

# 'ELEPAIO

*Journal of the  
Hawaii Audubon Society*



*For the Protection of  
Hawaii's Native Wildlife*

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## HAWAII AUDUBON BECOMES A CHAPTER OF NATIONAL SOCIETY

A letter from the Hawaii Audubon Society requesting Chapter status was submitted to the National Audubon Society on January 21, 1978. The letter, signed by President Robert L. Pyle and Vice President Robert J. Shallenberger, was accompanied by several enclosures, including the revised By-laws, an indication of the official "territory" of the HAS Chapter (Hawaii and the Pacific area), and lists of 1978 officers and committee chairmen.

National Audubon Society approved the application and granted provisional Chapter status to Hawaii Audubon Society for a period of one year beginning February 1, 1978. The welcoming letters have been received from the President and Regional Managing Director of NAS, as follows.

Dear Dr. Pyle:

We were very pleased to receive through the office of Richard Martyr your recent request for the issuance of a provisional chapter charter for the Hawaii Audubon Society. Your chapter bylaws are approved. Since your society has been formed in accordance with the provisions of our chapter plan and meets all criteria for a chapter, we have approved your application for provisional chapter status for a period of one year commencing February 1, 1978.

I personally wish to welcome you and your new chapter into the Audubon family. As this family grows, we realize that our chapters are the backbone of the Society and without people such as yourself and those working with you, our task would be almost impossible.

Under our bylaws, the Board of Directors must vote on the acceptance of your chapter; however, since you have met all requirements, we are considering your chapter as part of the Audubon family as of the date stated above.

The membership solicitation territory as

proposed by you has been approved provided, however, that should sufficient interest develop in the future and it becomes feasible to establish chapters within your territory, you will be prepared to relinquish those zip codes requested by your Regional Representative.

As stated to you in Mr. Howard's letter of August 19, 1977, it is agreed that the Hawaii Audubon Society may allow local memberships for a trial period of three years at the end of which time the matter will be mutually evaluated before a continuance is agreed to.

Undoubtedly, as your new chapter grows, you will require assistance from us. Please feel free to contact your Regional Representative or any of the departments at Society headquarters in New York City when problems or matters of interest arise. We are here to help our chapters and hope for a free-flowing network of communication with them.

We look forward to an increasingly active association with you in furthering the Audubon cause. Again welcome.

February 28, 1978

Sincerely,  
Edward M. Brigham III  
Managing Director of  
Regional Activities

Dear Dr. Pyle:

Let me add my own warmest welcome to that of Ed Brigham, who recently wrote you in detail about Hawaii Audubon's charter. I was delighted when Paul Howard told me last month that the way had been cleared for us to join together.

My very best wishes to all of you. I look forward to an opportunity to visit with Hawaii Audubon, and I hope it may work out sometime in the next few months.

March 8, 1978

Sincerely,  
Elvis J. Stahr, President  
National Audubon Society

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE VOLCANO, HAWAII CHRISTMAS COUNT

2 JANUARY 1978

by Larry Katahira, Compiler

The Volcano Christmas Count recorded remarkable statistics primarily due to the increase in participants (36 vs. 22 last year), and the additional areas included in the Count Circle. The group worked in 12 parties (6 last year), spent 89.5 hours in the field (64 last year) and traveled 56.2 miles on foot (44 last year). As a result, there were highs for 19 species and an astounding grand total of 13,685 individual birds compared to the previous high of 6,272 in 1974. For most areas the weather was favorable with clear to high clouds in the morning leading to overcast and intermittent light rain the late afternoon.

Five transects laid and censused by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1977 (J. M. Scott, C. Keppler, et al.) were included in our Count Circle. These rich birding areas traverse portions of Keauhou Ranch, Kilauea Forest Reserve, O'laa Tract, Kulani Correctional Facility, and Waiakea Forest Reserve. Our mahalo goes to the administration at Kulani for allowing several parties access within their boundaries.

A total of 29 species (25 previous high) was recorded this year with the inclusion of 3 new species: Kalij Pheasant, Hawaiian Owl (Pueo), and the endangered 'O'u.

