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SANFORD BALLARD DOLE: EARLY HAWAIIAN ORNITHOLOGIST By D. Amadon

1944 is the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Judge Sanford B. Dole, first Governor of the Territory of Hawaii and amateur ornithologist. Though Dole lived until 1926, his most important paper on birds was published in 1878. At his death few remembered his contributions to ornithology. Dole was born in Hawaii, but studied law in Boston. There he probably met naturalists who encouraged him to compile a list of Hawaiian birds. At any rate, the first edition of his "Birds of the Hawaiian Islands" appeared in 1869 in the "Proceedings of the Boston Society of Natural History." In 1876 Dole wrote a pamphlet, of which there is a copy in the Bishop Museum library, entitled "Hawaiian Birds Collected and Mounted by J. D. Mills of Hilo, Hawaii. List Prepared by S. B. Dole of Honolulu for the American Centennial." In this pamphlet he called attention to undescribed species of Hawaiian birds represented in the Mills Collection. Two years later he named and described these in a revised edition of his list of Hawaiian birds. This, his most important contribution to our knowledge of the birds of these islands, was published in 1878 in Thrum's "Hawaiian Almanac and Annual for 1879."

One of the new species Dole described was a member of the family Drepanididae¹ or Hawaiian Honey-creepers, of which the native name was said to be Ula-ai-hawane or "red bird that feeds on the Hawaiian palm. This attractive species Dole named Fringilla anna, to honor his wife. Through a shift in genus, the bird is now known as Ciridops anna Dole. Ciridops is not only extinct, but is one of the rarest of all birds in collections. Only three specimens exist. Two of these were in the Mills Collection, of which one is now in the Bishop Museum and the other in the American Museum of Natural History, New York. The third specimen, secured by a native, is also in New York. The speedy disappearance of this bird is puzzling. Possibly it was on the verge of extinction through natural causes when discovered. Mr. G. C. Munro in 1937 saw what he thought might be a Ciridops. If this species should be found to exist today, this would constitute one of the most remarkable re-discoveries in the annals of ornithology.

¹Mayr has shown (1943, "Condor", vol 45, p. 46) that this is the correct spelling of this name and not Drepanididae or Drepanidae, as variously used.

Dole described one other new species, a small, flightless rail which he named Pennula millsii. Pennula, meaning "small wing", refers to the decrease through disuse of the wings of this rail until they were useless. When cats, dogs and mongooses were introduced into Hawaii, the Hawaiian Rail was at their mercy and soon disappeared. The five specimens of Pennula in the Mills Collection are the only ones known, so it is appropriate that Dole named the species millsii after its discoverer. Two of the five specimens are now in the Bishop Museum, two in the American Museum of Natural History and one in the Cambridge University collection in England.

It is likely that Dole's interest led to the acquisition of the invaluable Mills Collection by C. R. Bishop, founder of the Bishop Memorial Museum. In addition to Ciridops and Pennula, the Mills Collection contained three of the four known specimens of the extinct honey-eater Chaetoptila and almost half of the dozen or less known examples of the famous Mamo, Drepanis pacifica.

In addition to the two species he described, Dole's name is commemorated by that of Palmeria dolei Wilson, the Crested Honey-creeper. This species is perhaps the most unusual member of this remarkable family. Apparently Judge Dole did not contribute to the literature of ornithology after 1878. However, he served as president of the board of trustees of the Bishop Museum, and in this and other ways expressed his continued interest in the natural history of Hawaii.

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My First Bird Walks in Hawaii (continued) By George C. Munro

Tantalus hill, Puu o Hea of the Hawaiians, 2013 feet elevation could be made an easily accessible botanical garden for many remarkably interesting and rare Hawaiian plants. The C.C.C. trail around it, now sometimes used as a bird walk by the Honolulu Audubon Society could be extended. It could be carried round the hill at intervals at an easy grade gradually rising to the top. Then if the lake formerly in the bottom of the crater, could be restored, with its fringe of reeds and native ducks swimming on its surface Tantalus trails would furnish a still more interesting bird walk. It might not be possible to restore the lake but a wonderful exhibition of plants peculiar to Hawaii could be grown on the slopes of Puu o Hea.

