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MIGRATORY WATER FOWL by J. Donald Smith
(Continued)

"My approach to the Kapiolani Park refuge is going to be biased from the start because of my interest in waterfowl. I am all for it right now. Some will object on the grounds that such a small area might not attract birds. But to counter this you have the refuge at Lake Merritt in Oakland, California, which attracts thousands of birds each year. It is not unusual to have hundreds of people come down to watch the birds feed. Lake Merritt was the first refuge ever established in the United States. It started the refuge program about 1870. They have increased the attractiveness of the area by feeding artificially--they throw grain out and I suspect you would have to do that here at Kapiolani. There is no use in trying to induce birds to nest there. A more natural site for that would probably be Maui and Kauai."

In response to questions Mr. Smith said no one knew just now what the principal food of the pintails in Hawaii is--no one has attempted to find out--probably seeds and the sprouts of water plants. The pintail is not a fish eating duck. I have several crops to examine because people complain that the ducks eat their goldfish, but I doubt this, for most of the crops are almost empty, as a matter of fact.

Are ducks likely to move from this flyway to that on the Pacific Coast? On the mainland they remain in one flyway always. Several experiments have been conducted to determine if you could move a native of one flyway to another, without success. They took wood ducks less than a year old from the Mississippi to the Atlantic flyway, and the following year the same ducks were recovered in the Mississippi flyway. Others have always gone back to their native flyway. What would be the purpose of artificial restocking--to try to develop a native flock of pintails here in the islands. Whether they would ever become numerous enough to be hunted is another thing.

What has been the result to date of the conservation program in the upland areas of the other islands? Three areas, one on Hawaii, one on Maui, and one on Molokai have been brought under management. This has consisted largely of constructing water catchment devices and improvement of the standing water on certain dry ranges and planting of food areas. The census of last fall indicated that the population of California quail had doubled over that before any management was started in the Pohakaloa area of Hawaii. The other areas have not been in existence long enough to enable any measure of their effectiveness. The water catchment devices are simply a metal pan set in such a position that it will funnel water into an oil drum and the water level is controlled by a poultry float valve. It is apparent that one of the most important environmental limitations on the quail population is a lack of standing water in the breeding season and while the young are being reared. We are attempting to alleviate that condition by establishing water catchment units. We hope to have many more of that type of area under management

in the near future. Right now we are getting a plan under way to see why the reproductive rate is so low here as compared to that on the mainland. We will have one man full time to follow this investigation through, to find out what happens to the eggs and what happens to the broods that are hatched. Certain phases of the hunters' take will be observed to determine the effect of hunting on the sex and age ratios--are they taking more hens than cocks, more old than young, etc.

We are also starting a restoration project for the Hawaiian goose, the nene. We have pens under construction in the Pohakaloa area. We will get two pair of geese from Mr. Shipman and attempt to raise them artificially. From the first of July we will employ Mr. Paul Baldwin who will conduct an ecological survey of the nene on Hawaii. He will attempt to learn why it has disappeared, to follow the remaining few--he will literally live with them, find out what they eat, etc. As a result of his survey we hope to obtain areas we can set aside as nene sanctuaries where no trespassing or hunting will be allowed. Then we will release the birds we have raised at Pohakaloa in these areas. Incidentally I have just received a communication from Peter Scott, Director of the Severn Wild Fowl Trust in England. He tells me that the nene was successfully propagated in England for many years. There are none now, but he had several, and there were a number in the London Zoo. A man in Holland had some before the war, and in France there was another which was killed by the Nazis when they invaded the country. Its owner, Mr. de la Cour, said it was 42 years old at that time.

Do you anticipate any similar program for the Koloa? "Yes, we do. If we can bring the pond at Kailua under Territorial control and the one at Maui, we will attempt to breed the Hawaiian duck, and we are also going to study the Pacific Golden Plover to determine whether the plover is a permanent member of a flyway. There is a concerted attempt under way to have a season opened on the Pacific Golden Plover to which I am opposed, because I do not think we know enough about the bird. The season was closed because the reason for their low numbers seemed to be overshooting. The proponents of the open season claim that the population has not been increased by the closed season, proving that the low level was not caused by hunting, and therefore it should no longer be prohibited. Does this seem logical to you? In spite of this, I do not think you need worry about a season being opened on plover at all soon. And I welcome interest in the plover as a game bird because it gives me a very good reason for studying it in greater detail. What we want to do is trap and band plover and conduct an annual census."

