



# 'ELEPAIO

Journal of the  
Hawaii Audubon Society

For the Protection of  
Hawaii's Native Wildlife

VOLUME 61, NUMBER 8 9

DECEMBER 2001/JANUARY 2002

## 2000/2001 Christmas Bird Count: Hawai'i/Pacific Islands

by <sup>1</sup>Thane K. Pratt (Reprinted with permission from National Audubon Society.)

Sixteen of the 17 counts for this region were conducted during the one hundred and first Christmas Bird Count, 2000/2001. Missing this year was Johnston Atoll, a remote but important seabird colony. Counters were few this year, and there was particularly low participation on three count circles: Volcano and the two circles on Maui. Nevertheless, coverage of the region was generally very good, with two count circles counted on each of the four main Hawaiian Islands and Guam, plus one each for the smaller islands of Moloka'i, Midway, Laysan, French Frigate Shoals, Rota, and Saipan.

Trends in CBC data are difficult to detect for slowly changing populations, so the seemingly robust numbers of albatross reported from Laysan Island belie the 10% decline documented in the Northwest Islands over the past decade by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The suspected cause of the decline is the large by-catch of the long-line fishery. (Albatrosses were also present as usual on Midway but were not censused this year). The Laysan Albatross count of 46 birds at Kilauea Point was lower than usual. On a more optimistic note, the two Short-tailed Albatross which spent recent breeding seasons on Midway were counted again this year. Numbers of other seabirds compare favorably with previous years. High counts were recorded for Sooty Storm-Petrels (13 birds, some in new nest boxes) and Great Frigatebirds (939) on French Frigate Shoals and for Red-footed Boobies (828) tallied at Kapa'a, Kaua'i. No unusual seabirds turned up on this year's counts in Hawai'i.

This season's Christmas count logged regular numbers of resident and migratory waterfowl and shorebirds in the Hawaiian Islands. However, a high count of endangered Hawaiian Stilts on Moloka'i was 134 birds and on North Kona, Hawai'i was 216. Both populations were probably boosted by increased food supply at aquaculture farms. The count of Bristle-thighed Curlews, a species-of-concern, came to 67 on Midway and 45 on Laysan. None was not reported from French Frigate Shoals, but a single bird was a first for the North Kona, Hawai'i circle. Other unusual migrants included: a Caspian Tern on O'ahu, a Eurasian Wigeon and a Hooded Merganser on Moloka'i, 2 Canvasbacks and a Black-tailed Godwit on Maui, and an Eurasian Wigeon, 4 Eurasian Green-wing Teal, a Whimbrel, and a Slaty-backed Gull at Midway.

Numbers of native land birds counted in the Hawaiian Islands showed little change, although coverage was stretched thin for two key areas, Pu'u O Kaka'e, Maui and Volcano, Hawai'i. Sightings of endangered species included a Puaiohi, two candidate endangered 'Akikiki, 25 O'ahu 'Elepaio (a

high number for recent years), 5 'Akohekohe, 5 'Akiapola'au, 5 Hawai'i Creeper, and 3 'Akepa.

Without a doubt, the biggest change measured by the Christmas counts has been the spread of introduced species. These birds have transformed, indeed are transforming, the lowland bird communities of the islands, with a few species invading the high-elevation habitat of the native forest birds. What could be tougher than a House Sparrow? This season for the first time, the Java Sparrow was the most numerous seed-eating bird reported on the four O'ahu and Kaua'i count circles, apparently at the expense of House Sparrows and other finch-like birds. Java Sparrows were recorded for the first time in big numbers on the Waimea, Kaua'i count circle (166 birds), and in Honolulu Java Sparrows outnumbered House Sparrows 3 to 1, with a historically low count for the latter species (393 birds). Thirty-seven Saffron Finches on the Waipi'o circle was an all-time high count reflecting this species' increase in central O'ahu. White-rumped Shama are common on Kaua'i and O'ahu islands, but only recently colonized nearby Moloka'i, where this year's 4 birds was a new high count. The Common Canary population on Midway has exploded now that the rats are gone, and this year the count came to 1,915!

