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MORE NOTES ON KOREAN BIRDS  
By Chester Fennell

I spent my memorial Day week-end camping and hiking in the mountains and along the seacoast some four miles north of Heundae, a small town approximately fifteen miles northeast of Pusan. The town of Heundae itself is sort of a GI rest camp with two or three hotels, natural hot baths and a long, sandy swimming beach. Really an ideal spot to get away from the old, monotonous routine for a few days. The surrounding mountains are alternately covered with long, open slides of rock scree and a fairly heavy growth of pine, chestnut, oak, alder and greenbriar. The summits of the peaks are well rounded and hold little meadows, fed by springs and lush with vegetation. The combination of open, rocky areas, plenty of shelter and water makes good bird country, and I was not disappointed as you shall see.

The most outstanding observation was a single male Japanese paradise flycatcher (tersiphone atrocauda atrocauda (Eyton)) on the side of a mountain at approximately 1000 feet elevation. I heard him whistling from the pines ahead of me as I was walking along the trail and stopped to try out a few phrases of imitation song not knowing what to expect. It was very similar to the low, more mellow portion of the Kentucky cardinal's song and I had no difficulty in putting it across. In a flash it tore across the little clearing before me, up the trail till within four feet of my face before it spotted me and suddenly veered into the underbrush alongside. For the next half hour I fairly drove him frantic answering my whistles, flying back and forth, over and around and literally tearing the woods apart looking for that brazen rival and intruder of his territory. Meanwhile I managed to procure some excellent views of him and to pretty thoroughly study his mannerisms and characteristic movements. His song varied not at all - just the same series of evenly pitched whistles repeated over and over again, occasionally interrupted by querulous cat-like, mewling calls of sheer annoyance. He made a quite striking appearance with a dark blue bill and face, dark reddish upperparts, pure white belly, crest and particularly long tail. Was in high hopes of catching a glimpse of the more drab appearing female, for I strongly believe they were nesting in the vicinity, but if she were in the area she remained well concealed.

Another first observation was the forest wagtail (dendronanthes indicus (Gmelin)) seen walking and climbing about over the rocks on a dry, steep hillside well covered with pines and the ocean lapping at its base. It sang constantly, a high-pitched, monotonous series of tit-like notes and had the most ridiculous habit of swaying its whole body and long tail back and forth at all times. Walking or perched on the lower branch of a pine pouring forth its everlasting ditty it kept up this peculiar mannerism looking for all the world like an extremely affected swaggart ever conscious of being on display. While all the other members of its family are fully content with pumping their tails up and down in a vertical line this little dandy must be different and swing his caudal appendage on a horizontal plane. Not in the least afraid it allowed me to approach till within ten to twelve feet continuing to sing all the time. Its rather mottled black, white and tan pattern fits in well with its surroundings and it evidently relied on this protective coloration to a great extent.



The white-faced wagtail (motacilla alba leucopsis (Gould)) frequented the rocks along the edge of the water at the base of the same hillside on which I found the forest wagtail and I found a single Eastern grey wagtail along the bed of a small mountain stream higher up, so you can see the family is fairly well represented in this particular area.

The Japanese cuckoo (cuculus canorus telephonus (Heine)) is a very common species throughout the Korean countryside at the present time. Heard my first one calling from a hillside May 22nd, not far from where I live. This is a form of the European species of cuckoo clock fame and so widely extolled in music and poetry. You can well imagine the thrill I had in hearing it for the first time. Could actually hardly believe my ears, and thought surely someone must be playing around with an old cuckoo clock. Hurriedly I rushed across the wide intervening valley and up the opposite ridge to verify my aural reception. Though I was not favored in catching sight of the bird upon that particular occasion, I have since had several good views of the species. It is a good sized bird, approximately thirteen or fourteen inches long with long wings and tail; grey and white in color. It likes to take a stand in the top of some small pine tree high on an open ridge, alternately pumping forth its ten to twenty "cuckoos" in succession then stopping a bit to diligently preen itself before repeating the calls. The calls carry a long way and one often hears the strange musical echo effect so commonly employed by the old masters in song and note. One started calling long before daybreak from a pine directly over my head when I camped out the other evening and I heard a lower, chicken-like cackling sound uttered after the first few "cuckoos" of the series. This is evidently a note not audible at any great distance, though perhaps a regular part of the song. I have also heard several give out a rapidly repeated series of high-pitched "coo-coo-coo-coo-coo"s. The usual cuckoo series of notes seem also to vary considerably in pitch dependent upon the individual birds.