The lake had evidently been fed by rainfall, running on the surface to the lowest point, the crater bottom. At long intervals there occurs on these islands a season of excessively heavy rainfalls. The surface soil becomes saturated and the water runs over the surface carrying a fine silt in solution. It accumulates in low spots and often before drying up deposits a layer of silt on the bottom which becomes waterproof. The water is then held as long as there is sufficient rainfall to replace evaporation from its surface. If rainfall is deficient the lake dries up, the silt cracks and crumbles into soil and will not set again. Then there is no lake till the right combination of rainfall occurs to form it and keep it in existence. I experienced one of these falls on Molokai about 1901 and another on Lanai about 1915. Old inhabitants on Molokai said there had not been such a rain for 30 years. A lagoon at Papohaku on that island remained there a long time. Henry Gibson, who was born on Lanai, when about 50 years old told of natives seen by himself or by story handed down,

of that island diving from canoes in the Palawai basin to harvest their sweet potato crops which the flood had covered and was not drying up quickly enough. We thought Henry was stretching the story, but it was quite possible. The fall I saw there, though five feet deep in places in the basin cut channels straight down through the soil and ran off in that way in a comparatively short time. The rock formation below is evidently very open. It is quite possible that the lake at Puu o Hea may be naturally revived again some time in the next quarter or so.

I knew of no trail on the Round Top side and started back the way I came. Three white birds were flying about on the opposite side of Pauoa Valley and I started down to get a closer view of them. There was no trail and under the large trees there was a tangled mass of vines and various kinds of undergrowth "as bad as any New Zealand bush." But there was not a great deal of it and I reached a little valley filled with wild guava and some horses grazing among them. The horses kept the ground more open and there was a trail which I followed down the valley. On the top and coming down I heard crickets chirping but did not see any. Landshells were plentiful but as I was not collecting them I did not avail myself of this opportunity. I wanted beetles but saw none. We were told afterwards that the chirping was made by landshells. Perkins, however, investigated this later and traced the chirping to very small crickets. Some people still believe that the chirping is made by landshells which often occupy the same class of forest as crickets. The former are conspicuous but the crickets can only be found by careful search. I have great faith in Perkins' investigations and would not question his conclusions without good reason. However, there is nothing to prevent anyone here in Hawaii with sufficient patience and perseverance for working it out for themselves. I found it a long tramp down the valley and was thankful for the trail and not having to scramble through vines and underbush. I saw no more of the white-tailed tropic birds that day. Near town there were several flocks of ricebirds. Eventually the taro patches were reached, "acres and acres of them" and on out to Nuuanu St. This was my introduction to the pueo, koloa, koae and ricebird.

On the 20th, I walked out to Nuuanu Pali. There were no trees along the road at the pali end. The planting of the present fine forest was done shortly afterward under the supervision of Mr. David Haughs, who for many years was connected with the Board of Agriculture and Forestry. That probably was his first work in Hawaii. On the road occasionally was met a Chinese with baggy black trousers carrying pole and baskets and Hawaiians on horseback coming over from the Kailua side.

My greatest interest was the hillsides and cliffs in full view on each side of the eastern end of the valley. I was entranced with their beauty and the thin streams running over the cliffs which were turned into spray when half way down. The wind was not strong enough to blow the water upwards from the top as can often be seen. The stretch of undulating country between the pali and the sea was noted, but being used to country like it I did not remark on the particular beauty of that scene. It probably was a dull day and the colors on the water on that side may not have shown at their best. I was not used to seas with bright colors and would certainly have remarked it if they had. The bunches of long leafed grass on the east slope as the pali is reached were waving in the wind as they do now. Several

owls were seen on the way and there were a number of tropic birds flying backwards and forwards along the faces of the cliffs. Some were soaring at a great height, chasing each other and performing aerial evolutions while uttering their harsh screeching cry.