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NATURE IN KAPIOLANI PARK

By George C. Munro

When I passed through the north end of Kapiolani Park on May 5, 1891, ironwood and kiawe trees were conspicuous. Now the kiawes are all gone there and only about a score remain at the south end. They are beautiful old trees but a few years will probably see their end. Every gale will take its toll. Their tops are so heavy and their foothold in the sandy soil so unstable that some are bourne down with every storm. I have had a long experience with this tree in the years on Kauai, Molokai and Lanai and have a special love for these noble veterans. It seems regrettable that there are no young trees of the species to take their place in the park. Will the flowering trees recently planted among them be more beautiful under the conditions there?

Dr. David Fairchild, the eminent botanist who travelled the world for over 35 years collecting plants for the United States Department of Agriculture said

when telling of his visits to Honolulu: "One was the oldest algarobillo tree (*Prosopis dulcis*) a different tree entirely from the algaroba (*Ceratonia siliqua*) of Spain. The algarobillo had been introduced by the Catholic fathers from the dry coastal regions of Peru." This is interesting but probably too late to change the local name. Anyway we will be right in calling it Kiawe, the Hawaiian name for the species.

Also of interest, that Dr. Fairchild and Barbour Lathrop who accompanied him, tentatively "talked over plans for a botanical garden somewhere on the islands."

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Excerpt from a letter of Dr. R.C.L. Perkins, dated March 7, 1949, sent to Mr. George C. Munro: "I was interested in the last 'Elepaio' and astonished at the native birds enumerated in one of the walks from Honolulu, as I must have taken that walk or near it scores of times. I used to go up through the planted forest to Tantalus, then on to the head of Pauoa and up Konahuanui, then from near the end of the Pauoa Flat down the steep side into Manoa and then back to town, or sometimes varied this by going by Pacific Heights on the ridges and into the head of Pauoa, or sometimes again I reversed either of the routes, i.e. - starting from Manoa valley. Either of these would be a long day's collecting, but when Keoble was with me we started very early, as he frequently or usually was awake at 4 A.M. and I would join him at the Government nursery for a start at about 5 A.M. I certainly never saw so many native birds in a single tramp as are recorded in the 'Elepaio', so at any rate, there can have been no decrease of individuals in that locality. I fancy the rats may have had something to do with it for surely they must have destroyed many eggs and young birds. Between 1895 and the plague epidemic [Ed. note, this was Dec. 12, 1899-April 1900] and a few years after this, one could hardly find a ripe fruit of the Ieie which was not more or less eaten up and fouled by them. I am quite sure of this, as there were 4 or 5 endemic beetles which were found only on the fruiting Ie and I always kept a lookout for these. One species which Blackburn got, I am not sure whether I found at all. At the time of the plague, rats were very abundant around Honolulu ascending the kiawe trees at least at night after the beans, and people were employed shooting them. On Molokai the rats seemed to be more keen after landshells and any large hollow trunk of a dead tree contained many dead and gnawed shells--sometimes a hat full. I particularly remember that this was so on one large tract over which I frequently passed, as I remember rightly called Kahanui. In 1902 the landshells were distinctly much less common than they had been in 1893. I collected some rather nice things for Henshaw there in 1902, but they took much looking for, then."

Mr. Munro replied to Perkins: The Pauoa Flat in his time was probably open ground. I have not seen it since 1936 when it was covered with young planted foreign trees. I can imagine that it is now a well sheltered, wooded area where the birds would congregate in a high wind such as prevailed on the day of the Christmas count. Perkins saw many concentrations of birds on other islands but probably not on Oahu, and not near Honolulu. The birds of Oahu have certainly increased since I made the survey covering the trails over all the island in 1935.

During 1935, starting about the middle of the year I devoted two days a week to tramping the new C.C.C. trails and continued till November using a month of time and tramping fully 200 miles, covering most sections of the forest. I did not climb to the summits of Puukonahuanui and Kaala but nearly so and did not connect up all the trails in the Koolau mountains. In all those tramps I did not see a single Iiwi or creeper. I think I heard the Iiwi once or twice. The apapane, amakihi and olepaio were the only native forest birds to be seen and not in large numbers. I

have never done much counting of native forest birds and always take other's counts with reservation. There is much chance for error even with taking every care of duplicating or mistaking the species. At the same time, I think the counts of the Hawaii Audubon Society are very valuable and will be more so in the future. Even with taking everything into consideration, they are somewhat of a guide.