The Kalij Pheasant, introduced on the slopes of Hualali in 1962, appears to have expanded its range to the windward side of the Big Island. Their widespread distribution not only includes ranchland but penetrates deep into the rain forest along Stainback Highway.

The Pueo was recorded above Kipuka Kī in a shrub-savannah type habitat by the Lockwood-Tomich party. This group also hiked the slopes of Mauna Loa to 8,200' where once again, as in past Counts, 'Oma'o were sighted.

Perhaps the highlight this year was recording the 'O'u. In O'laa Tract the party of Howard Sakai, Don Reeser, Lawrence and Ellen Jensen hiked into an area of closed 'Ōhi'a forest with hāpu'u understory where they heard 5 distinct calls of the 'O'u. They listened to 2 individual birds and tried



*Hawaii 'Akepa (Loxops coccinea coccinea), a new high for the Volcano Christmas Count.*

to get a visual sighting, but to no avail. The calls were described as being long plaintive downward type whistles. These vocalizations were confirmed to be 'O'u when Sakai and Reeser listened to tape recordings furnished by Ahuimanu Productions. During the summer of 1977, a census crew from the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Scott, Keppler et al.) sighted the elusive 'O'u in the same vicinity.

In Area 10, Waiakea Forest Reserve, there was an unusual observation of what appeared to be 'Akepa courtship behavior. A female 'Akepa was repeating its two note call from a nearby 'Ōhi'a as the male kept singing and flying 360° circles above the forest canopy. This activity continued for approximately five minutes until both birds flew from the party's view.

Six endangered species were observed during the Count day of which 4 are new highs: Nēnē, 13 vs. 6 in 1972 and 1976; 'Io, 10 vs. 7 in 1974; Hawaii Creeper, 53 vs. 23 in 1976; and 'Akiapola'au, 37 vs. 22 in 1976. These highs for endangered birds as well as for most other species may not represent valid trends since the Count is relatively young (since 1972), there was greater coverage (party-hours and miles-on-foot), an increase in the number of experienced participants, and additional areas were included.

Areas:	1	2	3	4a	4b	4c	4d	5	6	7	8a	8c	8d	9	10	11 mauka	11 makai	Total
White-tailed Tropicbird	.	6	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	6
Hawaiian Goose (Nēnē)	.	.	4	2	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	6	.	13
Hawaiian Hawk ('Io)	2	1	.	.	.	.	.	1	.	2	.	.	.	.	1	.	2	10
California Quail	.	.	.	18	60	1	.	6	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	85
Kalij Pheasant	.	.	.	6	4	.	.	.	.	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	12
Ring-necked Pheasant	.	.	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	2	3
Green Pheasant	2	.	.	4	2	.	.	3	.	.	3	.	.	.	.	.	.	14
Golden Plover	5	2	.	30	37	7	.	2	24	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	45	152
Spotted Dove	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	2	25	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	28
Barred Dove	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	7	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	9
Hawaiian Owl (Pueo)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
European Skylark	27	2	.	29	10	7	.	9	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	19	103
Melodious Laughing-Thrush	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	.	.	7	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	8
Red-billed Leiothrix	.	.	.	63	6	5	4	.	16	2	.	3	7	18	2	12	6	144
Hawaiian Thrush ('Ōma'o)	.	14	2	156	174	64	26	.	44	289	53	21	19	23	30	94	360	1369
Hawaii 'Elepaio	8	1	.	100	87	33	.	2	2	25	6	13	3	4	1	7	14	306
Common Myna	48	2	.	9	6	11	.	8	186	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	10	280
Japanese White-eye	33	3	.	72	109	26	25	6	136	128	4	2	34	83	22	63	99	845
Hawaii 'Amakihi	5	2	42	118	90	21	12	20	4	41	17	13	2	45	18	131	106	687
Hawaii Creeper	.	.	.	13	9	9	.	.	.	.	9	.	.	.	3	2	8	53
Hawaii 'Ākepa	.	.	.	6	12	4	.	.	.	.	3	.	.	.	10	4	24	63
'Akiapola'au	.	.	.	22	2	5	1	.	.	.	.	4	.	.	.	1	.	37
'O'u	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	2	.	.	2	.	.	.	2
'Apapane	98	187	107	1029	1122	121	79	66	422	1352	172	23	158	545	218	498	1775	7972
'I'iwi	1	2	2	93	131	31	6	.	4	113	11	8	6	98	47	121	178	852
Spotted Munia	.	.	.	82	64	38	2	10	73	7	.	.	.	.	.	.	42	318
House Sparrow	2	6	.	50	.	.	.	.	15	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	2	75
Northern Cardinal	12	.	.	22	19	6	6	6	21	.	.	1	.	.	.	1	1	95
House Finch	40	.	.	35	15	10	7	8	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	13	13	142
Unidentified Pheasant	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
No. of individual birds:	286	228	157	1960	1959	400	170	151	980	1968	280	88	229	818	352	953	2706	13685
No. of species:	15	12	5	22	19	18	12	16	15	11	10	9	7	8	10	13	18	29

