



Seabirds' Return a Key Step in Restoring Moloka'i Coastal Ecosystem

The following article is a news release about restoration efforts on Moloka'i and was first published on <https://abcbirds.org/article/milestone-seabirds-return-a-key-step-in-restoring-molokai-coastal-ecosystem/> by the American Bird Conservancy on September 25, 2020.

Mokio is a five miles coastal stretch in the north western part of Moloka'i between 'Ilio Point and the The Nature Conservancy's Mo'omomi Preserve.

A bold effort by the Moloka'i Land Trust and American Bird Conservancy (ABC) to restore 90 acres of remote coastal habitat on Moloka'i's north shore took an important step forward last month, when Wedge-tailed Shearwaters were documented breeding at the site for the first time in recent history. Signs of shearwater burrow excavation were noted in three different areas, and included five active nests. Two chicks were found in nests. Fossil bird bones have also been found at this site, indicating shearwaters historically nested at Mokio.

"Restoring seabirds into the Mokio coastal ecosystem has always been a goal of the Mokio restoration partnership," says Brad Keitt, Director of ABC's Oceans and Islands division. "We currently have decoys and a sound system to attract Laysan Albatross to the site. Burrowing seabirds like the Wedge-tailed Shearwaters are another critical part of restoring the site, and we are excited to see them return. Once the predator-proof fence is complete, it will be safe for burrowing seabirds to return in force. Eventually, this site may attract some of the endangered seabirds found only in Hawai'i such as the Hawaiian Petrel and Newell's Shearwater."

For the past four years, ABC has been working with the Moloka'i Land Trust, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Coastal Program, and other partners to study seabirds at the site and design a plan for the construction of a predator-proof fence at Mokio Preserve that will allow seabirds such as the Laysan Albatross, Wedge-tailed Shearwater, and other species to colonize the site.

A temporary fence to keep out deer has enabled native plant

restoration to take root over the majority of the site. A key part of this work: getting research scientists, such as those at Maui Nui Seabird Recovery Project and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), to consult on methods to establish baseline data and monitor restoration results. Acoustic monitoring systems, called song meters, were set up in 2016 to determine if nocturnal seabirds were present.



Wedge-tailed Shearwaters have returned for the first time in recent history to a restored coastal habitat on Moloka'i, photo credit Digital Studio J/Shutterstock.

"There had been a few detections of Wedge-tailed Shearwaters on song meters, suggesting they were in the area, but no successful nesting until now. This is a direct benefit of protecting the site," says Hannah Nevins, ABC's Seabird Program Director. "This is great news and lends more urgency to getting the fence built as soon as possible." Coastal habitats in Hawai'i and around the world are also

threatened by sea level rise, development, and overuse. Restoring coastal ecosystems provides resiliency that can help buffer sea level rise and maintain or improve the health of corals and fish populations, as well as habitat for endangered species. Increasingly, conservation fences designed to keep out invasive predators are being used to speed up coastal ecosystem recovery. While the fences keep out animals as small as invasive mice, gates allow human access for study, and, where permitted, recreation such as fishing and sightseeing.

“Mokio is a special place and it has been phenomenal to see the transformation from a degraded area, dominated by nonnative kiawe (a tropical mesquite tree) to primarily native coastal strand habitat with blooming native species carpeting the ground,” says Butch Haase, Executive Director of Moloka‘i Land Trust, who has been leading the effort to protect this site since 2010. “It is possible now to stand in the middle of the preserve and see only native species and ocean, giving people a chance to experience what Hawai‘i used to be like. It is our hope that seeing this restored land will inspire others to do the same elsewhere across our islands.”

Seabirds are a critical part of coastal ecosystems. As top-level marine predators, they bring nutrients from the ocean to their nests. In turn, their droppings fertilize coastal plants and nearshore waters. Recent research has shown that islands with healthy seabird populations have healthier corals and fish populations near them. A recently published study also calculated that nutrients deposited via seabird feces constitute an ecosystem service valued at \$473 million annually, and over \$1 billion when secondary benefits (valued at \$650 million) are added.

Invasive predators such as rats, mongooses, and cats are the leading cause of seabird declines. Excluding these animals with specially designed fences is a proven tool to restore seabird colonies.

