



'ELEPAIO

Journal of the
Hawaii Audubon Society

For the Protection of
Hawaii's Native Wildlife

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DECEMBER/JANUARY 2001

Christmas Bird Count 1999-2000: Regional Summary for Hawai'i and the Pacific Islands

by Robert L. Pyle

With twelve counts taken in Hawai'i and seventeen in the U. S. Pacific Islands during December 1999 and early January 2000, a record number of Christmas Bird Counts were reported in the region. The main Hawaiian Islands were covered by the eight regular counts, with an additional count initiated on West Maui (Table 1). It four counts were conducted on National Wildlife Refuges in the northwest Hawaiian Islands and Johnston Atoll (Table 2), along with the four regulars in Guam and the Northern Marianas.

The Hawai'i Christmas Bird Counts report many Endangered Species. The Federal Endangered Species List includes thirty-two species and subspecies of birds endemic to Hawai'i, fourteen of which were found on at least one Hawai'i count this year (Table 1). Six of the Hawaiian endangered birds inhabit areas not covered by the count, and two species of Procellariids are wintering at sea in December and January. Ten of the Endangered Species are likely extinct or existing in tiny remnant populations, with no verified reports of sightings in more than ten years for most species.

Two additional Endangered Species, Peregrine Falcon and Short-tailed Albatross, were reported among the group of non-breeding winter visitors found on this year's Christmas Counts at Midway Atoll. One or two Short-tailed Albatross have been wintering annually at Midway for more than twenty years and have been found on each count during that time. The birds were banded as chicks at a Japanese island colony and are readily observed sitting on short grass fields among Laysan and Black-footed Albatross. This year three Short-tailed Albatross were found on the Midway count: two on count day and one which happened to be foraging at

sea on count day, but returned during count week.

As the Christmas Bird Count program begins its second century, the complimentary mix of counts in Hawai'i is well positioned to monitor the important segments of Hawai'i's dynamic bird fauna. The new 'Iao Valley count on West Maui covers diverse habitats within the count circle, including two of the best wetland Refuges in the main Hawaiian Islands. The count there scored 22 party-hours and reported 38 species, including an interesting group of waterbird visitors. The very rare White-faced Ibis and American Wigeon were spotted, along with Semipalmated Plover, blue-winged Teal and Least and Pectoral Sandpipers. Other counts with good wetland habitats, particularly Kualapu'u, Kapa'a and North Kona added numerous other scarce visitors this year, including Brant, Greater White-fronted and Canada Geese, and Sharp-tailed Sandpiper. Other counts like Waimea, Pu'u O Kaka'e and Volcano are located in habitat areas for native forest bird populations. All species of Hawai'i's non-endangered endemic land birds were found in this year's counts.

For Guam and the Marianas in the western Pacific, all four regular counts were conducted. On Guam, in areas inhabited by the Brown Tree Snake, Dededo and Southern Guam together reported only 28 individuals of two species of native land birds, with a third species also found during count week. In contrast, on nearby CNMI islands without Brown Tree snakes, Saipan tallied 833 native land birds of 11 species and Rota reported 254 birds of six species. On Guam, a high species list depends on a good influx of waterbird visitors, which did happen this year, resulting in an all time record of 33 species at Dededo. Fifty-five Tufted ducks were found on one pond, with Common Ringed and Snowy Plovers, Black-winged

Stilts, and two species of snipe also noted. One Marianas Mallard, a distinctive form confined to the N. Marianas, was reported, having wandered to Guam for the first time on record a few weeks prior to the count. North American stragglers rare in the western Pacific included an Osprey at Southern Guam and two Bristle-thighed Curlews. One Eurasian Curlew was also spotted. An exciting highlight for Christmas Bird Count personnel in Saipan was a visit to a newly discovered abandoned water basin which held thirty-nine Common Moorhens, usually seen in ones and twos. Rota, now in its third count year, reported its first Black-headed Gull.

Thorough coverage of some count circles remains a problem in the region due to relatively low numbers of participants and party-hours as compared to mainland counts. The very small pool of recreational birders in Hawai'i limits recruitment of observers needed to cover more areas within the circles. Waimea and Honolulu had a few more than 30 participants, but only Honolulu and Johnston Atoll Refuge (with its relatively large military/civilian population) had more than 30 party-hours. The other counts in the main Hawaiian Islands and Midway Atoll Refuge ranged from 29 down to 12 party hours. Five main island counts showed more party-hours than last year, an encouraging trend. The two Refuges on uninhabited islands, French Frigate Shoals and Laysan, have only two or three designated staff in the winter months who put in a commendable 16 and 18 party-hours this year. In the western Pacific, the two Guam counts spent twenty party-hours each, a significant increase over the typhoon-reduced coverage last year. Saipan had sixteen hours and Rota had eleven party-hours.