Volcano, Hawaii Christmas Count

VOLCANO, HAWAII, CHRISTMAS COUNT  
1954-1977

	Highest Prior Count*	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977
White-tailed Tropicbird	3	2	2	3	.	2	6
Hawaiian Goose	.	6	4	2	.	6	13
Hawaiian Hawk	2	1	4	7	4	3	10
California Quail	.	.	1	1	29	43	85
Chukar Partridge	.	23	.	.	.	.	.
Japanese Quail	.	.	.	.	2	.	.
Kalij Pheasant	.	.	.	.	.	.	12
Ring-necked Pheasant	13	1	1	.	.	4	3
Green Pheasant	**	9	12	17	13	11	14
Golden Plover	42	68	157	71	346	172	152
Spotted Dove	15	2	6	16	24	18	28
Barred Dove	2	11	18	1	1	2	9
Hawaiian Owl (Pueo)	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
European Skylark	44	16	23	16	43	66	103
Melodious Laughing Thrush	.	.	.	.	1	.	8
Red-billed Leiothrix	196	16	13	84	49	83	144
Hawaiian Thrush ('Ōma'o)	19	382	284	702	571	961	1,369
Hawaii 'Elepaio	92	75	68	169	197	299	306
Common Myna	54	19	41	92	157	258	280
Japanese White-eye	122	169	239	330	391	250	845
Hawaii 'Amakihi	280	128	207	201	240	338	687
Hawaii Creeper	8	1	3	13	17	23	53
Hawaii 'Ākepa	.	13	13	15	45	100	63
'Akiapola'au	4	30	9	20	34	22	37
'O'u	.	.	.	.	.	.	2
'Apapane	1,307	3,269+	3,061	3,893	2,037	2,755	7,972
'I'iwi	71	246	161	424	163	316	852
Spotted Munia	46	76	21	93	107	121	318
House Sparrow	49	2	31	6	31	23	75
Northern Cardinal	11	19	22	42	48	57	95
House Finch	236	50	153	54	41	58	142
No. of Individual Birds:	2,616	4,634+	4,554	6,272	4,591	5,991	13,685
No. of Species:	21	25	25	24	24	25	29

\*Prior counts taken 1954-6, center of count circle 1/4 mile south of Hawaii Volcanoes National Park Headquarters. Number is greatest for respective species of these three counts.

\*\*Lumped with Ring-necked pheasant in 1954-6 counts.