On Guam, the 101 Christmas Count affirmed the tenacity of all 13 species of surviving land and fresh water birds that maintain populations despite predation pressure from the infamous Brown Tree Snake. Numbers of certain species, such as the Yellow Bittern and Eurasian Tree Sparrow, appear to be bolstered by recruitment in relatively snake-free refuges, such as the main airport (a site of intensive snake-control) and down town Agana (thanks to speeding motorists). The count of 28 White Terns was encouraging for a species that used to breed on Guam in big numbers. Two endangered and very rare Mariana Crows were also counted, and a respectable count of 100 endangered Guam Swiftlets marks that species' persistence at a few breeding caves. Good numbers of migrants and vagrants were tallied. Rota and Saipan, hopefully snake-free still, reported expected numbers of resident breeding birds and migrants, although the count of 18 Rota White-eyes is worrisome. Noteworthy vagrants were a Little Ringed Plover, a Black-winged Stilt, and a Whiskered Tern on Saipan. *See tables on pages 77-81.*

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## December Program Meeting:

Maui Forest Bird Recovery Efforts:  
Current Activities

Monday, December 10, 2001, 7:30 - 9:30 PM  
CHAMINADE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS  
3140 Wai'ala'e Avenue, Kaimuki  
Henry Hall Room 109

Maui Forest Bird Project Coordinator Jim Groombridge, PhD, will give a slide presentation on the recovery efforts to save Maui's critically endangered forest birds, such as the Po'ouli and the Maui Parrotbill. The conservation of Maui's endangered avifauna includes habitat protection as well as monitoring bird populations. Other more hands-on conservation measures include pulling eggs for captive rearing and moving birds to establish new populations or to assist with pair formation. Jim will be giving a presentation on the current activities involving translocation and tracking of different species of Maui honeycreepers.

Jim earned his PhD at the University of London. He has extensive experience in the recovery of critically endangered birds of the Mauritius, and spoke at a recent Program Meeting on that topic.

Results of the elections for our Board of Directors will also be announced at the meeting. Call the HAS office if you need more information - 528-1432.

## February Program Meeting

Monday, February 18, 2001, 7:30 - 9:30 PM  
CHAMINADE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS  
3140 Wai'ala'e Avenue, Kaimuki  
Henry Hall Room 109

Topic to be announced - check February's 'Elepaio or call the HAS office (528-1432) and listen to mailbox #6 for Program Meeting updates.

## Many Thanks to our Annual Mailout Volunteers

A BIG MAHALO to Susan Miller, who spent many hours formatting and printing the envelopes and labels for the mailout. Board members Wendy Johnson and Liz Kumabe, HAS members Patricia Zerda-Bishop, Jean Carr, newcomer Clifford Hand, and HAS Administrative Assistant Linda Shapin each gave a portion of their Sunday to label, stamp, stuff, and seal the envelopes. We shared pizza and good conversation from 10am until 3:30pm.

*Thanks to everyone!*

## Hawaii Audubon Society

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Table 1 – Results of Hawai'i Christmas Bird Count 2000-2001

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
Laysan Albatross	1	46		3					
White-tailed Tropicbird	7	8			20				
Red-tailed Tropicbird					14				
Masked Booby				1					
Brown Booby	1	1		2					
Red-footed Booby		828		850					
Great Frigatebird		7		22	1				
Cattle Egret	418	66	81	140	87		88	2	
Black-crowned Night Heron	13	5	10	49	1		11	27	
Brant							1		
Canada Goose (small races)	1								
Nene		51							2
Green-winged Teal			17		3			1	
Mallard			19	50			18		
Koloa		30							
Hawaiian Duck X Mallard hybrid			18	3			9		
Northern Pintail			9		12		96	18	
Northern Shoveler			37		21		94	70	
Eurasian Wigeon					1				
American Wigeon					1		6		
Canvasback							2		
Ring-necked Duck duck sp.							12	1	5
Lesser Scaup							18		
Bufflehead					1				
Hooded Merganser					1				
'Io									2
Peregrine Falcon							1		
Black Francolin					8			2	
Gray Francolin					11		16	2	
Erckel's Francolin	4		7						
Chukar	3								
Kalij Pheasant									15
Red Jungle-fowl	171	24			13				
Ring-necked Pheasant	3								2
Common Peafowl	1								
Wild Turkey	3								
Hawaiian Moorhen	25	10		16					
Hawaiian Coot	5	23	27	3	65		485	176	
Black-bellied Plover							1	1	
Pacific Golden- Plover	26	42	369	914	126		139	82	14
Hawaiian Stilt	6	39	70	148	134		502	225	
Wandering Tattler		1	1	14			9	29	
Bristle-thighed Curlew								1	
Black-tailed Godwit							1		
Ruddy Turnstone			16	326	16		36	101	

