research vessel and apparently suffocated because he could not move enough to provide respiration. ..."We think it's a new species, a new genus and a new family of shark," said Leighton Taylor, director of the Waikiki Aquarium. ...Taylor said he gave the shark the nickname "Megamouth" because its mouth is "huge." But he said that judging from the rows of small, needle-like teeth, the shark fed on small sea life and wouldn't even have been tempted by a baited hook. ...The shark's feeding habits are similar to the temperate basking shark or the whale shark, Taylor said, "but he's definitely not one of those." The shark was identified as a male. Taylor said there was some calcification of the bones, showing that the fish was mature. He also said the shark may have been equipped with a headlight. "There is some evidence he can produce bioluminescence because there appear to be photophores in the mouth areas," Taylor said. He said many fish living at the shark's depth can produce light. After he's been thoroughly studied, classified and catalogued, "Megamouth" probably will be displayed either at the Bishop Museum here or at the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco, Taylor said.

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Request Bird-flock Information: For the next six months a study of bird flocks in Honolulu and throughout O'ahu will be conducted, so please report all sightings of bird flocks, noting 1.Date and time, 2.Location, 3.Name of species, 4.Number of birds, and 5.Whether feeding, flying, or roosting, to C. van Riper III, Dept. of Zoology, University of Hawaii,

2538 The Mall, Honolulu, HI 96822 or Cindy Garder, Hawaii School for Girls at La Pietra,  
2933 Poni Moi Road, Honolulu, HI 96815. MAHALO.

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J. d'Arcy Northwood, First President of the Hawaii Audubon Society by Charlotta Hoskins

In the summer of 1975 the Northwood Nature Center was established at Swan Sea Sanctuary, Cape May Point, New Jersey. This comprises half of the Cape May Bird Observatory, given as a memorial to d'Arcy Northwood. The New Jersey Audubon Society has made it headquarters for its educational and Raptor Studies program.

In addition to editing d'Arcy Northwood's Mill Grove Journal for publication, his wife, Anne has recently had published a new book called A CURATOR'S WIFE. This is a poetic story of a relationship and an insight into what may happen to a woman artist who marries the curator of a great bird sanctuary. Told in the third person with pseudonyms for the main characters it nevertheless has a universal theme to which both men and women, be they bird lovers or not, may relate. (Swan Sea Publications, P.O. Box 276, Cape May Point, New Jersey 08212. \$4.50)

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Field Checklist: The Society's new Field Checklist of Birds of Hawaii is now available.

It lists 125 species occurring regularly in Hawaii, with additional blank spaces for entering less common visiting species. Endemic and Endangered forms are indicated. Three columns are provided for recording observations at different localities. The list is in standard field card format, folded once to 4x6 inches in size. It is available either on heavier card stock for firmer recording in the field, or on lighter paper.

When ordered by mail, the list is priced at 25¢ each or 20 for \$1.50, postpaid. Copies obtained directly without mailing are priced at 10¢ each or 20 for \$1.00. A sample is enclosed with this issue of the 'ELEPAIO.

A Preliminary Checklist of all species known to have occurred in Hawaii has been completed in manuscript form. It provides vernacular, scientific and Hawaiian names, and is planned for publication in an early spring issue of the 'ELEPAIO.

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ALOHA to New Members:

Dr. Alexander T. Cringan, 1200 Stover St., Fort Collins, Colorado 80521  
Charles E. Scheffe, Muscatatuck Nat'l Wildlife Refuge, PO Box 631, Seymour, IN 47274  
John Stonick, 37 Neutral Ave., Staten Island, New York 10306  
Rene D. Sylva, P.O. Box 218, Paia, Maui 96779 (Reinstated)  
Peter H. Warner, 2533 Ala Wai Blvd., Apt 1202, Honolulu, HI 96815

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Donations: Mahalo! The following members have generously sent in donations: Mr. & Mrs. C. Fred Zeillemaker-\$15.00; Dr. Alexander T. Cringan-\$2.00 with a note, "for your fine work." MAHALO NUI LOA for your KOKUA!

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To the outgoing and incoming officers and members who actively participated in the Society's endeavors: MAHALO NUI LOA!

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Please report all bird sightings to field observation recorder, Dr. Robert L. Pyle, 741 N. Kalaheo Avenue, Kailua, Oahu 96734, telephone 262-4046.

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When you find a bird's nest, please call Dr. Andrew J. Berger at the Department of Zoology, University of Hawaii, telephone 948-8655 or 948-8617.

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HAWAII'S BIRDS, a field guide, is available for \$3.00 + postage & tax. Postage: U.S. 25¢ book rate, 57¢ first class; foreign--variable, weight 5ozs; sales and mailing in Hawaii--add 12¢ sales tax. Send in orders to Book Order Committee, Hawaii Audubon Society, P.O. Box 22832, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822.

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JANUARY ACTIVITIES:

- 2 January - Big Island Christmas Count. Call 967-7416 (home) or 967-7311 (office)  
Larry Katahira, PO Box 100, Hawaii National Park, Hawaii 96718
- 9 January - Field trip, depending on the weather, to study either the forest or the water birds. Meet at the State Library on Punchbowl Street at 7:00 a.m. Bring lunch, water and if possible your car. Transportation cost (\$1.00) to be paid to the drivers. For information call Dr. Robert Pyle, 262-4046
- 10 January - Board meeting at Waikiki Aquarium Auditorium, 7:00 p.m. Members welcome.
- 17 January - General meeting at Waikiki Aquarium Auditorium at 7:30 p.m.  
Program: Refuge Manager Palmer Sekora will speak on the Hawaiian and Pacific Islands National Wildlife Refuge and also on the Fish and Wildlife's advisory role to the Military. (color slides)

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HAWAII AUDUBON SOCIETY EXECUTIVE BOARD:

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'ELEPAIO: Editors-Charlotta Hoskins, Unoyo Kojima

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DUES: Regular-\$3.00 per annum, Junior (18 years and under)-\$1.00 per annum,  
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