## AREAS COVERED:

- 1 Kipuka-pua-ulu (Bird Park) and adjacent areas (Diane Calamar, Hubert Farley, Margaret Linderer, Dale Thompson)
  - 2 Rim of Ki-lau-ea Crater (same as 1)
  - 3 Mauna Loa Trail 6600-8200' elevation (Jack and Marti Lockwood, Quentin Tomich)
  - 4a Keauhou Ranch (Tonnie Casey, Holly McEldowney, Rick Warshauer, Charles and Sandy Van Riper)
  - 4b Keauhou Ranch, Transect 29 (Mary Lew Breese, Carol and C. J. Ralph)
  - 4c Keauhou Ranch, Transect 30 (Mark Collins, Maile Stemmermann)
  - 4d Keauhou Ranch, Transect 31 (Robert Pyle, J. Michael Scott)
  - 5 Mauna Loa Road, 4000-6600' elevation (same as 3)
  - 6 Volcano Community (Barbara Mull, Gary Nishimoto, Ken Nishimoto)
  - 7 Stainback Highway and Pu'u Maka'ala (Bill and Mae Mull)
  - 8a Kilauea Forest Reserve (same as 4a)
  - 8c Kilauea Forest Reserve (same as 4c)
  - 8d Kilauea Forest Reserve (same as 4d)
  - 9 Olaa Tract, National Park Service (Ellen and Lawrence Jensen, Don Reeser, Howard Sakai)
  - 10 Waiakea Forest Reserve, Transect 27 (James Jacobi, Larry Katahira, Claire Wolfe)
  - 11 Kulani Project, Transect 28-mauka (Dawn Breese, Avery Taylor)
  - 11 Kulani Project, Transect 28-makai (Paul Banko, Winston Banko, Peter Pyle)
- Count taken within 15-mile diameter circle centered on Kulani Cone summit (19° 31'N, 155° 18'W). Weather: clear to cloudy, occasional rain and fog; temperature 52-72° F; wind NE, 0-5 mph. Time: from 0630 to 1700 hours.
- Thirty-six observers in 12 parties: Total party-hours, 89.5 (81.5 on foot, 8 by car) Total party-miles, 117.7 (56.2 on foot, 61.5 by car)

## BIRD OBSERVATIONS DUE

Any bird observations of interest for the period 1 December through 28 February should be submitted now to Robert Pyle, 741 N. Kalaheo Ave., Kailua Hi 96734 (phone 262-4046). Many of these will be included in the reports in the 'Elepaio and American Birds Magazine.

## AMENDED CHRISTMAS COUNT FOR LIHUE, KAUAI

by Winona Woon Sears

In finishing going over Christmas mail I have just discovered a list mailed to me on December 20th that unfortunately I did not identify in making up the count.

The additions are: Cattle Egret 27, Black-crowned Night Heron 1, Northern Shoveler 6, Ring-necked Pheasant 3, Hawaiian Coot 3, American Golden Plover 9, Ruddy Turnstone 4, Hawaiian Stilt 6, Spotted Dove 6, Barred Dove 80, Common Myna 24, Japanese White-eye 11, Northern Cardinal 2, House Finch 16; Total 126. These observations were made by Renee and Riley Kaliher.

## GLEANINGS FROM THE TECHNICAL LITERATURE

## DO NATIVE BIRDS USE EXOTIC MATERIALS?

The use of sheep wool in nest construction by Hawaiian birds,

by Charles van Riper III

*The Auk* 94: 646-651, October 1977

Since endemic Hawaiian birds evolved in the absence of any long-haired mammals, would they recognize sheep's wool as a good material for building nests? As a good nest-finder with plenty of field time spent on Mauna Kea, van Riper found he could answer this question. He found that the native birds there, the 'Elepaio, 'Amakihi, and Palila, often did incorporate sheep's wool in their nests. In fact, these species used wool more often than did any of the seven introduced species living in the same areas. Some 'Amakihi and 'Elepaio were so enthusiastic about wool that they even flew off their territories at least as far as 400 m to get it. The 'Elepaio used wool the most frequently, with wool in 61% of all the nests found.

The use of wool is related to the complexity of the nest the bird builds. The three native species and three of the exotics, Red-billed Leiothrix, Japanese White-eye, and House Finch, all build "complex" nests, weaving a variety of materials. These are the species that used wool. The four exotic species that never used wool, Skylark, Melodious Laughing-Thrush, Spotted Munia, and Northern Cardinal, build "simple" nests, using almost only grasses.

- C. P. Ralph

## FIELD TRIP TO PONDS AND SHORES IN THE HILO AREA, ISLAND OF HAWAII

Cloudless skies and almost no wind were ideal conditions on 14 January 1978 for waterbird observations in the Hilo area by Society members (Larry Katahira, Claire Wolfe, Dawn Breese, Bill Mull and Mae Mull) armed with three spotting scopes and six pairs of binoculars. The scopes were set up first for close study of two unbanded Canada Geese (Cackling subspecies) grooming and sunning on the concrete embankment of the Mohouli storm drainage channel in back of the Cafe 100 drive-in. The Canada Geese were in the company of three domestic white geese -- part of an assortment of domestic fowl maintained by the nearby Sheraton-Waiakea Village. Michael Scott reports he had seen from one to three of the Cacklers in the same area on several occasions starting in November 1977, and the hotel people said they had not released them. We assume these are wild birds; the subspecies has previously been reported from the Hilo area.