Table 1 – Results of Hawai'i Christmas Bird Count 2000-2001, continued

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
Sanderling	2		2	17	26		85	46	
Pectoral Sandpiper							2		
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper							2		
small sandpiper sp.							1		
Dunlin							1	2	
Ruff							1		
Long-billed Dowitcher			1				10	1	
Caspian Tern			1						
Hawaiian Noddy				10					
White Tern				14					
Rock Dove	1		15	220	9				
Spotted Dove	126	35	411	1114	99	3	28	91	21
Zebra Dove	330	59	949	3367	208		4	33	19
Pueo	1						1		
Guam Swiftlet				23					
Eurasian Skylark			3		9				
Red-vented Bulbul			252	1089					
Red-whiskered Bulbul			20	139					
Japanese Bush- warbler			30	14	3	9	26		
Kaua'i 'Elepaio	77								
O'ahu 'Elepaio			9	16					
Hawai'i 'Elepaio									21
White-rumped Shama	4	1	58	101	4				
'Oma'o									47
Puaiohi	1								
Greater Necklaced Laughing Thrush		2							
Hwamei	3		2	1			7		
Red-billed Leiothrix			28	87		5	3		
Northern Mockingbird	12						11		
Common Myna	234	120	560	1638	154		19	68	33
Japanese White- eye	70	15	325	430	31	16	31	66	77
Northern Cardinal	18	3	51	76	10		5	23	18
Red-Crested Cardinal	19	18	59	197	21	3			
Yellow-billed Cardinal								50	
Saffron Finch				2				33	
Western Meadowlark	1	5	37						
House Finch	115	5	330	264	201		5	45	29
Yellow-fronted Canary				94		13			
Kaua'i 'Amakihi	29								
O'ahu 'Amakihi				16					
Maui 'Amakihi			22			31	7		
Hawai'i 'Amakihi									32
'Anianiau	14								
'Akiapola'au									5
'Akikiki	2								



Table 1 – Results of Hawai'i Christmas Bird Count 2000-2001, continued

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
Hawai'i Creeper									5
Maui 'Alauahio						17			
'Akeke'e	10								
Hawai'i 'Akepa									3
'I'iwi	58					15	5		95
'Akohekohe						5			
'Apapane	363		51	8	7	37	100		494
House Sparrow	81		202	393	11	23	15	30	17
Orange-cheeked Waxbill				3					
Common Waxbill			282	711					
Red Avadavat			24	40					
Warbling Silverbill				2			1	56	
Nutmeg Mannikin	61	1	157	32			11	7	21
Chestnut Mannikin	140	6	273	2					
Java Sparrow	166	51	293	2123				120	
Individuals	2626	1502	5128	14784	1329	188	1915	1415	972
Species	42	28	40	46	33	13	43	31	21
Observers	37	9	20	33	32	1	7	3	8
Party-hours	28.5	9.5	55.82	81.25	19.5	3	19	10.25	8
Count Date	12/30/00	12/27/00	12/16/00	12/17/00	12/19/00	12/17/00	12/16/00	12/16/00	12/23/00

## Hawaiian Honeycreepers and the Molecular Clock

(from *Volcano Watch*, A weekly feature provided by scientists at the Hawaiian Volcano Observatory n̄ this piece from November 19, 1998. Website: <http://hvo.wr.usgs.gov/volcanowatch>)

One of the most useful gadgets in the geologist's toolbox is the ability to measure the age of a lava flow, an island, or even the earth itself. The techniques to do this involve studying processes, such as weathering, that indicate age. Measurement of chemical and radioactive changes can be used to date rocks. By dating geological features, one can reconstruct the course of events, such as how the Big Island was built.

Understanding geological events in Hawai'i has proceeded at a faster pace than discovering the history of our native plants and animals. When did they get here? From where did they come? Until recently nobody has been able to *date* a species of tree fern or know when the first land bird arrived.

A way to start is by looking at how much a group of organisms – let's say birds – has changed. For instance, an 'auku'u stealing fish out of Lokoaka pond near Kealoha Beach Park is identical in every way to the black-crowned night-heron overseas. Although this bird is native, perhaps it got here only recently, because it hasn't changed from its relatives elsewhere.

By contrast, an 'io soaring over the Panaewa farm lots bears no resemblance to another hawk. It must have arrived a long time ago to have changed so much. But how long ago was that?

The answers have come recently by a now familiar biological tool, the analysis of DNA. Applying the same techniques that forensic labs use to identify criminal suspects from a piece of hair or a drop of blood, biologists are

now mapping the DNA of birds. The principle here is called the molecular clock.

DNA is the giant molecule in each of our cells that holds the architectural plan of our body and physical functions. Over the generations, DNA changes at a presumably steady rate. For birds, that's about 2% change (for mitochondrial DNA) in a million years — not a whole lot! But it's enough to figure out their evolutionary history. What have we found out?

The DNA samples come from a drop of bird blood or from bone of extinct species, some of them dead for a thousand years. By comparing the DNA of related species, biologists can construct a family tree. Most of the research on DNA comparisons for Hawaiian birds has been done by Dr. Rob Fleischer and his collaborators at the Smithsonian Institution. They have learned that the Hawaiian honeycreepers evolved from sparrow-like birds that made their landfall in Hawai'i about 4-5 million years ago, when Kaua'i was an active volcano and most of the rest of our state didn't yet exist.