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Table 1 - Results of 1999-2000 Christmas Bird Count - Main Hawaiian Islands

Species	Kaua'i Waimea	Kapa'a	O'ahu Waipi'o	Honolulu	Moloka'i Kualapu'u	Mau Pu'u O Kuka'e	'Iao Valley	Hawai'i N. Kona	Volcano
Laysan Albatross	3	51	-	4	-	-	-	-	-
White-tailed Tropicbird	16	16	-	-	1	-	-	-	3
Masked Booby	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
Brown Booby	-	-	-	11	1	9	-	-	-
Red-footed Booby	2	254	-	969	-	-	-	-	-
Great Frigatebird	8	1	-	9	6	3	-	-	-
Cattle Egret	412	192	29	172	83	9	209	8	-
Black-crowned Night Heron	10	6	8	38	5	-	50	4	-
White-faced Ibis	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Brant	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Canada Goose (small races)	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-
Nene	-	18	-	-	-	6	-	3	1
Mallard	2	-	10	8	-	-	32	-	-
Koloa	3	82	-	13	-	-	-	-	-
Hawaiian Duck x Mallard hybrid	-	-	33	12	-	-	34	-	-
Northern Pintail	1	-	35	-	11	-	151	8	-
Northern Shoveler	-	10	11	-	8	-	193	6	-
American Wigeon	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	3	-
Lesser Scaup	-	-	-	-	2	-	6	-	-
'Io	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	4
Black Francolin	1	-	-	-	14	-	-	-	-
Gray Francolin	-	-	-	2	2	29	17	3	-
Erckel's Francolin	61	-	10	-	-	-	-	7	-
Chukar	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-
Kalij Pheasant	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	29	8
Red Junglefowl	190	29	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ring-necked Pheasant	4	2	-	3	-	16	2	-	-
Common Peafowl	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Wild Turkey	-	-	-	-	8	-	-	1	-
Hawaiian Moorhen	8	12	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hawaiian Coot	6	28	143	1	117	-	527	137	-
Black-bellied Plover	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Pacific Golden-Plover	89	50	227	894	127	32	218	25	7
Semi-Palmated Plover	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-

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Table 1, Continued - Results of 1999-2000 Christmas Bird Count - Main Hawaiian Islands

Species	Kaua'i Waimea	Kapa'a	O'ahu Waipi'o	Honolulu	Moloka'i Kualapu'u	Maui Pu'u O Kaka'e	'Iao Valley	Hawai'i N. Kona	Volcano
Hawaiian Stilt	12	29	98	151	96	-	355	162	-
Wandering Tattler	4	2	17	24	6	1	13	19	-
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Ruddy Turnstone	9	-	36	256	23	-	174	59	-
Sanderling	5	-	16	40	10	-	129	29	-
Long-billed Dowitcher	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-
Ring-billed Gull	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-
Hawaiian Noddy	-	-	-	70	-	1	-	-	-
White Tern	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-
Rock Dove	-	-	31	305	22	33	61	5	-
Spotted Dove	139	80	175	1238	79	94	325	192	1
Zebra Dove	141	114	360	3956	379	49	289	389	-
Barn Owl	1	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	-
Pueo	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Guam Swiftlet	-	-	-	13	-	-	-	-	-
Eurasian Skylark	-	-	7	-	20	96	1	-	1
Red-vented Bulbul	-	-	328	1543	-	-	-	-	-
Red-whiskered Bulbul	-	-	-	162	-	-	-	-	-
Japanese Bush-warbler	29	-	52	8	3	14	16	-	-
Kaua'i 'Elepaio	64	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
O'ahu 'Elepaio	-	-	4	13	-	-	-	-	-
Hawai'i 'Elepaio	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	31
White-rumped Shama	16	7	59	97	1	-	-	-	-
'Oma'o	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	111
Puaiohi	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hwamei	21	1	1	2	-	21	20	-	-
Red-Billed Leiothrix	-	-	6	151	-	23	3	1	15
Northern Mockingbird	5	-	2	1	5	4	-	-	-
Common Myna	256	279	311	1732	232	234	287	143	2
Japanese White-eye	371	27	233	537	99	295	88	98	62
Northern Cardinal	43	6	53	95	16	31	55	43	5
Red-Crested Cardinal	66	20	40	198	18	2	11	-	-
Yellow-billed Cardinal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	-
Saffron Finch	-	-	3	1	-	-	-	129	-
Western Meadowlark	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
House Finch	100	5	107	187	48	90	89	59	16
Yellow-fronted Canary	-	-	-	163	-	-	-	223	-
Kaua'i 'Amakihi	135	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
O'ahu 'Amakihi	-	-	30	38	-	-	-	-	-
Maui 'Amakihi	-	-	-	-	-	79	2	-	-
Hawai'i 'Amakihi	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	110	35
'Anianiau	24	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
'Akiapola'au	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
'Akikiki	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hawai'i Creeper	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9
Maui 'Alauahio	-	-	-	-	-	23	-	-	-
'Akeke'e	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hawai'i 'Akepa	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
'I'iwi	45	-	2	-	-	24	-	11	106
'Akohekohe	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-
'Apapane	458	-	65	43	18	102	14	57	364
House Sparrow	193	-	69	463	29	129	62	76	6
Lavender Waxbill	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	-
Orange-cheeked Waxbill	-	-	-	24	-	-	15	-	-
Common Waxbill	-	-	252	713	-	-	-	-	-
Red Avadavat	-	-	-	8	-	-	-	6	-
Warbling Silverbill	1	-	-	4	-	-	1	73	-
Nutmeg Mannikin	-	39	7	220	482	32	44	157	-
Chestnut Mannikin	719	23	430	228	45	-	-	-	-
Java Sparrow	1	70	186	2515	-	-	10	228	-
Individuals	3700	1459	3493	17343	2021	1487	3522	2552	802
Species	46	29	39	49	36	32	39	41	21
Observers	40	5	9	32	6	11	17	8	19
Party-hours	26.50	15	29.25	86.75	21.50	17	22.25	19	12
Count Date	01/02	12/28	12/18	12/19	12/21	12/19	12/18	12/19	12/19
Compilers	Katie Cassel	Barbara Stuart	David Bremer	Eric VanderWerf	Rick Potts	Lance Tanino	Lance Tanino	Reggie David	Nick Shima