The best viewing of Mohouli Pond was from the Kilauea Avenue side, with access at the restaurant parking lot next to the huge Chinese banyan tree landmark. After lengthy observation, counting and recounting of the moving birds, we arrived at 8 Hawaiian Coot (endangered species), 3 Northern Shoveler and 14 Lesser Scaup (9 males, 5 females). Two usual winter migrants were absent from the pond: American Wigeon and Pintail. Eight domesticated Mallards repeatedly swam in front of us, as though asking for handouts. Two Wandering Tattlers ('Ulili) briskly fed along the pond margins, and ten Golden Plover (Kōlea) were in the sweeps of lawn grass around the "improved" Waiakea Pond and Wailoa Visitor Center. There were at least forty Spotted Munia in a wide stretch of grass gone-to-seed in Wailoa State Park along Kamehameha Avenue. Mohouli Pond is named a bird "sanctuary" in several government reports, but it does not have officially protected status yet.

At Kionakepahu Pond, east of Hilo on Kalaniana'ole Highway, the flock of Cattle Egrets often seen in the pasture around the pond were not present this time. Two Black-crowned Night Herons ('Auku'u) stalked along the marshy edges. At the far side of the adjacent and much larger Lokoaka Pond, we picked out five Hawaiian Coot with the

scopes. Three Lesser Scaup (2 males, 1 female) were closer in, diving and resting in the middle of the pond. Up to four 'Auku'u, juveniles and adults, were seen at a single time -- slowly flapping over the pond, perched on a wooden post sticking out of the water, in ironwood trees, standing motionless or stalking along the grassy borders. Seven 'Ulili were counted here and across the highway on the lava rock shore of James Kealoha Beach Park.

Scanning offshore from the park, Wolfe sighted "fins" above the waves. Such excitement as a pod of porpoises came into view, some of them leaping and spinning in the air for a few seconds as they moved from east to west along the coast just beyond the breaking waves. Breese, an experienced cetacean observer, identified them as the Pacific Spinning Porpoise and estimated a total of fifty individuals. Their slow movement and our unobstructed view kept the pod in sight for about fifteen minutes. Beach park visitors, including author James Wohl and Nature Conservancy representative Kimo Tabor, shared in the great fun of porpoise-watching. After a ten-minute break, porpoises were sighted again, this time moving in the opposite direction, from west to east. Once more we were dazzled by the leaping and spinning performances, with one or more of them in the air almost constantly. Before they passed from view, Breese estimated this group at twenty-five individuals. Had half of the pod turned around to pass the beach park waters a second time?

Later, from a Waiakea Peninsula picnic table off Banyan Drive, we watched a flock of six Ruddy Turnstones ('Akekeke) working the wave-washed rocks just off the shore of Hilo Bay. One or two more 'Akekeke were sighted at several points on our walk around the periphery of Coconut Island, and here we saw an 'Ulili catch and devour a small rock crab. A half-dozen Kōlea were scattered on the island and peninsula shores. We saw or heard the common urban exotics at one or more stops: Spotted and Barred Doves, Japanese White-eye, Common Myna, House Sparrow, Northern Cardinal and House Finch. The porpoises made it a memorable day!

Mae E. Mull

### QUESTION: SHOULD WILD SHEEP BE ALLOWED TO ROAM FREE ON MAUNA KEA?

Island of Hawaii Representative Mae E. Mull and Earl Pacheco, President of the Hawaii Island Fish and Game Association, were invited to present opposing views on this question by Hilo radio station KIPA on the program "Focus" in a live broadcast on 26 December 1977. Tapes of the program were broadcast to Big Island audiences several times in December and January. This is a transcript of Mrs. Mull's presentation, limited to 2½ minutes:

"Big Island residents probably would put majestic Mauna Kea near the top of the list as a prized natural resource. The problem is, how can we enjoy and use this resource without using it up? The ancient Hawaiians can teach us. They used the trees, fruits and birds of Mauna Kea in their everyday lives. But they used them in moderation; they didn't use them up. They thought of future generations who would live here.