The DNA shows that the original honeycreeper rapidly evolved into a large number of species, the descendants of which are still with us today. In some cases, the DNA also documents when a species colonized new Hawaiian islands as they emerged from the sea. Getting back to the 'auku'u and the 'io, DNA and the molecular clock would say that the heron reached Hawai'i in the last few thousand years, and that the hawk arrived about a million years ago.



Table 2 – Results of Northwest Hawaiian Islands Christmas Bird Count 2000-2001

Species	French Frigate Shoals	Laysan Island	Midway Atoll	Guam Dededo	Guam Southern
Short-tailed Albatross			1		
Black-footed Albatross	4174	42778	cw		
Laysan Albatross	2649	236250	cw		
Black-footed Albatross X Laysan Albatross (hybrid)		2	9		
Bonin Petrel	5	cw	560		
Wedge-tailed Shearwater		1			
Sooty Storm Petrel	13	cw			
White-tailed Tropicbird			2	1	
Red-tailed Tropicbird	8	1	57		
Masked Booby	165	51	3		
Brown Booby	1	14	5	4	
Red-footed Booby	1033	336	370	1	
Great Frigatebird	939	612	194		
Yellow Bittern				45	53
Pacific Reef-Egret				3	5
Cattle Egret					20
Intermediate Egret					1
Green-winged Teal			4		
Laysan Duck		65			
Northern Pintail		30	5		6
Northern Shoveler		1			
Eurasian Wigeon		1	1		
Tufted Duck					10
Lesser Scaup		4			
Blue-breasted Quail					2
Black Francolin				20	9
Red Jungle-fowl				6	
Ring-necked Pheasant				1	
Common Moorhen				3	7
Black-bellied Plover				1	4
Mongolian Plover					28
Pacific Golden-Plover	132	1177	645	416	48
Semi-palmated Plover		1	1		
Common Greenshank				1	5
Marsh Sandpiper					2
Wood Sandpiper				3	4
Wandering Tattler	5	120	22	5	6
Gray-tailed Tattler					8
Common Sandpiper				2	6
Whimbrel			1	1	34
Bristle-thighed Curlew		45	67		
Ruddy Turnstone		1428	371	24	42
Sanderling	833	15	2	1	3
Red-necked Stint				2	1
Pectoral Sandpiper	11				
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper				1	

cw: seen count week

## What Volume Is It?

*Our apologies!* October's 'Elepaio should have been Volume 7, and November's should have been Volume 8. October was mistakenly marked Volume 6, and November's, Volume 7. The persons responsible for the errors have been marked, banded, and released into the wild.

## Field Trips for 2001/2002

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 5:

Christmas Bird Count (see page 83 for details).

### January 12, 2002 (Saturday):

Whale watching on a Zodiac! We meet at Wai'anae Boat Harbor at 8:30am and board a large Zodiac boat to whale watch for 3 hours. We will see whales and most likely spinner dolphins as well. Pelagic birds are also a possibility. Bring sunscreen, jacket, rain gear, binoculars and camera. You may also bring lunch to eat at the harbor afterwards. Cost will be approximately \$40 per person. Limited to 15 participants. Call HAS office, no later than December 29, to sign up – 528-1432.

### February 9 (Saturday):

A walk to Ka'ena Point Natural Area Reserve with Betsy Gagne, Executive Secretary to the NARS Commission, Division of Forestry and Wildlife. Ka'ena is the site of one of the last intact dune systems in the main Hawaiian Islands. We will see nesting Laysan Albatross, Wedge-tailed shearwaters, Red-footed and Brown Boobies, Brown Noddies, and whales. Betsy will also discuss the cultural significance of Ka'ena Point. This is a 3 hour round-trip walk, come prepared with hiking shoes, sunscreen, water, lunch, binoculars, etc. Call Alice Roberts to register ñ 538-3255.

### \*March:

Possibly a service/field trip to Mt. Ka'ala! See the next 'Elepaio for details.