On the trip a close view was had of ricebirds. Mynahs, sparrows, linnets and Chinese doves had been seen before. The sparrows seemed numerous. I was told that the linnets had been common in the town but that the sparrows had driven them out. The linnets are grass seed feeders and would naturally gravitate to the country and the sparrows would stay in the town. The linnets, sparrows and ricebirds were all bad on the rice crops.

On the 25th, at 5 p.m. we embarked for Kauai. Early in the day with some shipmates I took a walk along the shore by the present site of Moana Park and Kewalo Bay. The whole shore was then a belt of coral rubble about 100 yards wide between the sea and the swamp. Aukuu and curlew were on the beach.

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Bird Notes from the New Hebrides
By Walter Donaghho

The morning dawned beautiful and serene, illuminating the coconut groves with brilliant shafts of light. A beautiful morning indeed, for exploring the groves and jungles of this mysterious island, and it was with much eagerness that I literally gulped down my breakfast in order to get out and see what surprises there were in store. I decided to go down to the beach to get a view across the harbor. The ground sloped gently down through the cocoanut groves, to fall away abruptly in cliffs of white coral ten feet in height. I went over to a scattered grove of trees in a field nearby, where I hoped to get acquainted with some of the island's feathered denizens. Flocks of white eyes frequented the trees. They were large birds; nearly the size of the English sparrow, and their notes somewhat resembled those of the ricebird. Their song was somewhat similar in nature to that of the Mejiro, only much louder and sweeter. As I entered the grove, I saw a tiny dull green bird with a dirty white breast and a thin pointed bill. It uttered a beautiful passage of clear, whistling notes. A cute little fantail flycatcher flew down to give me carefully scrutiny. Now and then it poured forth a sweet melody of high tinkling descending notes, followed by a trill on the end. Several golden plover flew up as I crossed the grassy field, and made for the cocoanut groves and the main road.

I quickly grabbed a ride in a jeep that soon came along. After a short ride through the groves, the jeep turned off at a cemetery. On the opposite side of the cemetery from me was jungle, and I went over, hoping to see some new birds. It was a beautiful open forest, with trees about fifty feet in height, and a grassy floor. Cocoa trees were scattered about underneath the green canopy. I noticed the orange or brown pods hanging from the limbs.

A strange bird was uttering beautiful plaintive whistles as I entered, and I started stalking. They resembled the notes of the Guadalcanal yellowbreasted thickhead. I saw a brown bird that was the female of the bird I was stalking, but didn't realize it at the time. Soon however, I saw it. It was a thickhead. However, instead of the

brilliant lemon yellow throat of the Guadalcanal species, the throat was white. Many white eyes were in the trees overhead. I saw a large reddish brown dove in a large tree and noticed that it was busily engaged in chasing white eyes out of its tree. Flocks of lorries flew screeching to a mountain apple tree in the cemetery. Close scrutiny disclosed them as the same green and red lorries as on Guadalcanal. I heard a rush of wings, and saw a pair of ground doves fly up from the shade of a cocoa tree and alight in the shade of a cluster of trees nearby. I crawled towards them, keeping behind the cover of a thicket in front of me. They walked out into sight, however, where I saw their beautiful and brilliantly colored emerald green wings, with a white patch on the shoulders, and their reddish brown breasts, heads, and tails. Once a beautiful honeyeater, dull green with a fiery red head, flew into a tree followed by its dull coloured mate (or young).

Going back to the main road, I soon got a ride. The jeep turned up a side road soon, and we went off through the jungle to the east side of the island. The jungle was very dense through here, and was full of thickheads; their whip like notes could be heard on both sides. Now and then the tinkling notes of the fantail floated out to us. Soon we left the jungle and came into cocoanut groves along the shores of a large and beautiful bay; the brilliant blue waters of which I could see through the palms. I heard a slow succession of kingfisher-like notes and stalked them. I found their source; a beautiful royal blue backed kingfisher with a clean white breast and a black bill, perched on a palm frond.