Table 2 - Results of 1999-2000 Christmas Bird Count -Northwest Hawaiian Islands

Species	Johnson Atoll NWR	Midway Atoll	Laysan Island	French Frigate Shoals
Short-tailed Albatross	-	2	-	-
Black-footed Albatross	-	19000	20000	2954
Laysan Albatross	-	400000	56000	1458
Black-footed Albatross x Laysan Albatross hybrid	-	3	4	-
Bonin Petrel	-	150	5	34
Wedge-tailed Shearwater	-	-	9	1
Christmas Shearwater	2	-	-	-
Tristram Storm-Petrel	-	-	5	-
White-tailed Tropicbird	2	4	-	-
Red-billed Tropicbird	-	-	-	1
Red-tailed Tropicbird	220	20	3	15
Masked Booby	38	-	109	191
Brown Booby	504	9	49	-
Red-footed Booby	1056	214	739	1063
Great Frigatebird	1106	151	1323	407
Greater White-fronted Goose	-	-	1	-
American Green-winged Teal	-	1	-	-
Mallard	-	2	-	-
Laysan Duck	-	-	215	-
Northern Pintail	-	7	18	-
Northern Shoveler	-	1	-	-
Eurasian Wigeon	-	1	-	-
Tufted Duck	-	2	-	-
Peregrine Falcon	-	1	-	-
Pacific Golden-plover	266	751	1033	65
Common Ringed Plover	-	1	-	-
Wandering Tattler	5	11	110	3
Bristle-thighed Curlew	11	10	63	-
Ruddy Turnstone	92	372	2936	286
Sanderling	2	-	6	3
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	-	2	-	-
Long-billed Dowitcher	-	-	2	-
Grey-backed Tern	-	-	10	-
Brown Noddy	38	4	49	68
Hawaiian Noddy	2	80	612	3197
Glaucus-winged Gull	-	1	-	-
Sooty Tern	15000	-	-	1200
White Tern	174	263	115	73
Common Myna	-	113	-	-
Island Canary	-	572	-	-
Laysan Finch	-	-	465	-
<hr/>				
Individuals	18518	421748	83881	11019
Species	16	28	24	17
Observers	13	15	2	3
Party-hours	37.5	22	16	18
Count Date	01/02/00	12/31/99	12/30/99	12/29/99
Compilers	Donna O'Daniel	Robert L. Pyle	Beth Flint	Brian L. Allen

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT 2000-2001

The Christmas Bird Count is a coast-to-coast annual bird census. Volunteers count every bird and bird species over one calendar day. Birds are indicators of the overall health of the environment. Christmas bird count data in any given area can provide valuable insight into the long-term health of bird populations and the environment.

Over 45,000 people from all 50 states,

every Canadian province, the Caribbean, Central and South America and the Pacific Islands participate in more than 1,700 counts held during a two and a half week period!

Join our Christmas Bird Counts during the official count period from December 15, 2000 to January 5, 2001. If you want to do something good for birds and meet other "bird people," call one of

the coordinators to sign up. There is a \$5.00 charge per person to support compiling and publication of the nationwide results. Note: Special information is needed by the coordinator of the popular "Kulani Prison" count, so call the Big Island Volcano coordinator by December 1 to ensure your spot.

<u>Island</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Coordinator</u>	<u>phone #/email</u>
Kaua'i			
*Waimea	12/30	Michelle Ho'okano Marsha Ericson Koke'e Natural History Museum	808-335-9975
Kapa'a	12/27	Barbara Stuart	808-826-9233
O'ahu			
Honolulu	12/17	Arlene Buchholz	988-9806 or snovakz@juno.com
Waipi'o	12/16	David Bremer	623-7613
Maui			
Pu'u O Kaka'e (East Maui)	12/17	Lance Tanino	808-280-4195 or lancemanu@hotmail.com
'Iao Valley (West Maui)	12/16	same as above	same as above
Moloka'i			
Kualapu'u	12/19	Arleone Dibben-Young	808 553-5992 or nene@aloha.net
Hawai'i Island			
Kulani Prison (Volcano)	12/23	Larry Katahira Nick Shima Tanya Rubenstein	808-985-6088 808-967-7396 x239 808-985-6197
North Kona	12/16	Reggie David	808-329-9141 or rdavid@kona.net

* re Waimea, Kaua'i count - There will be a bird ID meeting for all interested people free of charge on December 27th at the Waimea neighborhood center at 7:00pm. Call Koke'e Museum for more information, 808-335-9975.

HAS Annual Awards Dinner 2000

by Wendy Johnson, President

A congenial group of Hawaii Audubon Society members, friends and distinguished guests gathered November 3rd at McCoy Pavilion for the Society's seventh Annual Awards Dinner. Eleven educators, volunteers, public figures and corporate leaders were recognized for their contributions to environmental education and the protection of Hawai'i's wildlife and habitats. Rob Shallenberger, Deputy Project Leader for Hawaiian and Pacific Refuges with the USFWS, presented a fascinating slide show entitled "Palmyra: A New Pacific Refuge?"