The Mokio-Anapuka Restoration Site is the result of a partnership between ABC, Moloka‘i Land Trust, Maui Nui Endangered Seabird Recovery Project, USFWS, USGS, and the Hawai‘i State Department of Land and Natural Resources, Maui-Nui Native Ecosystem Protection and Management team.

ABC is grateful to the following supporters for making this project possible: United States Fish and Wildlife Service Coastal Program, Science Applications Program, and the Partners Program; the David and Lucile Packard

Foundation; Lynn and Stuart White; the BAND Foundation; and the Sacharuna Foundation.

The ‘Alal Project - Update

The following is a news release by the State of Hawai‘i Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) published on <https://governor.hawaii.gov/newsroom/latest-news/dlnr-news-release-the-alala-project-news-release-update-oct-5-2020/> on 10/5/20:

ADAPTATION IS KEY TO OVERCOMING CHALLENGES FACED IN ‘ALAL RECOVERY PROGRAM

Multidisciplinary Approach Will Be Used For Next Steps in Saving the Hawaiian Crow

(Hilo) – The coalition of conservation partners working to recover the ‘alal (also known as the Hawaiian crow) are looking to the future as they work to address recent challenges that have affected the population of the species living in the Pu‘u Maka‘ala Natural Area Reserve (NAR), on Hawai‘i island.



Alal (Corvus hawaiiensis), photo credit: San Diego Zoo Global, https://www.dropbox.com/sh/qacdwaak2sl39oz/AACD3fzjq4Hsllec2gJXLf_pa?dl=0

In response to recent mortalities, including predation of the birds, mostly by ‘io (Hawaiian hawk), conservationists are

bringing the remaining ‘alal back from the wild into the conservation breeding program at the Keauhou Bird Conservation Center (KBCC). Having successfully lived in the wild for 2-3 years, these birds have knowledge about foraging, predator avoidance, and other social behaviors that could be passed on to the birds residing within the conservation breeding program and aid with future recovery efforts.

“For the last three years it has been encouraging to see the released birds transition to the wild; foraging, calling, and flying in native forests,” said Jackie Gaudioso-Levita, a biologist with the DLNR Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) and the coordinator of The ‘Alal Project. “It is important to ensure that these surviving ‘alal are able to pass on the skills they have learned in the wild to future generations of the species. While very difficult, bringing these birds back into the breeding program is an interim step to the review and adaptation of the program to recover the species,” she added.

Alal have been rare for much of the 20th century, with fewer than 100 birds remaining in the wild by the 1960s due to habitat loss and fragmentation, invasive mammalian predators, introduced diseases, and perhaps other unknown factors. ‘Alal became extinct in the wild in 2002, preserved only at the KBCC and Maui Bird Conservation Centers managed by San Diego Zoo Global (SDZG). This conservation breeding population became the source for the reintroduction of ‘alal beginning in 2016 to restored forests in the NAR. The reintroduced population, closely monitored by conservationists with DOFAW and the SDZG’s Hawai‘i Endangered Bird Conservation Program, has survived for the last few years, even attempting to breed in the wild.

Recovering the ‘alal in the wild will take many years. By working as partners and utilizing tools such as conservation breeding the road to recovery will be similar to the recovery of other reintroduced species.

“The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is committed to the recovery of ‘alal ,” said Michelle Bogardus, Maui Nui & Hawai‘i Island Team Manager, Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife Office. “Strong conservation partnerships are essential for the recovery of threatened and endangered species. Working together, the many partners in The ‘Alal Project will determine the next steps for this iconic species.”

“San Diego Zoo Global has a depth of experience in recovery programs and we are confident that we can work with our distinguished partners to address this challenge and continue our work to recover the ‘alal ,” said Paul Baribault,

chief executive officer and president of SDZG. “This species is important not only to the recovery of Hawaiian forests but also to Hawaiian culture, and our organization is committed to creating a world where wildlife and people thrive together.”

“We remain committed to this project and have always known that there would be some setbacks and challenges along the way. Fortunately the project has an extremely knowledgeable, dedicated and passionate team and we believe this level of care and consideration for the ‘alal , will hopefully in time, see a re-establishment of a wild population,” said David Smith, administrator for the DLNR Division of Forestry and Wildlife.