Table 2 – Results of Northwest Hawaiian Islands Christmas Bird Count 2000-2001, continued

Species	French Frigate Shoals	Laysan Island	Midway Atoll	Guam Dededo	Guam Southern
Dunlin		1	1		
Ruff		1		2	
Long-billed Dowitcher		2	1		
Common Snipe			1		
Black-headed Gull				1	
Herring Gull			1		
gull sp.		1			
Common Tern					7
Slaty-backed Gull			1		
Gray-backed Tern		5			
Sooty Tern		2			
Brown Noddy	4	72	15		14
Black Noddy	1046	511	33		
White Tern	73	47	641	28	
Rock Dove				101	25
Island Collared-Dove				169	60
Grey Swiftlet					100
Black Drongo				72	54
Mariana Crow				3	
Micronesian Starling				16	
Laysan Finch		cw			
Common Myna			571		
Common Canary			1915		
Eurasian Tree Sparrow				701	275
Individuals	11091	283574	5500	1634	839
Species	16	31	30	29	29
Observers	4	2	7	26	10
Party-hours	5.5	13.5	26	18.5	15
Count Date	12/28/00	12/28/00	01/03/01	12/23/00	12/30/00

cw = seen count week

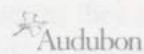
## ANNOUNCING THE 5TH ANNUAL GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT

### WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US

### FEBRUARY 15-18, 2002

- All ages and skill levels welcome
- Help scientists define the status of winter birds
- Join backyard birders from Nome to Key West
- Become a Citizen Scientist
- Spread the word

PARTICIPATE BY VISITING  
<http://www.birdsource.org>



AUDUBON CONTACT:  
Matthew McKown • [mmckown@audubon.org](mailto:mmckown@audubon.org)



CORNELL CONTACT:  
Brian Mingle • [cornellbirds@cornell.edu](mailto:cornellbirds@cornell.edu)

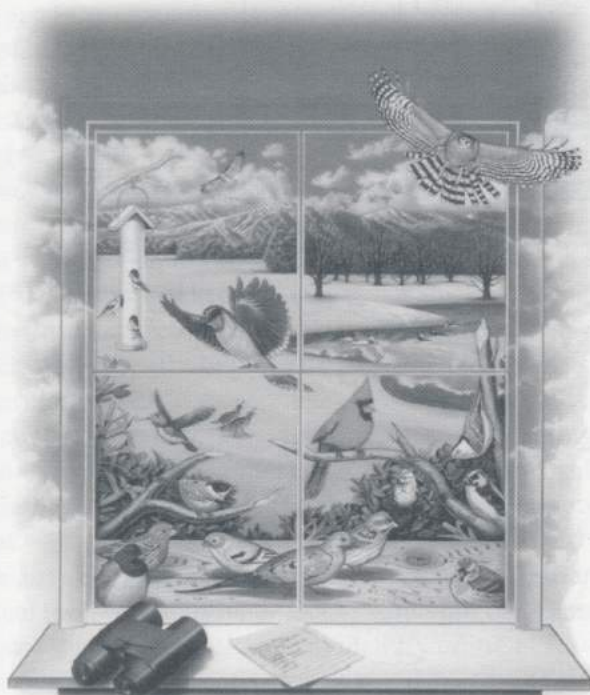




Table 3 – Results of Northern Mariana Islands Christmas Bird Count 2000-2001

Species	Northern Mariana Islands Saipan	Northern Mariana Islands Rota
White-tailed Tropicbird	7	2
Red-tailed Tropicbird		9
Brown Booby	1	83
Red-footed Booby		1104
Great Frigatebird		4
Yellow Bittern	37	6
Pacific Reef-Egret	10	6
Little Egret	3	
Cattle Egret	82	30
Intermediate Egret	8	4
Northern Pintail	11	
Eurasian Wigeon		4
Tufted Duck	29	
Greater Scaup	8	1
Red Jungle-fowl		3
Common Moorhen	52	2
Black-bellied Plover	3	
Mongolian Plover	3	3
Pacific Golden-Plover	470	298
Little Ringed Plover	1	
Black-winged Stilt	1	
Marsh Sandpiper	2	
Wandering Tattler	8	4
Gray-tailed Tattler	2	
Common Sandpiper	2	2
Whimbrel	1	16
Eurasian Curlew		1

Species, continued	Northern Mariana Islands Saipan	Northern Mariana Islands Rota
Ruddy Turnstone	24	71
Calidris sp.		1
Red-necked Stint	1	
Ruff	1	
Black-naped Tern	3	
Whiskered Tern	4	
Brown Noddy	574	84
Black Noddy		4
White Tern	401	33
Rock Dove	6	3
Island Collared-Dove	71	70
White-throated Ground-Dove	15	3
Mariana Fruit Dove	14	39
Guam Swiftlet	21	
Collared Kingfisher	84	79
Micronesian Myzomela	81	158
Black Drongo		582
Nightingale Reed-Warbler	15	
Mariana Crow		8
Rufous Fantail	54	46
Micronesian Starling	66	265
Golden White-eye	36	
Bridled White-eye	625	18
Eurasian Tree Sparrow	503	302
<b>Individuals</b>	<b>3340</b>	<b>3348</b>
<b>Species</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Observers</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Party-hours</b>	<b>13.9</b>	<b>15.75</b>
<b>Count Date</b>	<b>12/30/00</b>	<b>12/14/00</b>



## Field Trip Report - Bishop Museum Bird Skin Collection (and Some Bones)

Alice Roberts, Field Trip Coordinator

On Wednesday, September 26, three HAS members got to enjoy this wonderful hour at Bishop Museum. Carla Kishinami, Vertebrate Collection Curator, was kind enough to give us this tour, and proceeded to brief us about birds and the bird collection.