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FIELD NOTES: On March 10, 1949, a pre-nesting (we thought) survey of Manana Is. was made. However, the Wedgetailed shearwaters were already domestically well established. There was little indication of roosting Sooty or Noddy terns, and the Turnstone and Plover were the prevalent diurnal avian residents. There was every indication that the Shearwater colony had spread considerable since the writer banded there in 1947. No abandoned burrows were located and new burrows were found extending the former areas to at least twice their former population. There was no indication of any recent landings on the island. If future counts bear out most fragmentary observations, it speaks well for the protection the island has received. Another check will be made next month.

Ruth Dingus.

From Johnston Island: At this season there are a great many Sooty terns flying low over the south end of the island. They maintain an incessant and terrific clamor throughout the night. These birds fly very low at night, but during the day they are usually to be seen at a little distance off the island at an altitude of several hundred feet. They number about 2000, I believe. There are now fewer of the Frigate birds about, though last month "about 100." A very few so-called White albatross made an appearance last week, but left almost immediately.

Sigurd Jensen

From Japan: ... Only last weekend - Easter Weekend - we made a little excursion of some 100 miles to the west of Kobe, over close to the Japan sea coast, to visit the only place in Japan where the Japanese stork nests. It was surely the thrill of a lifetime for me, and an experience that even very few Japanese have had. The Japanese stork is actually quite rare in Japan at the present time, and this little area of approximately sixteen miles in diameter is the only place where they can be observed fairly constantly. It is estimated that approximately twenty pair are nesting in the total area this year. We actually observed five individuals and four nests. One of the nests contained three eggs; nest #2 was an old abandoned nest; nest #3 had not yet been completed, and nest #4 was only seen from the window of a bus - lack of time prevented us from investigating it more closely. ... All four nests were constructed in the very tops of tall pine trees approximately forty to fifty feet above the ground and were huge, bulky affairs. According to observers the nests are used year after year and added to in bulk at each re-construction. ... The birds are exceedingly beautiful and the epitomy of grace and stateliness either when on the ground or in flight. On the other hand, they are the most awkward clowns imaginable when they attempt to perch on the small top-most branches of the tall pines and must constantly flap their wings to keep from pitching either forwards or backwards off their precarious landing spots. They are quite tame and unafraid of people and feed in the terraced rice paddies close to the farmers toiling in the adjacent fields. They enjoy considerable protection throughout the area and are considered omens of good luck and good fortune. Thank God for this popular belief!

Chester Fennell.

Poamoho Trail: Sunday, May 8, dawned beautiful and clear. With light hearts a rather large group of us set off on the monthly field trip to Poamoho

hoping to glimpse the "mystery" bird. Apparently he was not in his most sociable mood on this Sunday because for the first two hours not a sound was heard from him. But suddenly after lunch his song rose up the valley, sounding like a tune a happy man might whistle. For those of us who heard him for the first time there was first a period of disbelief. "That isn't any bird! It's a man whistling." But no, it came again, and again closer, then farther away. Now one song, now a different one. He was quick to answer a whistle on our part, and seemed to enjoy the repartee. He did not trust such a large group too far, and only Lorin Gill and two other boys had the privilege of seeing him. Nevertheless, since we all enjoyed hearing him sing and since the trail was beautiful and the weather unusually clear and stimulating, we counted the day well spent indeed. The mountains were filled with songs of hundreds of birds. Hill robins sang constantly. Miss Hatch reported seeing 40 apapane and 16 amakihi. Elepaio, White-eye and Iiwi were also seen.

As we set off for home we all agreed that the Poamoho Trail is definitely one of our favorites and this particular bird walk one of the most enjoyable we have had.

Myrna Campbell.

Tantalus: Two Japanese tit feed regularly at a feeding station hung in the lowest branch of a tree, about five feet off the ground. This is at an elevation above sea level of 1350 feet in an area heavily wooded with eucalyptus and wattle trees.

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JUNE ACTIVITIES:

BIRD WALK: June 12th, to Kalena in the Waianae range, ewa of Mt. Kaala.

Meet at the Library of Hawaii at 8:30 a.m. It is on the Kalena trail that we have seen the greatest number of Iiwi; Japanese bush warbler are usually heard and the Oahu creeper has been reported.

MEETING: June 20th, Library of Hawaii Auditorium at 7:30 p.m.

The program will be sponsored by the Education Committee.

Mr. Reginald H. Carter of the Hui Manu will tell of his work in the public schools of Oahu to interest children in birds and their protection. Mr. Robert MacDonald, an executive of the Boy Scout organization, will talk about the nature counseling and conservation program of the Scout groups in Hawaii.

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