"Sheep are newcomers to Hawaiian forests. The old Hawaiians didn't know that sheep and goats existed. These domestic animals were brought to the Big Island only 200 years ago by Europeans and released to run wild in the forests.

"The native plants have no built-in defenses, like thorns, bad taste or deep roots, against these big mammals. Native plants are like ice cream to them, especially māmane.

"Sheep and goats have a destructive impact on the native ecosystem. You can see the evidence in the one-acre plots that were fenced off near treeline about 12 years ago. In these plots where sheep are kept out at Pu'u-kole and mauka of Pu'u-lā'au, you can compare the ground vegetation and the healthy māmane trees of different sizes inside the fence with the dead māmane skeletons outside the fence. Growing conditions are the same on both sides of the fence -- same soil, same rainfall and same insects. Only one thing is different. Sheep have not been inside the fence for 12 years. This contrast shows how sheep destroy the forest. It also shows that māmane and other native plants will regenerate and grow vigorously in the absence of sheep.

"The endangered Mauna Kea birds are just the visible symptoms of a sick ecosystem. But the forest can be restored to health by eliminating the cause of the sickness: sheep and goats.

"Pig hunting will continue on Mauna Kea, along with good game bird hunting. Other Big Island sheep hunting areas already exist and will continue on the Pōhaku-loa flats, at Pu'u-anahulu, Pu'u-wa'awa'a and Hualālai.

"With wise use we can recover the watershed, soil and forest ecosystem of Mauna Kea and pass on this unique natural heritage to our descendants."

### ALOHA TO NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members and encourage them to participate in our activities.

Student: Beverly L. Gay and Nina Swenson, both of Honolulu.

Regular: Margit Anonsen, John W. Gilje, Brian Horiuchi, Gail Karlen, I. H. Lloyd, James Merrihew, Akiko Woolliams, all of Honolulu; Paul L. and Mary Lew Breese, Kapa'au; Martin Flavin, Garrett Park, Md.; Mrs. John Keat, Makaweli; Linda Myers, Pasadena, Calif.; Mary Oberle, Edina, Minn.; Puu Kohola Heiau National Historical Site, Kawaihae.

Regular (Reinstated): Otto Degener, Waialua; William Elder, Columbia, Mo.; Connie Kitney, Niagara Falls, Ont.; Eugene Kridler, Kailua; Mary McKinnon, San Rafael, Calif.; Brian McKnight, Honolulu; Cyril Morehen, Black Creek, B.C.; E. W. Mudge, Jr., Dallas, Tex.; D. S. Murdock, Honolulu; Linda Streitfeld, Kaunakakai; Lynn Thomas, Chico, Calif.

A special mahalo to new Life Members: Thelma Greig, John Hall, Harold J. Heide, Sybil N. Heide, and David Smith, all of Honolulu; Leah G. Niemoth, Kailua-Kona; and Lawrence Pinter, Pearl Harbor.

### DONATIONS

MAHALO NUI LOA to the following members who have generously included donations, ranging from \$1.50 to \$15.00, with their dues and purchases: Dawn Breese, Tim Burr, George Campbell, Bill Clark, Sophie Cluff, Dudley Coillet, Alexander Cringan, Charles Dunn, Susumu Fujii, Thelma Hensley, Asleain Hodges, Aileen Ichijo, Harvey King, Jack Kinsey, Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Kupchak, Martha Lockwood, Daniel & Lois Luten, Ann McKendry, Walter McKinney, Noel Miller, Donald Mitchell, Helen Morris, E.W. Mudge, Jr., Mr. & Mrs. William Myers, Jean-Marie Spoelman, Ora Stroborg, Helen Whorton, Dick Wong, and two Anonymous.

FIELD TRIP TO MOKAUEA ISLAND,  
JANUARY 8, 1978

A fascinating fleeting glance into a part of ancient Hawaii was afforded 27 members and guests of the Hawaii Audubon Society to Mokauea Island, Oahu. The trip was planned and escorted by John Kelly, advisor for the Mokauea Fisherman's Association, and his wife Marion, a teacher of ethnic studies, University of Hawaii. Also along as a resource person was Ron Walker, Chief of the Wildlife Section of the Department of Land and Natural Resources of the State of Hawaii.