Another fairly common species at the present time and one of most extraordinary beauty of both appearance and voice is the Chinese oriole (oriolus chinensis diffusus (Sharpe)). It too, is easily decoyed by an imitation of its song and goes berserk searching for the elusive rival. The song is a varied, liquid, mellifluous, warbled whistle and carries far throughout the valley. It frequents mostly the larger pine trees along the edges of nice fields or groves surrounding temple buildings. Large in size for an oriole, it appears more like a small crow in flight when silhouetted against a bright sky and the bright yellow of the body is indistinguishable. It surely is a striking addition to the entire countryside and a most gratifying sight.

Have recently come across the Brandt's jay (garrulus glandarius brandtii (Eversmann)) and find them far more common than I had ever suspected. They stick pretty much to the higher, more heavily forested areas and never intrude upon the territory of the Chinese magpie, or shall I say more accurately that I have not yet found the two species in the same locality. There must be some form of agreement between them perhaps based upon ancient days of feuding and fighting between the bands. The jay here, as elsewhere, is full of fun and pranks though apparently far more refined and less noisy about it all. They gather over your head in small groups as you prowl through the woods and quietly "jarr" their curiosity and disapproval.

Eastern house swallows (hirundo rustica gutturalis (Scopoli)) abound in great numbers and skim over the wheatfields, rice paddies, rivers, ponds, and roadsides in swift, skillful pursuit of their prey. Oftimes they approach you from the rear as you are casually walking along the dusty road and swerve in to quickly cut across your path not more than two or three feet in front of you. It seems to be a sort of game with them.



I saw a pair of the Philippine redbilled shrike (lanius cristatus lucionensis (Linnaeus)) in one of the high mountain meadows north of Heundae. They were extremely anxious over my presence as though a nest or young may have been in the vicinity. Careful scrutiny of the area, however, failed to reveal either. Also saw a single individual of this species on a barbwire fence only a short distance from our house the other evening.

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# LETTER FROM LORIN GILL

Dear Miss Hatch:

May 30, 1948

I certainly owe you an apology for failing you on that article I promised concerning my Mauna Kea trip. It has been so long that I have about forgotten where we saw what. All that I can recall are the apapane in the Kaumana forest reserve; the amakihi, skylarks, mejiro, and plover from Humuula to Hale Pohaku.

A bit of more recent bird lore should be of interest however. You will recall that three or four years ago our valley was visited by a lone shama thrush. Well, the gentleman is back - only this time in Pauoa flats.

Two weeks ago Sunday, the 16th, a friend, Robert Masuda, and I first heard the thrush at about 9:15 a.m. in that heavy stand of bamboo about in the center of the flats. We waited several minutes, but didn't hear him again. At about 1:30 p.m., when we were passing the bamboo on the back, he called twice - a lilting melodic whistle that built up to a deep "chortling" laugh. Bob and I started to stalk him in earnest, and Chico, my big clown of a dog, paddled stealthily along behind us. Everytime the thrush would call we would move up on him. It was slow progress, however, because he wouldn't call very often. To speed matters up, Bob suggested that I whistle. Not being accomplished enough to attempt to imitate the thrush, I rather jokingly gave an elepaio whistle. Much to our surprise, I was answered immediately by the thrush - in his own vernacular, of course!

After we got him to answer us whenever we called, we moved up on him quite rapidly. Just as I got a glimpse of him about halfway up a bamboo, he caught sight of our red shirts and took off to the other side of the bamboo. We soon realized that he was on to our game and, while he would continue to answer us, he would keep a lot of bamboo between himself and us. I remembered then that when I had seen him in 1945 I had noticed that he began his call with his tail hanging and gradually raised it until the climax of his call found it held erect. Working on the theory that all that tail-raising would keep him too occupied to watch us, we began to move up only while he was calling. Apparently the scheme paid off, because we soon managed to get another look at him. He soon saw us, however, and realizing that he had been treacherously deceived, took off in quite a huff for parts unknown.

Mother and I are going to be away this summer. We're joining my brother and his wife for a trip up the Alcan Highway to Alaska. Father will be here, though, and I'm sure he'd be glad to put his various animals through their paces so you and Miss Peppin would take pictures of them. You see, not only the robins come when he whistles in mornings. The fish come to get their bread and, when Father turns his back, the water rats come to get the bread away from the fish. Down by the bird feeder, he is met by a flock of robins and cardinals and a pair of tiny little mice. Then we spend our breakfast flapping our napkins out the window to protect the smaller birds from the mynahs and doves, which, unfortunately also know Father's whistle. Sometimes Chico will trot dutifully down and bare his teeth at a particularly stubborn mynah. He's stumped though, when the mynah calls his bluff!

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## FIELD NOTES:

KAWAILOA BIRD WALK: The trip to the Kawaihoa Trail was notable for at least two things, - beautiful weather and a scarcity of birds. The moderately large group was broken up into smaller parties and these were well dispersed along the trail so that different groups saw different species during the day.

