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SUMMARY OF RESULTS OF THE HAWAIIAN BIRD SURVEY

By George C. Munro

(Editor's note: Mr. Munro's HAWAIIAN BIRD SURVEY 1935-37 appeared in THE ELEPAIO, July - October numbers, 1946.)

The Hawaiian Bird Survey of 1935-1937 is now completed. The object, to get up-to-date information on the state of the bird life of the Territory, has been fairly well accomplished. I have given details of the various trips and also yearly summaries, so will now sum up in very few words.

In my mind it has been shown conclusively that introduced disease has been the main factor in the decrease of the native Hawaiian passerine birds.

The survey has shown that of the endemic birds, those having a fair chance of survival are: The one species of crow of the genus *Corvus*, three species of flycatchers, *Chasiempis*; six genera of the Family *Drepanididae*, with one species in each of *Vertiaria* and *Himatione*, the *iiwi* and *apapane* of the Hawaiians, and seven species of *amakihi*, (or 3 species and 4 varieties) *Chlorodrepanis*; four of *Loxops*; four of *Paroreomyza*, and three of *Oreomystes*. The hawk, *Buteo*, goose *Nesochen*, the duck *Anas* and stilt *Himantopus*. The others that are gone or are likely to go are the other 13 genera with 19 species of *Drepanididae*, two genera with five species of *Meliphagidae*, viz. the *kioea* *Chaetoptila*, long-extinct and the four famous feather-cloak oos, *Acrulocercus*. The genus *Phaeornis* with six species; and the one species of the Family *Rallaidae*, the long-extinct moho rail (*Pennula millsii*.)

Of course it is possible that some of these birds that I think will disappear may hold on for some time and some may even increase again. But judging from past experience I much doubt if any of them will do so or even eventually survive. I think we shall be fortunate if we can save all of the first list and have them increase to anything like their former numbers.

To make sufficient investigation as to which birds are really extinct would be a long and expensive work. It could, however, be gradually done and other objects served as well by adopting the first of the following recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For the care and study of the birds I recommend the permanent employment of a professional ornithologist. Preferably a local youth after taking a full course in ornithology, and already acquainted with the peculiarities of our fauna and flora, to give most of his time to field study.

Adequate bird quarantine regulations.

Government all-time protection for all birds, including all migratory birds, except introduced game birds and any that may prove very harmful.

Establishment of bird sanctuaries where needed; such as the whole shoreline of the islands and whatever shore lagoons are under Government control.

Adequate care of the offshore island sanctuaries and the shore lagoon sanctuaries when established. Introduced plants and grasses threaten to cover up the feeding grounds of the waders, and this will require attention.

I have doubts of the advisability of interpreting the passerine bird protection law so strictly as to stifle scientific investigation, as was done in the 20 years after its passing. The few birds killed for specimens and research would have been very small against the many thousands that must have died of disease. The birds disappeared when study might have done something to save them.

REF: 232241/569 AINAV #569 - 23 October 1946. "It is directed that insofar as practicable all training operations over or in March Land, Bay areas and other common habit of wildfowl be curtailed or conducted in such a manner as to cause minimum disturbance of birds and interference with hunters during the hunting season. Low flying or firing over bedded waterfowl is especially to be avoided." District Distribution: AINAV #569 - Case 6, All Lists.

INVITATION TO ALL: "...Note the new address, and I would appreciate it if you would also mail THE ELEPAIO to it: 2610 S. Durfee Ave., El Mont, California. That is headquarters of the San Gabriel River Wildlife Sanctuary, and you are all invited to come pay us a visit. It's the only place in southern California where the Cardinal redbird is found regularly - but then what's that to you of Oahu who have two kinds of cardinals? Over 135 species of birds have been listed here altogether, though, so it shows a good variety. Red-bellied Hawks, White-tailed Kites, Egrets, Chats, Russet-backed Thrushes, etc., are among them..... Best regards," HOWARD L. COGSWELL.

NOTES ON SOME BIRDS OF KAUAI

By Gordon Pearsall

(Continued from December)

After breakfast I sat on a log among the trees at the edge of the clearing about the cabin. Koa, Lehua and Eucalyptus were the common trees. Some Sequoia had been planted about the cabin and were doing very well. Among the Koa and Lehua flitted Iiwis, Apapanes, Amakihis, White-eyes in small flocks and Anianiaus. I noticed two birds that reminded me of the Brown Creepers of the States. They climbed up the trees and around branches uttering a continual chipping note. They often moved along the underside of branches or head down on tree trunks, carefully searching for insects. They were olive-brown above tinged with olive-green wings and tail. The underparts were olive-buff, nearly white on the chin and throat and yellow on breast and abdomen. They were Kauai Creepers (*Paroedonmyza bairdi bairdi*).