The recaptured birds will rejoin the population of more than 100 ‘alal being cared for within the SDZG’s conservation breeding program. As the dedicated project staff are working tirelessly to recapture and protect the remaining birds, they are driven by the vision that the goal of ‘Alal recovery is still attainable.

The ‘Alal Project is a partnership between major partners of the State of Hawai‘i Dept. of Land and Natural Resources Division of Forestry and Wildlife, the US Fish and Wildlife Service and San Diego Zoo Global. The project is working to establish a self-sustaining, wild population of ‘Alal that fulfills its roles (ecological, cultural, etc.).

Kawainui Marsh Receives Federal Grant

Hawai‘i’s largest wetland, Kawainui Marsh State Wildlife Sanctuary, was recently awarded a \$100,000 North American Wetland Conservation Grant (NAWCA). The grant is administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and supports efforts to conserve wetland habitats for migratory birds and other wildlife.

The project will remove invasive weeds and replace them with native plants, which will in turn provide habitat for Hawai‘i’s endangered wetland birds, the ‘alae ‘ula (Hawaiian Gallinule), ‘alae ke‘oke‘o (Hawaiian Coot) and ae‘o (Hawaiian Stilt), as well as numerous species of migratory birds.

The restoration plan also includes nature watching opportunities. For more information go to <https://pacificbirds.org/2020/06/kawainui-marsh-gets-a-nawca-grant/>.

CITES Secretariat welcomes CPW statement urging a science- based approach to wildlife management in the context of COVID-19

The following is a press release first published on 10/16/20 by the CITES (Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species) Secretariat on https://cites.org/eng/CPW_Statement_covi19_wildlife_16102020.

The Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management (CPW) has released a joint statement calling for a pragmatic, factual and science-based approach to the wildlife management challenges that have arisen in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In their statement, CPW partners, including the CITES Secretariat, put forward four guiding principles to steer decision-making towards actions that would work to reduce the risks of the rise and spread of new zoonotic diseases, while also contributing to the conservation of species and ecosystems, and the preservation of the livelihoods of the diverse groups that rely on wildlife for their incomes and sustenance.

These principles can be summarized in the following points:

- Recognize the importance of the use of wildlife for many communities, including Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs), in policy responses.
- Maintain and restore healthy and resilient ecosystems to reduce risks of zoonotic spillovers and future pandemics.
- Persecution including killing of wild animals suspected of transmitting diseases will not address the causes of the emergence or spread of zoonotic diseases.
- Regulate, manage and monitor harvesting, trade and use of wildlife to ensure it is safe, sustainable and legal.

An early reaction to the spread of COVID-19 took the form of calls for various kinds of blanket bans on the trade, harvesting, consumption or other forms of use of wildlife and wildlife products, most notably the consumption and trade of wild meat at so-called wet markets.

However, the collective membership of the CPW argues that calls for blanket bans would fail to tackle the underlying

causes of the spread of new zoonotic diseases, such as the habitat encroachment and destruction by human activity or impact of biodiversity loss on ecosystems' abilities to resist disease and to provide essential services for all species.

Such responses could also prove counterproductive for millions of people whose livelihoods and food security rely directly on their access to and use of various species of wild fauna and flora.

Instead, the CPW statement seeks to encourage stakeholders to first act towards the effective enforcement of existing regulations on the use, consumption and harvesting of wildlife. The partnership also suggests that efforts to respond to the new challenges of the post-COVID-19 world should be grounded in fact, science and taking into account the needs of the most vulnerable groups, so that the deeper factors that affect the health of global ecosystems, as well as human health, are effectively and efficiently tackled.

CPW partners urge governments, organizations and other partners to acknowledge the significant role that Indigenous and local communities can play in establishing patterns for the sustainable use and conservation of wildlife through the traditional knowledge of their environments, making plain the need to meaningfully involve these groups in crafting future solutions to these challenges.

The statement also seeks to encourage an integrated approach that can contribute to restoring damaged ecosystems and preserving essential services that keep nature, including humans, safe from the spread of disease, while also ensuring the development of sustainable livelihoods for all those who live close to nature.