The following awards were presented with great appreciation from the Hawaii Audubon Society Board of Directors:

- **President's Award:** **Tim Johns**, Director of the Department of Land and Natural Resources, was recognized for his remarkable determination and fine efforts to ensure that Hawai'i's public trust resources are protected now and in the future. Mr. Johns has repeatedly demonstrated that government agencies and non-government resource conservation organizations can and should work together for the protection of Hawai'i's natural resources.

- **Charles Dunn Lifetime Achievement Award:** **Dr. Phil Bruner**, Professor at BYUH, was recognized for his long term, exemplary contributions to, and support of, the Hawaii Audubon Society and its many activities and goals. Dr. Bruner has several years of past service on the Board of Directors and is currently Chairman of the Grants and Scholarship Committee. He also acts as Scientific Editor for peer-reviewed articles in this journal.

- **Program Award:** **William Aila**, Harbor Master of the Wai'anae Small Boat Harbor, was recognized for his contributions to the Society's Western Pacific Fisheries Coalition program. Mr. Aila is a valuable resource to the conservation community as a result of his unique cultural perspective and his willingness to speak out in support of the responsible use of marine resources in Hawai'i.

- **Conservation Award:** **Dr. Eric VanderWerf** was recognized for his important research and field activities sup-



President's Award recipient Tim Johns, with Linda Paul (L) and Wendy Johnson, President (R) of the Hawaii Audubon Society

porting the protection of Hawai'i's native birds, especially the 'Elepaio which is featured in the logo of the Hawaii Audubon Society. Dr. VanderWerf has also contributed to the HAS publication Hawai'i's Birds, to this journal, and to program meetings and field trips.

- **Volunteer Service Award:** **Arlene Buchholz** was recognized for her continuing role as coordinator of Hawai'i's Christmas Bird Count. This is a challenging and important role which Ms. Buchholz has undertaken with commendable dedication and commitment.

- **Environmental Education Award:** **Jan TenBruggencate**, writer and columnist for The Honolulu Advertiser, was recognized for his notable achievements in raising public awareness about environmental issues in Hawai'i. His commitment to responsible and informed journalism in this field is unique in our state. Mr. TenBruggencate has participated for several years as Kaua'i's enthusiastic host for the Society's Paradise Pursuits program for high school students.

- **Corporate Education Sponsor Awards follow:**

- **Hawaiian Electric Company** was recognized for the vital role its support has played in the Paradise Pursuits environmental quiz program. HECO has funded the games for the past six years

and Paradise Pursuits, broadcast annually on KITV, has grown to reach many thousands of high school students and television viewers statewide.

- **Maui Land and Pineapple Company** was recognized for its dedication to the high school students of Maui who participate in Paradise Pursuits. For the past four years Maui Land and Pine has provided a team trip to Pu'u Kukui, one of Hawai'i's most pristine ecosystems, to the high school team which wins the Maui Paradise Pursuits competition.

- **Chevron Hawai'i** was recognized for its continuing support of the Paradise Pursuits competitions. Chevron's generous contribution helps to defray the cost of running the games.

- **Sheraton Waikiki Hotel** was recognized for its generosity in providing complimentary accommodations for neighbor island students participating in the semi-final and final Paradise Pursuits competitions on O'ahu.

- **Aloha Airlines** was recognized for its generosity in providing complimentary interisland airfare for neighbor island teams participating in the semi-final and final Paradise Pursuits competitions on O'ahu.

National Audubon Society's New Membership Growth Strategy

by Wendy Johnson, President

In an effort to increase membership and to "create a culture of conservation in communities throughout America," the National Audubon Society (NAS) recently adopted new guidelines concerning chapter certification and dues payments to chapters. The Hawaii Audubon Society (HAS), founded in 1939, has been a certified chapter of the National Audubon Society since 1978, yet continues to function independently in all fiscal, policy and programmatic matters. In some instances over the years, the HAS position or approach to issues and policy has differed from that of NAS. As a certified chapter, HAS has readily met, and in most cases exceeded, the necessary criteria for providing newsletters, programs, projects and field trips for members and the general public.

NAS members living in Hawai'i are automatically added to the HAS membership, as "joint" NAS/HAS members, and a small "dues share" is remitted to HAS from NAS for these "joint" members on an annual basis. The "dues share" payments from NAS currently do not

cover printing and postage costs associated with supplying the 'Elepaio to "joint" members. The Hawaii Audubon Society also continues to maintain a loyal base of "Hawai'i-only" members who submit annual dues directly to HAS and who are not members of the national organization.

NAS now seeks to decentralize its operations by working towards the creation of a staffed National Audubon State program in each state interacting with, and in part supported by, individual chapters throughout the particular state. The Hawaii Audubon Society is the only certified chapter in Hawai'i, and while NAS did open a state office here in 1989, it was closed in 1993 due to inadequate funding.