We then entered the air conditioned room where the bird skins are. The room is kept as clean as possible (fungi, bacteria, and bugs of any kind can do great damage to this incredible collection). This room houses birds, reptiles, and some stuffed mammals. Rows of collection cabinets looked sterile & rather intimidating. The newer hi-tech ones rolled with slideable doors; the older ones had doors that had to be removed. Each had many pull-out trays on rollers. Each tray had many bird skins (which look like birds on sticks). Beaks & feet were intact.

The feathers told many stories. We looked at many Hawaiian Birds including an 'Io (Hawaiian Hawk). We spent the remaining time looking at many Birds of Paradise from New Guinea and considering family & evolutionary connections.

What colors! But which were real & which were merely reflected? (Merely is surely a bad choice of words for these incredible colors.) The magnificent birds have velvet capes & sequined head pieces as well as their well-known fancy tails ñ some long, some curly, some fanned, some streamers with eye-spots ñ outstanding!

After our wonderful bird-hour, we went through the Color Exhibit in Castle Hall and then were lucky enough to reach the Planetarium just in time for the afternoon presentation.

I spoke with Carla about offering this as an annual trip ñ sure hope more of you can go next year ñ it was truly fantastic.

## CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT 2001-2002

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 14, 2000 to January 5, 2001. If you want to do something good for birds and meet other *bird people*, contact 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 contact 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>
<b>Kaua'i</b>			
*Waimea	12/29	Michelle Ho'okano Marsha Ericson Koke'e Natural History Museum	808-335-9975 or <a href="mailto:kokee@aloha.net">kokee@aloha.net</a>
Kapa'a	12/28	Barbara Stuart	808-826-9233 or <a href="mailto:bpsrss@aol.com">bpsrss@aol.com</a>
<b>O'ahu</b>			
Honolulu	12/22	Arlene Buchholz	988-9806 or <a href="mailto:snovakz@juno.com">snovakz@juno.com</a>
Waipi'o	12/15	David Bremer	623-7613 or <a href="mailto:bremerd001@hawaii.rr.com">bremerd001@hawaii.rr.com</a>
<b>Maui</b>			
Pu'u O Kaka'e (East Maui)	12/29	Lance Tanino	808-280-4195 or <a href="mailto:lancemanu@hotmail.com">lancemanu@hotmail.com</a>
'Iao Valley (West Maui)	12/14	same as above	same as above
<b>Moloka'i</b>			
Kalaupapa	12/17	Arleone Dibben-Young	808 553-5992 or <a href="mailto:nene@aloha.net">nene@aloha.net</a>
Kualapu'u	12/18	same as above	
<b>Hawai'i Island</b>			
**Kulani Prison (Volcano)	12/16-	Larry Katahira Nick Shima Tanya Rubenstein	808-985-6088 or <a href="mailto:Larry_Katahira@nps.gov">Larry_Katahira@nps.gov</a> 808-967-7396 x239 <a href="mailto:Nick_Shima@nps.gov">Nick_Shima@nps.gov</a> 808-985-6197 or <a href="mailto:Tanya_Rubenstein@nps.gov">Tanya_Rubenstein@nps.gov</a>
North Kona	12/15	Reggie David	808-329-9141 or <a href="mailto:rdavid@kona.net">rdavid@kona.net</a>

\*There will be a bird identification workshop held on 12/27 at the Waimea Neighborhood Center from 6:00-7:30pm.

\*\*Those interested in birding at Kulani Prison will need to submit their SSN and DOB by Dec 3. Contact one of the coordinators for more information.



## Bird of the Month - Hwamei

(*Garrulax canorus*) also known as Chinese Thrush or Melodious Laughing Thrush

Native to Yantze Valley, China, and to Laos, the Hwamei is a cage bird that escaped here in 1900 when the Great Fire took place in Downtown Honolulu. It is about 9, and red-brown with a very noticeable white eye-ring and a bar of white skin which extends from the outside corner of the eye. Legs and bill are yellowish. It has a fan-shaped tail in flight, and broad, round wings. Its eggs are blue-green.