As I sat there I thought I heard a Guinea Fowl calling but was not sure. In the shrubbery along the edge of the clearing I saw two birds that from a distance reminded me of the Brown Thrasher of the States. They were olive-brown above with cheeks and throat white, belly reddish-orange and the tips of the tail feathers white. They moved nervously about, darting into the bushes or running quickly on the ground. I determined them to be Collared Thrushes (*Garrulax albogularis*).

We had decided to spend the day at the Alakai Swamp, driving to the end of the road and hiking the rest of the way along a narrow jungle trail. Leaving the car at the end we hiked along, crossing a stream and continued on up a valley. I was generally well ahead as the others stopped to collect insects. Hill robins were singing boisterously from the woods. As I rounded a turn in the trail I came upon four birds taking a dust bath in a dried-up mud puddle in the path. From a distance they looked like Wood Thrushes without the black spots on their breasts. Closer observation through glasses showed them to be dull brown with gray breasts. Two of them had faint brown spots on their light brown bodies. They were apparently young birds. As I stepped into the open they flew into the shrubbery. They were the Kauai Thrush (*Phaeornis obscura myadestina*). A half mile farther on I came to a rather dense Lehua grove bordering both sides of the path. I paused to watch a beautiful Iiwi searching the red blossoms. I heard a strange rattling sound. It came from the Lehua grove and sounded like someone crinkling very stiff paper, or to me like a Sapsucker digging among loose birch bark. I stepped quietly into the trees and moved slowly toward the sound. I saw two dark birds with a slightly curved bill and a long pointed tail about six feet apart (sic). One seemed to have a white throat. They were very active hopping along a branch with their tails erect over their backs like a Wren's on clinging to a trunk while they searched the loose bark noisily and vigorously for insects. Closer observation showed they had black heads streaked longitudinally with white, giving a striped appearance. Upper surface or back slaty-brown, rump reddish-brown, wings and pointed tail black. Throat black, each feather barred with white, breast black streaked with white, belly brown, bill and feet black, eye yellow, tibia rich golden yellow. The throat of the female showed more white streaking than the male. These were the birds that I had hoped to see more than any other Kauai bird, the Kauai Oo (*Acrulocercus braccatus*). I did not hear them call or at least I did not recognize their call, but their quick action and enthusiastic restlessness intrigued me. They would hop rapidly along a branch swinging their tail over their back, or drop to the underside, hanging on with their strong feet. Sometimes they would cling to the trunk in this manner, using their tail as a prop like a woodpecker. Later I saw two more of them on the road near our cabin. They ran rapidly down the road a few feet, jumped up into the bushes, moved into the low trees and finally flew into the low trees.

By eleven o'clock it had started to rain making the forest very wet. At eleven-thirty we decided to start back as it was too wet to collect insects. Back at the cabin we changed our wet clothes and decided to go back and work along the stream-bed we had crossed. It was still cloudy but had stopped raining. Along this stream I saw many birds. Once I thought I heard a peacock scream but was not positive. Several times I heard a beautiful song from different spots around the cabin but could not see the singer. The next morning I heard the same song as I sat at the edge of the clearing. Looking up I saw the singer perched on a dead branch in the top of a Sequoia tree. Suddenly it darted out into the open, apparently after an insect, after the manner of the flycatchers, bursting into song as it circled back to its perch. This performance was repeated several times. Sometimes it would sing from its perch fluttering its wings as it did so. Finally it flew from its hillside perch to the underbrush, bursting into a beautiful song as it flew. It was my Kauai Thrush I had seen the day before.

Jungle fowl were called vociferously. Back in the forests a Guinea fowl cackled. Kauai Creepers, Anianiaus, Elepaio and Apapanes were numerous in the Koa and Lehua trees.