The new guidelines adopted by the NAS Board reaffirm an earlier policy statement that all members of a chapter must be members of the National Audubon Society, i.e. all "Hawai'i-only" members must become "joint" members as described above. While documents confirm this requirement was waived for HAS "Hawai'i-only" members in the past, it is not clear how or if this policy will be

enforced in the future. A new "dues share" formula will be calculated according to a complicated and varied set of criteria, in most cases with payments to chapters dropping significantly over the next five years. According to the new "dues share" formula, a drop in chapter membership revenues from NAS can only be avoided by an active, "joint" membership recruitment program at the chapter level. Proposed recertification requirements for chapters will no longer require specific activities, programs or newsletters for members. This change is designed to ease the financial strain many chapters experience, or will experience, in servicing their members. Chapters are expected to engage in strategic planning and some form of communication with members.

The Board of Directors of the Hawaii Audubon Society is currently considering arguments for and against remaining a chapter of the National Audubon Society in response to its newly adopted Membership Strategy Guidelines. Comments and questions from interested members are welcome. Please direct them by phone, mail or e-mail to the HAS office.

Giving to the Hawaii Audubon Society - A Better Alternative for Your Retirement Plan

by Linda Paul

Because most retirement plans are subject to both estate tax and income tax at death, many people use their retirement plan assets as a way to support charitable organizations such as the Hawaii Audubon Society. Of all a person's estate assets, retirement plan assets are the most costly to transfer to individuals such as children, who will have to pay both estate and income taxes upon receiving them. However, these plans are the least costly to transfer to a charitable environmental education organization such as the Society because it is tax exempt and will receive the entire amount. When a retirement plan asset is properly

designated for charity, both taxes are eliminated. So if you want to leave something to your kids, and also leave something to charity, leave your kids everything else and leave your retirement plan to your favorite charities.

The easiest way to ensure that an organization such as the Society will receive retirement plan assets at death is to make it a beneficiary of the retirement plan. There are four basic types of retirement plans. They are qualified pension and profit-sharing plans, 401K Plans, Keogh Plans and Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs, Roth IRAs, SEP-IRAs). If you die before receiving any or all of

your retirement benefits, the remainder in your fund is paid to your beneficiaries. It is possible to donate all or part of your retirement plan to the Society. If you want to consider this, here are some points to keep in mind:

* You may name the Hawaii Audubon Society as first, second or last beneficiary for part or all of the life time payments or the remainder.

* A spouse must sign a spousal waiver when the Society is named for benefits to which the spouse is entitled.

However, before you change the beneficiary designation, consult with an estate planning attorney about your retirement plans.

December Program Meeting

Our Program and General Members meeting on December 11 will feature Dr. Fred Kraus speaking on "The Threat of Reptiles and Amphibians to Hawai'i's Native Ecosystems." Dr. Kraus has held the position of Alien Species Coordinator with Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources's Division of Forestry and Wildlife since 1996. He is a systematist and herpetologist with a Ph.D from University of Michigan, and was involved

in a variety of conservation activities, including surveys, alien species control, and rare plant propagation and outplanting, for a number of years prior to moving to Hawai'i.

Dr. Kraus will discuss the general sorts of threats that alien reptiles and amphibians pose to Hawai'i's native ecosystems, discuss in some detail two recently established Caribbean frogs that exemplify some of these concerns, and

discuss the potential for the situation to get worse with the establishment of new species smuggled into the state as pets.

Votes will be counted and results of the elections for our Board of Directors will also be announced at the meeting. Meeting takes place at Chaminade University's Henry Hall, Room 109, 3140 Wai'alaie Avenue, Kaimuki from 7:30 until 9:30 p.m. Call the HAS office if you have any questions at 528-1432

Department of Corrections

by Linda Shapin, Editor

It was most kindly brought to my attention that the November issue of 'Elepaio contained a number of errors and omissions! I apologize for my lapses. They are as follows:

On the cover, under the photo of a Streaked Shearwater, the caption should have read "Photo taken on 2 August 1989 of Laysan Island by Jeffrey Marks. Hawai'i Rare Bird Photo 848 to 853."

On page 79, in the article "Reminder: HAS Annual Awards Dinner on November 2" I mistakenly named Rick Warshauer as our guest speaker. Rob Shallenberger was in fact our speaker.

On page 81, the photo of two Wedge-tailed Shearwaters was taken by Rob Shallenberger.

No matter how I proof the 'Elepaio before sending to the printer, something always eludes me. Thanks to those of you who pointed out the errors and omissions and made these corrections possible.

Field Trips for 2000/2001

All trips with an * are still in the process of being planned. Details will be provided as the scheduled dates get closer. A donation of \$2 per participant on all field trips is appreciated.

- * December 15 to January 15: Christmas Bird Count- See page 87 for details.
- * January 21: Our trip to Hilton Hawaiian Village has been rescheduled because baby penguins are due to hatch and staff will be too busy feeding them for a few months to give us a tour until March. Come instead to Makapu'u Point Lighthouse in Waimanalo to watch whales and look for seabirds, Tiger sharks, and sea turtles. We will meet at the gate to the Lighthouse road at 9:30 a.m. Bring water, snacks, sun screen, good walking shoes, rain gear just in case, and binoculars. Please call HAS office to register: 528-1432.
- * February 17: Go behind the scenes at Sea Life Park and learn about the Seabird Rehabilitation program. Meet convalescent and non-releasable seabirds face to face (beak to face, actually!). The \$12.50 (including HAS \$2) per person price of this field trip includes admission to Sea Life Park for the rest of the day. Please call the HAS office to register: 528-1432.
- * March 17 or 18: A different sort of field trip to Waikiki's Hilton Hawaiian Village. Tour the exotic bird collection with a guide from Hilton's Wildlife Department. There is an extensive variety of birds from all over the world including swans, penguins, flamingos, cranes, ibises, Mandarin ducks, cockatoos and parrots.

