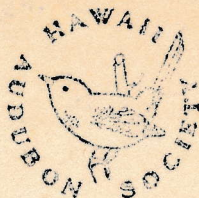


Journal of the
HAWAII AUDUBON SOCIETY

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For the Better Protection
of Wildlife in Hawaii

December 1947

ACTIVITIES OF 1947 REVIEWED BY THE PRESIDENT

As 1947 draws to its close, it may be well to review briefly our activities for the past year.

Early in January, the executive committee met and appointed committees, to whom all credit for the work accomplished this year should go. Miss Euphie Shields, assisted by Miss Margaret Clark and Miss Janet Bell, planned and arranged for the interesting and instructive monthly programs, which we have enjoyed. Miss Unoyo Kojima assumed the responsibility for the bird walks, being final arbiter of location, often scouting trails ahead of time, and as all of us who go on the monthly walks know, acting as leader as well as shepherd to the stragglers. Mrs. Ruth Rockafellow accepted the office of publicity chairman, succeeding by her interesting articles in bringing our Society to the attention of many and advancing thereby the cause of conservation.

This being a legislative year, we were concerned with the possibility of adverse legislation. It was decided at a meeting of the Society prior to the opening of the Legislature that it would be inadvisable to attempt to secure the passage of a bill placing the shore birds and others under direct government protection. (At the present they are protected by the regulations of the Territorial Board of Agriculture and Forestry, which have the force of law.) Mr. Francis Evans acted again as our legislative watch dog, spending a portion of each day at the legislature and scrutinizing all bills carefully. One adverse bill was introduced; the so-called "ministers' hunting bill", which added Friday as a hunting day in all open seasons. This was enacted into law over our protests at each step of its passage.

The establishment of the red-footed booby colony at Ulupau Head provided the Society with some of its most interesting trips. The sight of the great white birds on the nests and in the air is one never to be forgotten. It was here also that much of the bird banding, headed by Chester Fennell, was done. Mr. Fennell banded a total of 1511 birds, red-footed and brown boobies, noddy and sooty terns, and wedge-tailed shearwaters, working at Ulupau Head and Manana. Among those assisting him were the Paul Porters, Mrs. Rockafellow and Miss Kojima, while the same group, headed by our efficient secretary, Mrs. Pedley, spent many hours organizing and recording the banding.

One memorable occasion of the year was the trip around Moku Manu; a courtesy extended to us by Commander G. V. Walker of the Kaneohe Naval Air Station, with Mr. Fennell acting as liason.

We have acted this year to secure additional signs on Popoia, through the activities of Messrs. Robert Partridge and Al Lebreque, and are now securing more for Kaelepu Pond, with Mr. Hamilton and Mark Kerr in charge. Letters have been sent when it seemed that birds needed protection, as in the case of the booby colony at Ulupau Head.

The four islands of Moku Manu, Mokulua, Manana and Mokuhooniki were declared bird sanctuaries by the Territorial Board of Agriculture and Forestry early in the year, and closed to all except by special permit. This is one more instance of the forward-looking attitude of Mr. Colin Lennex and the Board. Recently it was found necessary to permit the bombing of Mokuhooniki, which we at first protested, but now feel assured that the best interests of all have been considered.

Acting in conjunction with the Emergency Committee of the American Ornithologists Union, one package of food and twenty-three packages of clothing have been sent to ornithologists in Europe, many of whom lack the very necessities of life. The articles of clothing and funds for postage have been contributed by individual members. Here we also extend an invitation to any who have not yet participated in this work, to communicate with one of the officers if you wish to help.

The Christmas bird count this year is being planned by David Woodside and the Paul Porters. This is one of the high points in our outdoor activities of the year. Some of us will be participating and the rest, we hope, will enjoy reading about it in the Elepaio later.