Presently a 65-year lease is being granted by the state to the Mokauea Fisherman's Association. The island was formerly an active ancient fishing village and is of vital concern today to the Fish and Wildlife Service because of the bird life in the nearby swamps where the endangered Hawaiian stilt or 'ae'oe can be found.

Mokauea Village lies 1,000 feet offshore by boat from Sand Island on the southern entrance to Honolulu harbor and part of it is slowly being converted into a public state park. During World War II it was used by the Army and much of the debris from that period and a current "dump" still remains.

The group noted the rustic homes of the five families still permitted to dwell on the island. Some of the oldtimers recalled how they walked across from Sand Island in low tide, using washtubs tied together to haul things from the mainland.

Habitation by Hawaiians was known on this island 160 years ago as shown on the 1817 map of the Kotzebue Expedition, Kelly pointed out to the visitors to the Audubon visitors. An ancient Hawaiian canoe on display was hand made of koa with ancient tools.

Visitors noted the islanders' gardens with herbs and dry land taro. Beyond we could see some wildlife parading among the clumps of mangrove trees. There were the lonely Wandering Tattlers or 'Ulili, Golden Plovers or Kolea, who valiantly fly some 3000 nonstop miles from their Arctic homes to winter here each year; Ruddy Turnstones or 'Akekeke, Sanderlings or Huna Kai in flashing white poking along the silty mudflats, a few Hawaiian Stilts and Brown Boobies, plus a visiting jaeger.

It was an enlightening visit for most of us who had never before been privileged to visit an authentic Hawaiian fishing village.

*Peggy Hickok Hodge*

ARE FACTS FOR THE BIRDS?

*The following is a letter from HAS member Jerome J. Pratt, appearing in The Maui Sun, Feb. 6-12, 1978.*

EDITOR:

Students of nature depend upon what they read in the press for much of their information, especially when something unusual happens. The appearance of a pair of emperor geese in the Lahaina area recently got a great deal of coverage in the press, but the clippings reaching me on the mainland were quite erroneous in several respects.

First of all, it is not that unusual for an emperor goose to show up in Hawaii. They have been reported as stragglers since 1903, on the Big Island, Oahu, Kauai, Maui, Laysan, Midway, and Kure. This goose breeds on the northwestern coast of Alaska and the northeastern coast of Siberia. Until recently it was believed that the entire population of these birds wintered in the Aleutian Islands. Now increasing numbers of them are showing up along the west coast of North America, from California to British Columbia, and inland to Idaho...

To make an interesting story of the emperor appearance on Maui, a reporter associated this species with the Canada goose in order to lead into the origin of the Hawaiian goose or nene. The emperor belongs to an entirely different clan than the Canada goose. The emperor fits into the genus *Philacte* and the Canada is a *Branta*, which means we cannot expect them to interbreed. The nene is also grouped with the *Branta*, but I am not so sure it belongs there...

The nene possesses some characteristics which lead me to believe it is more closely related to something from south of the equator than a North American relative. The nene commences its breeding cycle as the hours of daylight recede, which is not a Northern Hemisphere trait, and in proportion of egg size to body size of the bird, the nene lays a much larger egg than North American geese.

A good project for a young student would be to study the regression of a Canada-nene hybrid to determine if they really do belong in the same genus.



THE GREAT KAUAI MONGOOSE HUNT IS ON  
Article in Honolulu Advertiser, March 4, 1978

The state Division of Fish and Game, with help from the federal Fish and Wildlife Service, is going to try its darndest to find a mongoose on Kauai starting next week.

Several members of the Young Adult Conservation Corps, a federal jobs program for persons aged 18 to 23, will work under state wildlife management assistant Kimo McTavish in installing 200 to 300 mongoose traps over large areas of the island, said wildlife biologist Thomas C. Telfer.

"The whole purpose of our mongoose program is to verify its presence. We want to determine if it is here," he said, so that funds and permits required to eradicate the pest can be obtained.