More Field Trips are in the works and will be announced in the February 'Elepaio.

When Kalij Go To College, Martial Arts Is Their Major

from Volcano Watch - November 16, 2000

The Kalij Pheasant is an unparalleled success among game birds introduced in the 50th State. Because Hawai'i has no native upland game birds, people have imported a total of twelve species of pheasants, quail, partridges, peafowl, and wild turkeys from all over the world. Last to arrive was the Kalij, released in 1962 at Pu'u Wa'awa'a Ranch. From there the birds spread and multiplied rapidly, so that by about 1985 they occupied all forests on the Big Island above an elevation of approximately 2,000 ft.

The name kalij originates in India, where the birds range from the western Himalayas to Myanmar (Burma). Progressing from west to east, the males' appearance undergoes the most amazing transformation. In northern India the birds are glossy black above and pearly gray below. In eastern Nepal they are mostly black, but in Myanmar the birds are gray above and black below. The Hawaiian kalij came from U.S. mainland game farms and appear to be a mix of Indian and Nepalese birds. True to neither race, their plumage varies in the amount of black and gray, and each bird looks different. In contrast to the males, the less showy kalij females wear mottled brown plumage.

Books on pheasants relate that it is uncertain whether male kalij are monogamous or polygynous, a term meaning that individual males maintain harems during the short mating season in spring. The better-known Ring-neck

Pheasant, quarry of hunters on Big Island pastures, are polygynous, and after mating, males abandon the hens, who alone care for their chicks. By contrast, kalij males in Hawai'i are monogamous and behave like model fathers. Dad stays with Mom year round and helps raise the chicks by brooding, feeding, and protecting them. The parents show up around Memorial Day with 6-10 brown chicks that look like downy golf balls running on toothpick legs. Many chicks perish, but the survivors grow rapidly during the summer months and by October resemble their parents. The daughters seek independence first, slipping away from the family circle in the fall. The nearly all-male clan remains together until the next spring when the sons drift off on their own. Surprisingly, brothers sometimes do not leave and instead stay with their parents through the following breeding season. They also help rear the new brood of chicks. This prompts the question: why do some males opt to remain in an extended family rather than setting up house on their own?

One clue is that broods are predominantly male. Kalij families were tallied this summer along the roads and trails around the Volcano and National Park areas. Of 42 teenage chicks, there were 62% more males than females. For all 77 adults seen, there were 85% more males than females! There were no polygynous males or "harems." In fact the females seemed to have it pretty good, with 1-3

adult males attending each female and her chicks.

Two more observations fill in the story. Families were seen again and again in the same places, giving the impression that each had its own home turf. And they defended that turf vigorously. Kalij males spar in much the same way as do roosters. Even females will fight, taking on the member of their own sex when pairs run into each other. Chicks learn the martial arts at an early age by play-fighting in comical contests, girls joining the boys. It becomes clearer why some older brothers stay with the family. By fighting as a team, two or all three males can win conflicts with their neighbors. Additionally, some males may not leave the family owing to a shortage of available females, and by staying with their parents, sons can help pass on the family genes by helping raise their younger brothers and sisters. Why there are more males than females remains a mystery.

Kalij Pheasants can be readily seen within Kipuka Puau (Bird Park) at Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, where they are protected.

The Volcano Watch is a weekly article written by USGS scientists at the Hawaiian Volcano Observatory and the Kilauea Field Station. The Volcano Watch is available on the web at <http://www.usgs.gov>, then click on Volcanoes under the "browse our topics box."

Critical Habitat for the O'ahu 'Elepaio

As the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service begins a review of the critical habitat determination for the O'ahu 'Elepaio, many landowners and others will have questions both about the possible effects of critical habitat designation on land and about the designation process itself. Below are some of the most frequently asked questions and their answers, as well as a contact for additional information.

Question #1 What is an O'ahu 'elepaio?

A. The O'ahu 'elepaio (*Chasiempis*

sandwichensis ibidis) is a small forest bird that is found only on the Hawaiian island of O'ahu. It is a member of the monarch flycatcher family. Adults have a dark brown crown and back, white underparts with light brown streaks on the upper breast, and white wing bars, rump, and tail-tips. Their long tail is often held up at an angle. The O'ahu 'elepaio was placed on the list of endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on May 18, 2000.

The O'ahu 'elepaio was once widespread and found in forested areas throughout the island at all elevations.

Currently, it is found only in mid-elevation forests in portions of the Ko'olau and Wai'anae Mountains. The species is thought to occupy less than four percent (about 13,400 acres) of its original range. Seven small populations totaling approximately 1,900 birds are thought to remain in the world.

Primary threats to the O'ahu 'elepaio are diseases carried by introduced mosquitos, including avian pox and malaria; predation by introduced mammals, especially rats; and habitat degradation and loss caused by human impacts and feral

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pigs. Storms with high winds also are known to destroy nests.

In Hawaiian legend, 'elepaio helped canoe makers judge the quality of koa logs to make into canoes. If the bird landed on the log and pecked at it, the wood was considered to be of poor quality. If, however, it landed on the log and sang "ono-ka-ia," the log was considered sound. Because the 'elepaio is an insect-eater, its ability to identify insect-infested wood made it a valuable resource to early Hawaiians.