When the lists were totaled at the end of the day's birding, it was agreed that the bush warbler (*Horeites cantans cantans*) was THE bird of the day. Its faculty for being heard but not seen was well demonstrated throughout the trip. From around each turn of the trail a loud u-u-gwee shu or the clear decelerating call of the tee-cher-tee-cher, tee-cherr-tee-cherr-tee --- cherrrr --- tee ----- cherrr came from the dimly lighted center of a clump of lehua trees or a dense guava thicket. One mature bird and an adult with two birds that were probably immatures were seen. Other birds and approximate numbers were: ricebirds 75, linnets 10, frigate birds, elepaio, night heron 3.

Ruth Porter

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AIEA HEIGHTS: The main purpose of the Saturday bird walks was to accommodate those members who went to church on Sundays and thus were unable to go on the regular Sunday walks, but since few took advantage of this opportunity, those present at the last regular meeting, June 21st, voted to discontinue the Saturday walks. Saturday walks have been conducted the past several months, and this was a good experiment to find out whether or not an extra walk was actually in demand. At present the answer is negative; therefore, today, June 26th, ended the experimental Saturday walks.

At eight o'clock, there were seven people willing to go birding in the rain. Transportation is the biggest problem on Saturday walks, and since we had only two cars, we had no choice but to go wherever the two overloaded cars were able to make the grade. We decided on Aiea Heights.

Because of the rain clouds, and the thin veil of mist over the Island, the Waianae was beautifully composed. There were occasional refreshing showers. Kentucky cardinals were everywhere, and they seemed to be enjoying living every moment of their waking hours. Some one said that the cardinals sing "Pretty, pretty, pretty", but today they seemed to be announcing "Happy, happy, happy." Norfolk pines on the left, Java plums on the right with white-eyes, ricebirds, sparrows, and cardinals having a wonderful time visiting each other. It's wonderful to hear the contented chirp from a ricebird bouncing on the very tip of a grass blade, then suddenly the excited white-eye announcing the intruders. Each of the five senses is alerted on a day like this. The fragrance of the eucalyptus mingled with those of the naupaka, then the red lehua against the blue sky with dark clouds for background, the scoughing of the wind through the ironwood, the gentle rain on the face, the comfortable warmth of the dead leaves against the feet, and the taste of guava and timble berries; all these within a second, but the memory is everlasting.

At the edge of an ironwood grove, a Chinese thrush was singing and singing. He was very near, but did not present himself. The symphony of his song and the wind through the ironwoods and the eucalyptus leaves is indescribable.

An elepaio came to the trail to greet us, but he left in no time. He stayed long enough to make everyone happy! Hill robins were too busy with their house-keeping to come up to see us. They were way down in the valley. During lunch amakihi came to the lehua blossoms and displayed its beauty to us. The distant ridge, the deep valley full of kukui nut trees and lehua, the amakihi, white-eyes, and hill robins - all added to the contentment and peace. By now there was no sign of rain, so we leisurely finished our lunch and started back. Unoyo Kojima



In the Pacific Science magazine for July 1948, is a short article by Dr. Frank Richardson which should be of interest to members of the Audubon Society. Dr. Richardson tells of the observations he made during the fall of 1947 of the Wedge-tailed shearwater (*Puffinus pacificus cuneatus*) on Rabbit and Moku Manu islands. He found that 23 of 28 birds checked, had holes in the webs of their feet. These birds were checked at random, and were of all ages, and Dr. Richardson deduced that said holes were not caused by fighting, but from bites of flies, or carnivorous ants.

Also recommended reading is a chapter on the Hawaiian Nene which is in a book put out by the United States National Park Service, titled: Fading trails. It was published by the Macmillan Company in 1943. Both the Library of Hawaii and the University library have it. Get it, it's good reading.

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#### FIELD NOTE: REPORT ON SKYLARKS

Skylarks are still plentiful on Oahu. Yesterday, May 30, 1948, skylarks were everywhere in the pasture land above the pineapple field between Pa Lehua and Palekeea. Until today, the only skylarks reported were those heard and not seen, and many times the singing was so distant that no one could be sure whether the song was from an unusually melodious white-eye, or the skylark. At least it is gratifying to know that in spite of the Army and predatory animals they are still thriving. - U.K.

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Just in case that some feel that this issue of the Elepaio is not up to its usual editorial splendor, it should be announced that the regular editor, Miss Charlotta Hoskins, is in Vermont, attending the Bread Loaf School of English, enjoying a much earned vacation, and having a wonderful time.

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#### AUGUST ACTIVITIES:

BIRD WALK: August 8th, to Kipapa. Meet at the Library of Hawaii at 8:30a.m.

AUGUST MEETING: Plans for August meeting indefinite. Please watch newspapers for announcement.

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