Kauai is the only major island in the state without mongooses although occasional sightings have been reported over the years.

Then, in December 1976, a mongoose body was found on a road on Kauai's west side. It was a female, and an autopsy showed it had recently suckled young.

Since then, there have been several dozen sightings or believed sightings of mongooses, but no more firm evidence. The state Fish and Game Division has used 30 or 35 traps, but they have not snared a mongoose.

Telfer said his office is still seeking sightings, so that it can determine where the mongoose infestation is the greatest.

BOARD MEETING, FEB. 13, 1978

Rob Shallenberger reported on the progress of the new edition of "Hawaii's Birds". The Society could save substantial amounts of money by having the entire job done in Taiwan (about \$10,000), and very little by the other options (such as having the printing and stripping done by Star-Bulletin, and the separations done elsewhere). However, by taking the job to Taiwan, we will lose the copyright and will have to cope with a foreign, non-English-speaking company. Concern was expressed that loss of copyright might affect both the Society and the individual artists and photographers. After lengthy discussion, the Board unanimously decided to have the separations done in Taiwan by China Color, and with one dissenting vote, to have the printing done at the same place.

C.J. Ralph passed around the Auditing Committee Report on 1977, the proposed 1978 budget, and the monthly report for January. The Committee report will be published in the 'Elepaio (March, 1978). The 1978 budget was introduced and reviewed by the Board.

Linda Ogata exhibited the poster she has prepared for National Wildlife Week, featuring the koloa release program. She proposes to distribute the poster and a descriptive leaflet through the Department of Education and requested that the Board expend \$200 for printing 2500 copies. Her request was approved unanimously.

The Board discussed the location and duration of future Board meetings. Concern was expressed over the ever-increasing length of the meetings. It was suggested that priorities be set on the agenda items, and that a 9:00 curfew be set on discussion. This led to fears that controversial issues might not be adequately discussed. After a more-than-adequate discussion, the Board unanimously agreed to hold meetings at Board members' homes, alternating monthly between the windward and leeward sides of the island, to last from 7:00 to 9:15 p.m.

PUBLICATIONS OF THE SOCIETY

HAWAII'S BIRDS by the Society (1975). This is the best field guide to our birds, and includes colored illustrations of all native and well-established exotic species.  
(Postpaid, add 27¢ for airmail)..... \$3.30

FIELD CHECK-LIST OF BIRDS OF HAWAII by R. L. Pyle (1976). A pocket-size field card listing the species recorded in Hawaii with space for notes of field trips.  
(Postpaid)..... .25  
(ten or more, 10¢ per copy)

GUIDE TO HAWAIIAN BIRDING by members of Society and edited by C. J. Ralph (1977). Where to go and some idea of what you are likely to see. For the islands of Hawaii, Maui, Molokai, Lanai, Oahu, and Kauai.  
(Postpaid)..... .50

PRELIMINARY LIST OF THE BIRDS OF HAWAII by R. L. Pyle (1977). An authoritative compilation of all species naturally occurring in Hawaii as well as those introduced by man currently established as viable populations. Gives an excellent summary of each species' status.  
(Postpaid)..... \$1.00

POSTER: "We care about Hawaiian Wildlife Habitat". A joint effort of H.A.S. and other conservation groups, this colorful poster illustrates native waterbirds overlaid on a map of the island chain.  
(Postpaid)..... .50

HAWAII AUDUBON EXECUTIVE BOARD

HAWAII AUDUBON SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Apr. 9. Field trip to Halawa Ridge trail for forest birds, hopefully to include 'i'iwi, Oahu creeper, and swiftlet. This is a difficult and, in places, treacherous trail, and we recommend that only people in good physical condition participate; children should be left at home. Meet at 7 a.m. at the Hawaii State Library on Punchbowl St. Leader: Maile Stemmermann, ph. 235-1693.

Apr. 10. Board meeting for survivors of field trip, at the home of Linda Ogata, 3263 Pahoa Ave., Honolulu (734-2636), 7 p.m. All members welcome.

Apr. 17. General meeting, Waikiki Aquarium, 7:30 p.m. Jack Throp, Director of the Honolulu Zoo, will report on his recent trip to the Galapagos Islands.

\* \* \* \* \*

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