Q. #2 What is the Endangered Species Act?

A. Enacted by Congress in 1973, the U.S. Endangered Species Act (Act) provides a legal mechanism for the conservation of endangered and threatened species and the ecosystems upon which they depend. The Act places restrictions on a wide range of activities involving endangered and threatened animals and plants to help ensure their continued survival.

One such restriction requires all Federal agencies to consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service whenever an action they wish to fund, carry out, or authorize will affect an endangered or threatened species or its critical habitat (also see Q. #11).

Q.#3 What is critical habitat?

A. Critical habitat is the term used in the Endangered Species Act to define those areas with the physical and biological features essential to the "conservation" of a threatened or endangered species, and that may require special management considerations or protection. "Conservation" means to recover a species to the point where it is no longer threatened or endangered. So, critical habitats are those areas of habitat that are needed by an endangered or threatened species in order to recover and that may require special management or protection.

Q.#4 How do you determine what areas to consider as critical habitat?

A. The Fish and Wildlife Service considers the species' current range (i.e., areas in which the species currently exists) and historical range (i.e., areas that the spe-

cies formerly occupied within historical memory). Then, we identify features of the habitat that are needed for the species in question to live, reproduce, and recover to the point where it can be removed from the list of threatened and endangered species. Examples of features of the habitat or requirements that are generally considered are:

- Space for individual and population growth and for normal behavior;
- Food, water, air, light, minerals, or other nutritional or physiological requirements;
- Cover or shelter;
- Sites for breeding, reproduction, or rearing of offspring, germination, or seed dispersal; and
- Areas that are protected from disturbance or are representative of the historic geographical and ecological distributions of a species.

Q.#5 How is critical habitat designated?

A. The Fish and Wildlife Service considers habitat features needed for life and successful reproduction of the species (see Q. #4). We are required to use the best scientific data available and to consider the economic and other impacts of designating an area as a critical habitat.

Q. #6 Can the public participate in the process for deciding whether to designate critical habitat?

A. The Endangered Species Act ensures the public ample opportunity to comment on critical habitat proposals, and our policy is to encourage such participation in the rulemaking process. Proposed designations are published in the Federal Register and provide for a public comment period of at least 60 days.

To ensure that all interested members of the public are aware of the proposals, announcements of the proposed rulemaking and the public comment period are published in local newspapers. In addition, we directly notify Federal, State, and local agencies, as well as other interested parties. If requested within 45 days of the published proposal, a public hearing is held in the vicinity of the affected area.

We can also extend or reopen the public comment period and schedule additional hearings, if we find there is good reason to do so. All written and oral

information provided during the public comment period is analyzed carefully by the Fish and Wildlife Service prior to a final decision on critical habitat designation, and responses to comments received are published in the decision document.

Q. #7 Are potential economic impacts considered?

A. Yes. Although the decision to list a species as threatened or endangered must be based solely on biological grounds, economic and social effects of critical habitat designations are analyzed and considered before such designations are completed. An area may be excluded from proposed critical habitat if the Secretary of the Interior finds that the economic or other burdens of such an exclusion outweigh the conservation benefits of including the area. However, excluding an area from a critical habitat designation is allowed only if doing so will not lead to the extinction of the species.

Q. #8 Is critical habitat similar to a wilderness area or wildlife refuge?

A. No. Critical habitat designation does not in any way create a wilderness area, preserve, or wildlife refuge, nor does it close an area to human access or use. It applies only to activities sponsored at least in part by Federal agencies. Land uses such as logging, grazing, and recreation that may require Federal permits may take place if they do not adversely modify critical habitat. Critical habitat designations do not constitute land management plans.

Q. #9 How does the designation of critical habitat increase protection of threatened and endangered wildlife?

A. If critical habitat is designated for a species, all Federal agencies, under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, must consult with the Fish and Wildlife Service to ensure that any action authorized, funded, or carried out by the Federal agency is not likely to result in the destruction or adverse modification of the critical habitat.

In certain circumstances, critical habitat may add an extra increment of protection, above and beyond that offered by the listing of the species, by providing for

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the protection of the habitat whether the species happens to be there or not – but this protection requires a Federal action triggering section 7 consultation.

Q. #10 How does critical habitat affect the State or private landowner?

A. Critical habitat designation does not affect activities on State or private lands unless some sort of Federal permit, license, or funding is involved. Activities of the State or a private landowner, such as farming, grazing, and logging, generally are not affected by a critical habitat designation, even if the landowner's property is within the geographical boundaries of the critical habitat. The designation has no impact on individual, town,

county, or State actions if there is no Federal involvement, nor does it signal any intent of the Federal government to acquire or control the land.

Q. #11 How does critical habitat affect Federal agencies?

A. Federal agencies are required to ensure that any activity they fund, carry out, or authorize is not likely to jeopardize the survival of a listed species or destroy or adversely modify its critical habitat. By consulting with the Fish and Wildlife Service, an agency can usually minimize or avoid any potential conflicts with listed species and their critical habitat, and the proposed project may be undertaken.