The Elepaio which comes to us all apparently without effort, is due to hard work - first on the part of the editor, Miss Charlotta Hoskins, who seeks and assembles material; of Unoyo Kojima, who gives one day a month to the cutting of stencils; of Miss Ruby Munro, who runs them off; and of our secretary, who takes care of the addressing and mailing.

Two hundred and twenty Elepaios are mailed out monthly; 10 going to foreign countries. Our total membership now stands at 162. The state of the treasury this year is somewhat lower than last year, due to purchase of necessary supplies and reprints of out-of-print Elepaios, a work not yet completed.

Plans for the future include the ambitious one of securing a sanctuary for waterfowl and shore birds; of having the Elepaio printed; and embarking upon educational projects in the schools. Obviously, we do not hope for all of this at once - but we shall hold these in view and work toward them.

To these, to the generous contributors of articles to the Elepaio, and to many others whose help and interest made possible the work of the past year, the Society, and particularly the president, offer hearty thanks and appreciation. With such a group working for us, we look forward to successful years in the future, and to ever increasing accomplishments. Mahalo nui loa!

Grenville Hatch

LOGBOOK FOR GRACE

Reviewed by Ruth L. D. Porter

When the whaling Brig Daisy sailed from Dominica in the summer of 1912, it carried Robert Cushman Murphy as assistant navigator, entitled to one - two hundredth of the lay. At least that was what the ship's papers said. Actually, the Skipper of the ship was being paid by the American Museum of Natural History to take the newly-graduated biologist along, to give him all necessary assistance, and to haul back his collected specimens. The Brig was bound for South Georgia Island for sea elephants, with whaling on both the outbound and return trips.

The Logbook for Grace, written for Grace Murphy, Dr. Murphy's bride, starts with the day Mrs. Murphy boarded the steamer for New York, and continues through the entire voyage until the return to Barbados almost a year later. The original log, styled after Darwin's "Log of the Beagle", was a rather personal document, so it has been edited and reinforced with additions from Dr. Murphy's scientific journals which he wrote concurrently.

The Daisy carried an assorted crew, recruited and otherwise, from available seamen in the West Indies. The majority were Cape Verde Islanders. Some of the men were old hands; some had never, in their worst nightmares, dreamed of climbing into the rigging of a ship.

In 1912, a whaler carried no radio or communication equipment of any kind. "Going to sea meant leaving the world." Mail was received and dispatched at ports where the ship touched.

Though primarily a biologist, the author was interested in plant life, so that the life scene, from the tropical West Indies across the Atlantic to the Cape Verde Islands, back to the South American coast, and to the sub-Arctic is depicted.

During the cruise and whaling at sea, Dr. Murphy rowed with the seamen in one of the whaleboats, took sun shots, and worked in various ways, as little time was required to clean and preserve the specimens he was able to shoot and catch from the boat. Once settled at South Georgia Island, he set up a tent ashore and did his work there, returning to the ship only to sleep.

The book is filled with stories of the pursuit of whales, the reaction to being fast to an active whale for nine hours...all tales well mixed with humour and sea songs. The Logbook has more than a common interest to residents of these islands, as much of the marine life and many of the bird species were identical with or similar to species found here.

Whaling under sail, with its attendant hazards, delays and inefficiency, was a dying industry. Power boats with plants ashore to use the by-products in keeping with more modern conservation practices were taking over the field. The days of wanton slaughter and waste were passing. But before again reaching Barbados, poor food, exposure and lack of stamina were taking their toll in the forecandle. It was with full measure of relief that the author was honorably discharged at the end of his profitable year of whaling. As the Old Man would add to his daily log entry, "So ends."

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The annual report of the secretary-treasurer of the Hawaii Audubon Society, Mrs. Blanche Pedley, dated Nov. 1, 1947, shows a total of 123 members paid dues in 1947, and 13 subscriptions to the Elepaio were received. The research fund was reduced by \$67.77, for supplies, files, etc., used in the bird banding. The cost of publishing and mailing the Elepaio amounted to \$77.74. Other expenses, including a filing cabinet, and stationary, brought the total expenses to \$236.80, leaving a balance of \$183.51 in the treasury. Of this, \$93.13 belongs in the research fund, leaving \$90.38 in the regular funds of the Society.