Walking up the road to the north, I crossed a little stream and noticed its clear pale blue water. A large brown, green winged pigeon flew out of a tree on one of its banks, and disappeared into the jungle.

It was nearing lunch time by now, and I started looking for a ride. A jeep driven by a couple of air corps officers came along presently and gave me a ride back to the field.

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One of the most unique gathering places of the water birds of this island appears to be the shallow ponds of Moanalua. Here at different seasons of the year, birds from various parts of the island and even different portions of the world come to feed and spend the fall and winter months. During one day alone, in a favorable season many hundreds of shorebirds and ducks may be seen. The species list for a single day in that region may be as high as ten or twelve without including the perching birds of the vicinity.

During the spring and summer months the Black Crowned Night Heron is about the only resident of the ponds. Between five and twenty of these permanent resident may be seen stalking their food at any time.

The Hawaiian Stilt, which seems to be a favorite of all bird students here, returns after the nesting season to the ponds and during the later months of the year over 150 may be seen on good days. I have spent some time recording groups which have appeared early this year in small numbers. One flock of approximately thirty was observed on June 4, while another group of thirty three was seen about a month later on July 9. On a visit to Moanalua ponds on July 21 I noticed only three individuals.

On July 25, approximately 200 stilts were seen although an accurate account of the number was almost impossible to obtain. This group was probably all the remains of the stilts living on these islands.

In early fall the Plovers and Tattlers return from distant nesting locations in Alaska and Siberia and a number always spend the fall and winter months at Moanalua. On almost any day after August these visiting shorebirds may be seen there.

Coot and Gallinules are very frequently found; sometimes in groups out in the water, more often swimming among the water lilies and along the overgrown shore lines.

During the fall Pintail and a few other varieties of ducks take over the ponds when their numbers increase to several hundred.

Because of its nearness to town and the great variety of birds present, the ponds of the Moanalua area should be of great interest to persons who enjoy observing and studying birds.

Harold T. Cantlin

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BIRD WALK. Being an amateur bird walker and writer I'll try to tell of the interesting bird walk we had last Saturday, August 12, 1944. It was a good day to be in the outdoors, but only three of us were able to forget our present atmosphere and listen to the chirps of our feathered neighbors. Miss Unoyo Kojima, Cpl. Ivy Dahl, and yours truly carried on in the name of the Elepaio to add another chapter to the saga of the Elepaio, Honolulu Audubon Society. Starting from the end of the Alewa Heights bus at two thirty we started to listen or see the birds with a few guavas in our hands. Our object was to cover the trail on the ridges of the mountain surrounding the Country Golf Club. The Trail was like a roller coaster up and down, but we had fun and success. The first birds to come in sight were two hill robins on a tree alongside of the trail. Of course, cardinals made the entire trip more pleasant and made us forget for a while that we were near Honolulu. After the first rest, we saw in the valley below four tropic birds flying in circles and seeming to go higher as the leader pointed its beak upward. We ate the remaining guavas then heard some hill robins. Miss Kojima was our bird authority, and each of us took turns in leading. The trail was inviting as there was a cool breeze and some of the beauty of Oahu could be seen. We took a short cut in the trail and were lucky to come across two rice birds that didn't mind us getting a close look at them. We whistled and pressed our lips against our wrist as if a mate was calling, but they then flew away. Crickets could be heard during the entire trip and it made Cpl. Dahl and myself think of home. About this time we were getting a little thirsty and nature presented us with more of her fruit, this time it was strawberry guavas. After resting and eating again we could see our destination in view and the sun beginning to cast its shadow on the mountain. As we neared the end of the trail we saw two more rice birds and heard an elepaio calling. Soon we were able to hear our city friend the mynah telling us that we were once again back in Honolulu.

August 14, 1944

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Pfc. Meyer Elliot Klein

Next bird walk: meet at Manoa bus terminus, September 9th, 2:00 p.m.¹⁸
for a walk to the Manoa falls.

HONOLULU AUDUBON SOCIETY

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