CITES Secretary-General Ivonne Higuero said: "The pandemic has caused enormous global human and economic impacts and prompted strong calls for a new relationship with nature in order to reduce the risk of future zoonotic spillovers. This requires that policy decisions affecting the use, consumption and trade in wildlife species and other biodiversity-based resources be thoughtfully and carefully anchored in fact and science. The four guiding principles laid out by CPW partners offer policymakers a solid factual basis with which to steer their efforts towards an effective, realistic management of wildlife and biodiversity, in a way that ensures our relationship with nature is improved, sustainable and safe for people and planet."

The CPW comprises a group of international organizations that have mandates or programmes that revolve around sustainable use and conservation of wildlife resources.

Partners include the CITES Secretariat, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), the Food and Agriculture Administration of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC), the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB), International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), International Trade Centre (ITC), International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO), and TRAFFIC – The Wildlife Trade Monitoring Network.

The partnership was established in 2013, with the aim of establishing a platform for addressing wildlife management issues that require national and supra-national responses.

Hawaii Audubon Society 2021 Leadership

The Society wants to thank all our Board members for their efforts in this challenging year! Continuing to serve as Board members will be:

Linda Paul (President)

Yvonne Chan

Rich Downs

Elizabeth Kumabe-Maynard (Vice President)

Wendy Kuntz

Susan Scott

Re-elected for a two-year term are:

John Harrison (Treasurer)

Pat Moriyasu

Alice Roberts

Colleen Soares

A big thank you for her continued help also goes to Wendy Johnson (Executive Director).

The Society wishes to gratefully acknowledge the efforts of outgoing Board member Kaily Wakefield, who served as Secretary and is stepping down with the end of 2020.

National Audubon Society 2020 Christmas Bird Count

COVID-19 protocols will be followed at all counts. Please contact the individual compilers for details.

Big Island

Volcano: Dec 19, 2020, Thane Pratt,
Thane-linda@earthlink.net, 808-443-8160

Hilo: Jan 2, 2021, Sherman Wing,
shermanwing1@gmail.com, 303-324-9636

North Kona: Dec 19, 2020, Lance Tanino,
Lance.Tanino@gmail.com

Kaua'i

Kapa'a Circle: Dec 19, 2020, Kim Uyehara,
kim_uyehara@fws.gov; Lea Miller, cbckauai@gmail.com

Lihue Circle: Dec 27, 2020 Jen Rothe,
jennifer.a.rothe@gmail.com

Maui County

Hana/East Maui: Dec 24, 2020, Sonny Gamponia,
sgamponia@gmail.com, 808-244-0727

Iao Circle: Dec 28, 2020, Sonny Gamponia,
sgamponia@gmail.com, 808-244-0727

Haleakal Circle: Jan 4, 2021, Sonny Gamponia,
sgamponia@gmail.com, 808-244-0727

Moloka i (Topside & Kalaupapa): Dec 19, 2020,
Arleone Dibben-Young, nene@hawaii.rr.com

L na i (Boat Harbor): Cancelled

O ahu

Honolulu: Dec 20, 2020, Peter Donaldson,
pdnldsn.bird@mac.com

Waipio (Central O ahu): Jan 2, 2021, Dick May,
mayhi02@hotmail.com

Acquisition of Hawaii i Koa Forest on the Big Island

The Hawaii Audubon Society strongly supported the Trust for Public Land's <https://www.tpl.org/> proposed acquisition of 13,130 acres of koa forest on Hawaii i Island on the east slope of Mauna Kea makai of the Hakalau National Wildlife Refuge for conservation purposes earlier this year.

We congratulate the Trust for receiving partial funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation!

The complete letter of support can be found in the September/October 2020 'Elepaio (80:5 issue).

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

2021 Freeman Seabird Preserve Fieldwork Habitat Restoration

When: January through March, starting 01/02/21 all Saturdays from 8:00 am to 11:00 am

Where: Freeman Seabird Preserve, located in Southeast O‘ahu at Black Point.

Freeman Seabird Preserve (FSP) is generally closed to public visitation to protect sensitive nesting habitat. Reservations may be arranged for work groups that would like to help restore Hawaiian coastal vegetation and seabird nesting habitat. For more information, visit <https://www.freemanseabirdpreserve.com/>.

In November and early December, Wedge-tailed Shearwater adult birds and chicks leave the Preserve to forage at sea for several months before returning in the latter part of March to nest. While the birds are absent from the Preserve, volunteers are needed for habitat restoration.