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NOTES ON MAGAZINE ARTICLES read and passed on to us recently include:

McGregor, Richard C.: Notes on a Small Collection of Birds from the Island of Maui, Hawaii. Condor 4: 59-62, May 1902.

Brice: Getting Acquainted with the Golden Plover. Animal Kingdom, July 1947.

Blackman, Thomas M.: Observations on the Sense of Smell in Chimpanzees, Journal of Physical Anthropology 5:283-94, September 1947. Mr. Blackman is a member of the local Society and has contributed many articles of interest to ornithologists. In this article he discusses observations based on his work here with chimpanzees. His conclusion is that, contrary to beliefs hitherto held by zoologists, the chimpanzee has a very keen sense of smell, which he does not necessarily need or use in connection with his food, but does use in detecting predatory animals and other dangers.

A much delayed but still interesting communication from HOWARD COGSWELL brings us this news of him and his activities:

"Since coming to live at the Sanctuary here in October (San Gabriel River Wildlife Sanctuary, El Monte, California) I have boosted the list of birds recorded in or near the sanctuary limits to 170, chiefly by the addition of certain fairly common, but rarely noted, migrants this spring. Flocks of Hudsonian Curlews flew to roost down river every night for over two weeks in April, at their maximum numbering over 200. This summer we have had Blue Grosbeaks in the tall weeds of the dry portions of the river bed and along the edges of adjoining fields; they are a beautiful bird when in full sunlight - all deep purplish-blue with a brown patch on the wing and heavy lead gray bill. They sing somewhat like the house finch, but more briefly and more evenly modulated. In the alfalfa fields on farms just east of us a colony of grasshopper sparrows appeared in June and sang from field after field as the farmer cut them down one at a time. Too bad that alfalfa is both such good food for cattle and good cover for the inconspicuousness of this little sparrow who has his name because he sounds much like a grasshopper. His entire effort at song is given from a perch on one of the sub-terminal branches of an alfalfa plant somewhere in the smooth greenness of the field. "Pit-zeeeeeeeeeeee-sik!" is what it sounds like, and not too loud, either; but if it weren't for this characteristic song they would be practically impossible to find. Then, of course, we've had the regular birds such as cardinals, downy and Nuttall's woodpeckers, black-headed grosbeaks, yellow-throats, chats and towhees; and this year, for the first time in three years, we have again a pair or two of yellow-billed cuckoos, quite a rarity anywhere in California, it seems.

"Our bird trips "afield" this year have taken us to places far and wide, mostly with groups of Audubon members. Thus we were in the Mugu back country in January and saw many thousands of ducks, 7 white-tailed kites, and a short-eared owl ("Pueo", to you in the islands). February we went to Salton Sea on a trip highlighted by more thousands of a dozen different kinds of ducks and a flock of 200 or more sandhill cranes. Then at the end of March came the Arizona trip with Dr. de Laubenfels and some of his students, which trip netted me 17 new "life birds" - such things as Pyrrhuloxia, Mexican goshawk, olive and Virginia's warblers, Hepatic tanager, Spotted Screech owl, Elf owl, etc. The Tucson, Arizona area is merely an extension of Mexico as far as the birds are concerned, I guess, but don't tell any of the air-conditioned housed residents of that city that or they may not like to have me return. Our April trip was to combine a bit of desert and a big inland lake (Buena Vista). The desert was good with such birds as Desert sparrows, Scott's orioles, Swainson's hawks in migration, etc.; but the lake was a big disappointment. Since our "survey trip" in February, the shoreline had receded some $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 miles and the white pelicans which we had come to see were barely discernible as a strip of white froth some 5 miles away! During May we begin to go to the higher mountains in earnest - up among the pines and around the wet meadows and the shoreline of Big Bear Lake, where on May 24-25 we conducted a bus trip from Los Angeles and returned with a bird list of 81 species, included among which was the Calliope hummingbird, smallest bird in the world (just 3 inches long, the long bill included), and the Great blue heron, one of the largest. Ocean trips have netted us various shearwaters, a very few petrels, quite a lot of Cassin's auklets, Rhinoceros auklets, and Xantus murrelets, but no albatross - and no frigate birds, red footed boobies or noddy terns. And none of the thrills of all our species surpasses that received while you stand motionless on a knife-like Oahu mountain ridge watching an apapane feeding in a close-by ohia lehua bush, unaware of your presence...