I decided to hike down to a fork in the road about half a mile away, to try and photograph a fine stand of Scarlet Passion Flower (*Passiflora coccinia*) I had seen there the day before. Along the road I saw collared thrushes again. A trio of pheasants ran down the road, then flew into the distant forest. Before I reached my destination it had started an intermittent drizzling. I set up my camera, hoping the rain would stop. A small stream ran through the low ground here. Princess flower grew here in profusion, as did Red Passion flower and the climbing Pink Flowered Passion Vine (*Passiflora Mollissima*) with large pink pendant flowers and ochre-yellow fruit shaped like a cucumber. Nasturtiums and Tritonia grew in numbers along with Yellow Ginger and Wild Hydrangea. I moved back under the shrubbery to wait for the rain to stop. Suddenly a small bird with a long brownish tail and wings flew into the princess bush about ten feet away, sitting quiet for a moment then began searching for insects with a methodical gliding movement. In a moment it was joined by another one. They seemed quite tame, paying little attention to me. I thought the first bird had a deformed bill as there was a definite crossing of the tips of the mandibles, the tip of the lower mandible turning to one side. But the second bird also had the mandibles crossed. They were joined by three more all with the crossed bills of a prussian blue color. As they worked along the branches they would stop occasionally and sing. Their song sounded much like that of the Pine Siskin of the States. The upper parts were olive green with the top of the head yellow. Under parts yellow and a dark patch in front of the eye. They were Kauai Akepas (*Loxops coccinea caeruleirostris*).

After waiting twenty minutes I took down my camera and started back to the cabin as a steady rain had started in. We decided to return to Lihue at one; so cleaned up the cabin, loaded our bags and started down the canyon road. As we passed spots where we could look into Waimea Canyon, the clouds were actually below us in the valleys, forming a white blanket. We got back to shoreline road near Kekaha. This side of the island is more barren than the windward side. Barren sandy soil with clumps of coarse grass and Imopea vines and algaroba trees and kiawe trees. As we drove along the road I noticed a group of birds that from a distance looked like young chickens feeding just beyond some kiawe trees. We stopped the car and I studied the birds that were about thirty yards away through the glasses. I saw they were Valley Quail (*Lophortyx californica vallicola*). They had gray backs, a distinctive black top-knot, black face and throat, border with white, chestnut crown and scaled breast. They became uneasy as I stepped from the car and ran swiftly into the shrubbery.

As we passed through the pineapple fields near Kalaheo, we saw an owl perched on telephone wires, swaying back and forth. We noticed another owl flying low over the field and circling a certain spot, finally alighting. I went over to the spot, the bird flying up while I was still several feet away. I am sure they were nesting there but did not have time to search for it.

To be concluded

OLIVE (MRS. D'ARCY)NORTHWOOD WRITES: "...We went to the Audubon camp in Maine. It was great fun - up to 55 enrollment in one group. The usual staff was there; the Buccmeisters (Vice-President of the National Audubon Society), the Cruickshanks, the Cadburys, and from time to time Mr. Baker, Wayne Short, or some other New York notables would appear.

On the first of September D'Arcy took on the Secretary-Treasurer's work for the New Jersey Audubon Society and started off at Cape May Point for two months. The Point must be the ornithologist's heaven - it has all kinds of birds in spectacular numbers - if the wind happens to be northwest. That's a long story, but it reminded me of Anne Lindbergh's book, Listen, the Wind! where all the goings and comings depended on the wind. So it is at Cape May Point. It, according to local inhabitants, affects the fish, the orchards, the bees, and other things too numerous to mention, including the air we breathed, for once in a while (rarely, thank fortune!) it blew the smoke from the magnesite plant (a wartime steel plant) right over the little town... It is having ill effects on the sanctuary foliage, too, including the rapidly disappearing holly... We have been here in Short Hills since November 1. We are most fortunate in finding a delightfully comfortable house in which to live. I go in to Teachers College, Columbia University four days a week; D'Arcy goes in to the office in Newark on five days."

ON DECEMBER 16 THERE WERE NOT ENOUGH MEMBERS AT THE MEETING TO MAKE A QUORUM! The election of new officers and other business requiring the presence of a quorum had to be held over until January 20. Members are urged to make a particular effort to attend that meeting.

HUI MANU O MAUI at a recent meeting at Wailuku Community Center elected the following officers: Mrs. D. T. Fleming, president; Mrs. Ralph M. Riggs, vice-president; Mrs. J. R. McConkey, secretary; Mrs. J. E. Vockrodt, chairman, membership committee.

The report for 1945 of the secretary-treasurer, Mrs. Blanche A Pedley, shows that 115 persons paid dues to the Hawaii Audubon Society in 1945; 26 subscriptions were received, and the treasury swelled by \$160.90 which was turned over the Society by George C. Munro, the money to be used for research purposes. Total expenses for the year, \$72.95 of which went for the publication of the Elepaio, were \$104.85, leaving a balance in the treasury of \$303.26.

JANUARY ACTIVITIES:

Bird walk, January 12th, to Kipapa trail. Meet at the Library of Hawaii at 8:30.

Meeting, January 20th, in the auditorium of the Library of Hawaii, at 7:30 P.M. Walter Donaghho will talk on birds of the South Pacific, drawing upon his observations made there during the war.