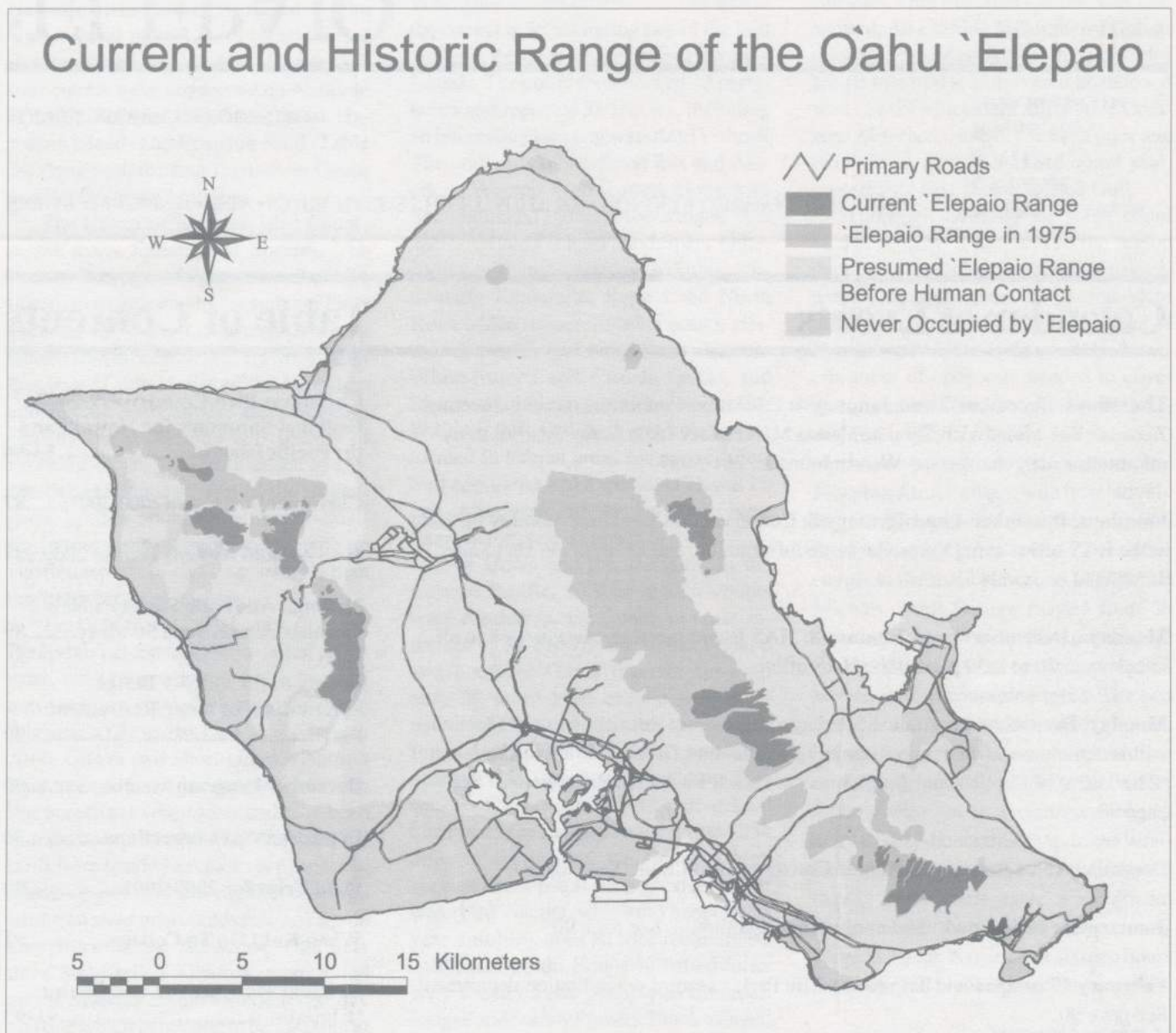
Q.#12 How many Hawaiian birds are

federally listed as endangered and threatened, and how many have critical habitat?

A. Critical habitat has been designated for only one of the 32 Hawaiian birds listed as threatened or endangered species under the Endangered Species Act, the palila (*Loxioides bailleui*). The palila's critical habitat was established in 1977 on the slopes of Mauna Kea on the Big Island.

source: US Fish and Wildlife Service informational mailing received 11/17/00.

contact: Marilet Zablan, Coordinator for Vertebrate Conservation or Fish and Wildlife Biologist Eric VanderWerf at 808-541-3441.





DECEMBER/JANUARY 2001

'ELEPAIO

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Calendar of Events

Thursdays, December 7 and January 4: Education Committee monthly meeting, 7 p.m. at BaLe Sandwich Shop in Manoa Marketplace (near Safeway). For more information, call chairperson Wendy Johnson, 261-5957.

Mondays, December 4 and January 8: Conservation Committee monthly meeting at the HAS office at 5:45 p.m. For more information, call chairperson Dan Sailer, 455-2311.

Mondays, December 4 and January 8: HAS Board meeting, always open to all members, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the HAS office.

Monday, December 11: Annual Meeting and Program Results of Board Elections will be announced. Our Program meeting will feature Dr. Fred Kraus speaking on "The Threat of Reptiles and Amphibians to Hawai'i's Native Ecosystems." See page 90.

December 15 to January 5: Annual Christmas Bird Count. See page 87.

January 21: Field Trip to Makapu'u Point Lighthouse. See page 90.

February 17 or 18: Field Trip to Sea Life Park's seabird rehabilitation department. See page 90.

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