"To everyone in the islands a sincere Aloha!"

FIELD NOTES:

NOVEMBER BIRD WALK - November 9, 1947

We were awakened this morning by the tinkle of rain at our window. And although we had been promised a trip to Tantalus if not raining, we knew there would be something of much interest anyway, so on arrival at our accustomed meeting place, 'In front of the Library', at 8:30 we were told that the weather man promised 'showers in the mountains all day but clear on the windward side', so off we went.

There were 15 of us with three cars and a jeep and were soon in bright sunlight with clear skies.

Our first stop was at Kuapa Pond for only a few minutes where we saw several stilt and tattlers.

Soon we were on our way again to meet at the drug store at Kailua and from there soon turned off on a dirt road leading up to Kaelepulu Pond. Here most of us put our lunches in the jeep which Mr. George Sonoda drove on up through the muddy road. While the road was quite muddy in spots, it was not bad walking and we felt lucky in not having to carry the lunches.

Here too we were sorry to discover that Miss Hatch did not come along after being at the Library to see that everyone was comfortably situated in cars. She had to turn back to be with her Mother who was ill. We missed you, Grenville, and hope your Mother will soon be well and you can be with us on the December trip.

At Kaelepulu Pond we climbed up over a small hill which gave us a splendid view of the surrounding water. We saw several hundred coots, three pintails, a few plover and turnstones and surprisingly, a flock of about 50 hill robins.

After watching these birds in their natural surroundings for some time, we took our good time to walk back to our lunches and were surprised to hear a lot of shooting in the vicinity. Whether or not they were shooting at birds, we did not know, but do know that by the way the birds were flying away that they were scaring them and are glad to know that "No Shooting" signs will soon be posted there. After resting in the shade of the Algaroba trees eating our lunches, we started out again.

At the gate to the Kaneohe N.A.S. after the guards carefully checked for the necessary insurance, we were permitted to proceed. Soon after passing the gate, at Nuupia Pond, we saw several stilt, plover, tattler, doves and two shoveler ducks.

Going on up to Ulupau Head, we saw the whole hillside dotted with white, where the red-footed boobies were nesting. Flying about were Hawaiian noddy terns, sooty terns, frigate birds, turnstones and stilts.

After returning to the gate and giving up our passes, we all went our several ways toward home, and all agreed that we were fortunate in being permitted on the Military Reservation and finding so many interesting and beautiful birds, and it was surprising to note how tame and unafraid they seemed to be.

We all agreed we had had a fine day, sunshine and clear all day, and on our return, found it raining again, or yet, in town.

Ida N. Hamilton

RETURN OF HILL ROBINS:

On November 13th, the hill robins again appeared in considerable numbers around Roosevelt High School. This is the fourth year that they have come to the lowlands, probably from Tantalus in this area, and remained for varying times. Last year there was no influx of this gay little bird, and they were the more welcome this year because not expected.

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DECEMBER ACTIVITIES:

BIRD WALK: December 14th, to Tantalus. Meet at the Library of Hawaii at 8:30 a.m.

MEETING: December 15th, at 7:30 p.m., at the auditorium of the Library of Hawaii.
ANNUAL MEETING, election of officers for 1948. All members urged to
 be present.

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