Usually a solitary and shy bird, it is found in a variety of habitats from native 'ohi'a to rural thickets of non-native vegetation. Its song is quite loud and similar to the White-rumped Shama Thrush, and includes slurred whistles and imitations of other birds.

The Hwamei can be found on the Big Island at Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park and Pu'u La'au, on Kaua'i at Kilauea Point Lighthouse and Ha'ena State Park, and on O'ahu in Waimanalo at the head of the Maunawili Trail and at Maunawili Farm in Maunawili. Look for a large red-brown bird with white *spectacles* flying through underbrush.



Photograph by R.J. Shallenberger

[information taken from *The Birds of Hawaii and the Tropical Pacific*, by Pratt, Bruner, and Berrett (1987), *Hawaiian Birdlife* by A.J. Berber (1972), *Enjoying Birds in Hawaii*, by H.D. Pratt (1993), and *Hawaii's Birds*, by Hawaii Audubon Society (1996).]

## Report on Program Meeting of August 20 - Theresa Menard's Hawaiian Hoary Bat Research

by Alice Roberts, Field Trip Coordinator

We had another good crowd for our bimonthly evening seminar. This night, most of the audience were HAS members. We heard Theresa's very interesting talk about her research on the seasonal activity patterns of our Ope'ape'a (Hawaiian Hoary Bat).

Theresa explained that the mainland hoary bats, close relatives of our Ope'ape'a, have a wide range over North America. They migrate northward (as far as Canada) when it gets warm in spring and southward (as far as Mexico and perhaps Central America) when it gets cool in the fall. They do not hibernate in caves over winter. Instead, they roost in trees at all times of the year.

Since our weather and temperatures are very stable, Theresa wondered if our bats migrated altitudinally (up and down the mountains) rather than latitudinally (north and south). She researched all the literature she could find and even found some unpublished work. She talked to many people trying to separate the stories of our little hoary bats from those of some very big moths.

During her study, she attempted to catch bats by setting up mist nets at various Big Island sites. (The Big Island may have the largest bat population in the state, though populations are found on Maui and Kaua'i. Sub-fossils show that hoary bats once occurred on O'ahu as well as a larger related species.) She caught one female early in her study, then no more. In frustration, she spent many hours watching them fly over and under her nets.

Theresa observed bat activity year round over a broad geographic and altitudinal range on the Big Island and discovered some interesting patterns. She found that the time of night bats first appear in the sky varies throughout the year. For example, in the fall (the mating season *ñ* did you know that females store sperm?), Ope'ape'a can be seen flying as early as half an hour before sunset, but in June (when bat pups are born) bats typically appear only after sunset.

Theresa also noticed that bats were present more often in some places at some times of year. For example, in the lowlands bats were infrequent over winter (January to March), but they were frequently detected there during the rest of the year, whereas, in the eastern highlands (Hakalau Forest National Wildlife Refuge), bats were infrequent during summer, but regularly detected from October through March. These patterns of occurrence are consistent with a pattern of altitudinal migration in which bats are moving upslope in fall (to spend winter in the cool highlands) and downslope in spring (to rear their pups in the warm lowlands).

Several folks stayed around asking questions and talking with Theresa in the classroom. Then, as usual, lively discussions continued in the hallway with fruit juice and cookies.

Remember, we have Program Meetings every third Monday of the all the even months. Join us!



## Field Trip Report – Paiko Wildlife Refuge

by Alice Roberts, Field Trip Coordinator

On Saturday, September 15, the low-tide in Honolulu Harbor was expected to be 0.1' (plus 1/10 of a foot), a good time for this field trip. The nine of us (seven adults, one girl, one boy) headed very quietly for the Makai end of Kuli'ou'ou Rd where we watched many mud critters dive into burrows to escape us & watched a young Black-Crowned-Night heron watch us (perhaps the same one we saw in June).

It was a gorgeous and hot day; both Koko Crater & Koko Head were highlighted by a blue sky. While we walked, we talked about the area's geology - Koko Crater & Koko Head and which was which, their ages, and of course Hanauma Bay. Then a Great Frigatebird ('òIwa, *Fregata minor palmerstoni*) flew overhead; it was all black – a male – he flew pretty close to us, so we (and he) got a good view – someone remarked about how big he was, especially his wingspan!

On the mud flats in the sanctuary's lagoon we saw a couple of Pacific Golden Plovers (*Kolea, Pluvialis dominica*) alertly darting about, and a couple of Ruddy Turnstones ('Akekeke, *Arenaria interpres*) with their black bibs.

Passing by the fence, we looked at some trees - Milo (a hibiscus relative with gorgeous wood), Coconut Palm, & Ironwood/Casuarina. We saw & discussed short thorned Kiawe, and Mangrove seedlings (we talked about how they deal with salt water). Covering the refuge land are bushes of Naupaka, babies/seedlings of Kiawe and Milo; Pickleweed with the beautiful little pink star flowers, and Akiaki grass.