Activities include removal of invasive plants, trash, and debris as well as maintenance of native plants and artificial landscape: In a collaboration with HAS, Hawaii Pacific

University (HPU), Oikonos, Windward Community College, and Nathan Lynch, fifteen nests were designed, hand-built, fired, and deployed at the Preserve in 2018.

Please bring drinking water, sun and rain protection, shoes, gloves, weeding tools, clippers or loppers, if you have them. We will also provide gloves and tools.

In response to the ongoing pandemic, Covid-19 protocols will be applied. We will practice social distancing and require volunteers to wear a facemask. The number of volunteers on the habitat will be on the discretion of the Volunteer Coordinator.

RSVP: Text Alice Roberts at 808-864-8122 in advance to participate; former volunteers, please update us about any changes. Also, let us know your age if you are under 18 years.

Do you want to know more about Wedgies and FSP? Check out the updated four lessons classroom activity package (not only for educators): *Way of the Wedgie – Survival Lessons from a Seabird Preserve* is available for free download, courtesy of HAS, Oikonos, Hawaii Pacific University, and other partners on:

<https://www.freemanseabirdpreserve.com/lessons-home>



FSP Volunteer Coordinator and HAS Board member Alice Roberts took this picture of a Wedge-tailed Shearwater soaring right between a “double rainbow”.

Hawaii Audubon Society Membership/Donation Form

The mission of the Hawaii Audubon Society (HAS) is to foster community values that result in the protection and restoration of native wildlife and ecosystems and conservation of natural resources through education, science and advocacy in Hawaii and the Pacific. Founded in 1939, HAS is an independent non-profit 501(c)(3) organization and does not receive dues paid to the National Audubon Society. Thank you for supporting your local Hawaii Audubon Society.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Hawaii Audubon Society Regular Member | International Membership: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$15 Hawaii Audubon Society Student Member | <input type="checkbox"/> \$28 Canada & Mexico |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Hawaii Audubon Society Supporting Member | |
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Donations are tax-deductible and greatly appreciated.

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- Email me the Elepaio Mail me the Elepaio Email me volunteer opportunities, updates, & field trips

Please make checks payable to **Hawaii Audubon Society**.

Mail form and payment to Hawaii Audubon Society, 850 Richards St, Suite 505, Honolulu, HI 96813.

Email: hiaudsoc@gmail.com <http://www.hawaiiaudubon.org> Phone: (808) 528-1432

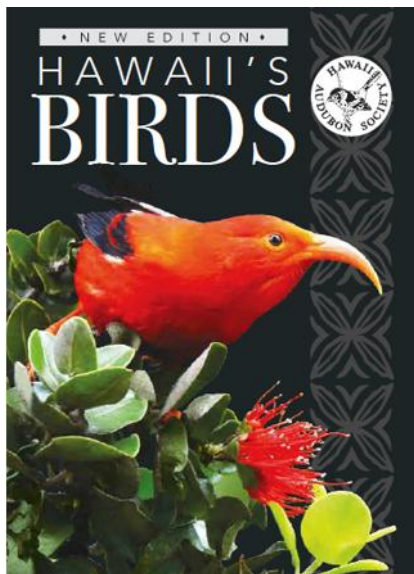
Mahalo for your concern and commitment to protecting Hawai'i's native wildlife and ecosystems.

Announcements

7th Edition of Hawaii's Birds

The wait for the 7th edition of the Society's signature book, which was first published in 1967, is over!

It contains important information on conservation actions and issues for native birds, as well as fascinating



references to Hawaiiana. This new and expanded edition has 155 pages and is available for purchase in our online store for **\$15**.

Go to our website and secure your copy today!

Mahalo!

The Hawaii Audubon Society would like to especially thank the four photographers who gave wonderful presentations as part of our virtual 81st HAS Annual Membership Meeting on November 18.

Ann Tanimoto-Johnson, Tom Fake, Susan Scott, and Eric VanderWerf showed a sneak preview and shared their stories behind some of the amazing photos you can find in the new 7th Edition of Hawaii Birds book. The presentation can also be viewed on:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=01yh9PqOcv&feature=youtu.be>.

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