We did not enter the refuge but went around it. As we rounded the curves of the peninsula, we saw many Ghost Crab holes and even some very active ghost crabs; we caught (in plastic peanut butter jars for better looks) a female and one or two males.

Much of the seaweed/limu we'd seen in late June was gone and we didn't find even one hermaphroditic seahare! Neither did we find a bioluminescent bobtail squid. But we did find some red seaweed - a fat imported Ogo relative (we talked to three people who were collecting regular poke ogo), *Hypnea*, and *Acanthophora* was everywhere; browns ñ *Padina* with the calcium rings, *Dictyota*; greens – thick feather-like *Caulerpa* with its runners, oatmeal-sand making *Halimeda*; and even the itchy blue-green *Lynbya*. In puddles here &

there, we saw many little tiny gobies (a family of fish with pelvic fins fused as suction cups for jumping waterfalls on their spawning return to freshwater streams of their birth).

We walked as far as the house built in/on the refuge. Then, a gray over white bird called ulili-ulili-ulili-ulili flying past us to land on a bit of beach a little way past the house. It finally turned its head so we could see its long straight bill and watch its head characteristically move back and forth like an Egyptian dancer – definitely a Wandering Tattler.

We stopped and snacked and spoke of how strange it felt looking at Diamond Head (Leahi) from the *wrong side* (not the familiar symbol of Hawai'i). Pickleweed is the main ground cover along the outside edge of the refuge. Kiawe are the high trees on the refuge, they were very dry, we saw a couple of Red-vented Bulbuls fly amongst the branches. We checked the boulders for snails (Pipipi).

As for Vertebrates, other than birds, we saw Fish – a really big 'O'opu/Goby, a couple schools of Mullet/'ama'ama, and one very large Puffer.

As for Invertebrates, Mollusks seen included clams, oysters under rocks, and mussels in lava rock crevices. We were amazed by the fast closing responses of brown and white featherduster worms - an annelid relative of earthworms.

Of course, Arthropods were everywhere: barnacles in their volcano-like shells below the high-tide mark on the rocks, ghost crabs, their burrows and pyramids built by males with eye stalks were along most of the shoreline, a'ama were on the rocks, and we found the molted carapace (shed exoskeleton back) of a Box crab. We heard some Popping/Snapping/Pistol Shrimp.

Under rocks and on seaweed, we found rainbows of sponges. This trip we didn't see any Sea Cucumbers or other Echinoderms (sea urchin relatives) or any big Tunicates though we did find some tiny ones ñ our nearest invertebrate relative (we're both chordates).

As we returned to our vehicles, we realized that along the way, we'd also seen Zebra doves and Spotted doves, Mynas, sparrows, and some finches.

We will be returning to Paiko in the late-March to mid-April to bid farewell to our shorebirds before they leave for Alaska. See you then?

## Bumper Sticker Contest!

The Hawaii Audubon Society is planning to create a bumper sticker to raise public awareness about a conservation issue important to Hawai'i's native wildlife and habitats. We need to compose a brief, compelling slogan highlighting such an issue. i.e., alien species control, forest habitat protection, avian disease control, fishing size limits, ground-nesting seabird/water-

bird habitat protection, shark fishing ban, wetland protection, native plant propagation, predator control, sea turtle protection, etc.

### WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP?

The winning slogan will be one with a relevant message and catchy wording. Please submit ideas (multiple entries are welcome) to HAS by mail or by e-mail no later than Jan 1, 2002. Include

your name, address and phone number. The Board of Directors will select a winning slogan in January.

### WIN A PRIZE!

The winner will receive a gift basket of HAS products including our notecards, Hawai'i's Birds book, Voices of Hawai'i's Birds tape set, patch, Treasures of O'ahu map, and Nene poster.





DECEMBER 2001  
JANUARY 2002

# 'ELEPAIO

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## Calendar of Events

### Monday, December 10:

HAS Annual Membership Meeting and Program. See page 76.

### Monday, January 14

Conservation Committee and Education Committee monthly meetings at the HAS office at 5:45 p.m. For more information, call Conservation Chair Dan Sailer, 735-5278 or Education Chair Wendy Johnson at 261-5957.

### Monday, January 14

HAS Board meeting always open to all members, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the HAS office.

### Saturday, January 12

Whale watching on a Zodiac!  
See page 83.

### Saturday, February 9

A walk to Ka'ena Point Natural Area Reserve with Betsy Gagne. See page 83.

### Monday, February 18

Program Meeting – speaker to be determined. See February 'Elepaio.

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