#### **VOLUME 82, NUMBER 2**

## **State of the Society: Annual Report for 2021**

LEPA

By Susan Scott, Recording Secretary, 2021 Elected Society President, January 17, 2022

Mission Statement: 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 Hawai'i and the Pacific.

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, the Hawaii Audubon Society (HAS) continued working for Hawai'i's native species through education, protection, and advocacy.

#### **CITIZEN SCIENCE PROJECTS**

#### Kolea Count

www.koleacount.org The 2020-2021 Kolea Count pilot study was a success with 611 people reporting 4,196 kolea. Susan Scott launched the second annual Kolea Count in July 2021, enlisting teachers from several schools to engage students in the project. See bit.ly/3Hstsbt for the pilot's report.

# Kolea T-shirt sales help support the project, available on https://www.hawaiiaudubon.org/store

#### White Tern Count

www.whiteterns.org Volunteers submitted over 800 reports of breeding terns to the online database and responded to 80 calls to the Manu-o-Kū Hotline (808-379-7555) to assist injured White Terns as well as chicks fallen from their nesting spots.

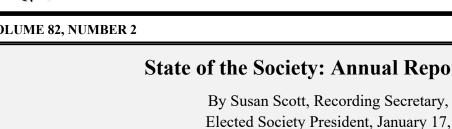
In a continuing partnership with the state Division of Wildlife and Forestry, our volunteers placed blue "Nesting White Terns" ribbon on trees around town to alert tree trimmers to the presence of White Tern breeding.

#### **CONSERVATION REPORT**

With past Board approval, on March 8, 2021 Linda Paul, 2011-2021 president and attorney for the Society, filed a challenge of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for Kawainui-Hāmākua Marsh Master Plan Project in the First Circuit Court. Linda is representing three conservation organizations: Hawaii's Thousand Friends, The Outdoor Circle, and the Hawaii Audubon Society. The defendants are the State's Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), the State's Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR), and the governor of Hawai'i.

The challenge asserts that the defendants failed to: 1) take into consideration pollution flowing into the Marsh from the adjacent Kapaa Industrial Park, as well as pollution from four now-closed landfills, and the waste-transfer station. The Master Plan includes several restrooms along the Kapaa Quarry Road where there is no sewer system, 2) disclose the Project's impacts on public trust resources, and 3) assess the foreseeable impacts due to climate change. Linda filed a pretrial Statement on Nov. 8, 2021. No trial date is yet set.

The Hawaii Audubon Society and Concerned Citizens of Hawaii (CCH) have been observing and monitoring Ae'o foraging and nesting activity in the Hawaii Kai Marina for over fifty years. Drone observation and video recording of the endangered Ae'o (Black-necked Stilt) nesting sites at Rim Island II in the Hawaii Kai Marina continues in partnership with CCH President James Dittmar. Making public the drone recordings of stilt nesting activity at Rim





Journal of the Hawaii Audubon Society

For the Protection of Hawai'i's Native Wildlife

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Island II public is intended to discourage the dumping of dredge spoils on the island.

### EDUCATION

## Manu-o-Kū Festival

The Society partnered with the Conservation Council of Hawai'i to organize the 6th annual Manu-o-Kū Festival as part of our ongoing effort to increase public awareness, appreciation and understanding of the manu-o-kū. The festival was at the Banyan Tree House in Waikiki's International Marketplace.



White Terns courting at International Market Place, photo credit Susan Scott

## Teamwork at Roosevelt High School

Through Rich Downs' educator contacts, Roosevelt High School science teachers Phillippe Fernandez-Brennan and Joanna Wright scheduled HAS talks.



Susan Scott and Laura Zoller gave slide shows to 5 classes about the Society's programs with manu-o-kū (White Terns), kōlea (Pacific Golden Plovers) and 'ua'u kani (Wedge-tailed Shearwaters.) Iolani science educator and HAS board member, Yvonne Chan, worked with Susan Scott and Laura Zoller to engage Hawai'i's students in the ongoing HAS Kōlea Count. The Hawai'i Science Teachers Association (HaSTA), also joined in.

## 'ELEPAIO

Kolea Count

The peer-reviewed journal of the Hawaii Audubon Society offers educational outreach to the Society's membership and subscribers. Six bi-monthly issues with the following lead articles were published in 2021:

- 81.1: Seabirds' Return a Key Step in Restoring Moloka'i Coastal Ecosystem, news release about restoration efforts on Moloka'i, first published on https://abcbirds.org/article/milestone-seabirds-returna-key-step-in-restoring-molokai-coastal-ecosystem/ by the American Bird Conservancy
- 81.2: 2020 State of Society report by President Linda Paul
- 81.3: Decadelong restoration of Año Nuevo Island deemed a success, first published on https://www.santacruzsentinel.com/2021/01/10/decade long-restoration-of-ano-nuevo-island-deemed-asuccess/ by Cypress Hansen
- 81.4: Observations of a Peale's Peregrine Falcon in Waikiki, Hawai'i November 23, 2020 May 6, 2021, by Michael Walther
- 81.5: Using ArcGIS as a Conservation Tool for Wedge-tailed Shearwaters (*Ardenna pacifica*) on O'ahu, Hawai'i, by Jennifer Urmston
- 81.6: New Invasive Species Alert: Rose-ringed Parakeets Found on Maui, press release first published by the Maui Invasive Species Committee (MISC) on https://mauiinvasive.org/2021/08/18/pressrelease-new-invasive-species-alert-rose-ringedparakeets-found-on-maui/

## FREEMAN SEABIRD PRESERVE

A one-acre gift to the Society in 2007, the Wedge-tailed Shearwater colony continues to be a treasure of native species in the middle of a residential community. From January through March, when these migratory seabirds were absent from the Preserve, dedicated volunteers continued to cultivate native and canoe plants, remove pesky weeds, build homes for the wedgies and study the birds' success. In 2021, there were approximately 120 volunteers. The rest of the year was devoted to monitoring the colony and predator control with periodic scheduled educational visits.



FSP coordinator Alice Roberts (on the right) with a group of volunteers, photo credit Wendy Kuntz

#### FREE-ROAMING CATS

The Society received regular requests from Hawai'i residents for help in controlling free-roaming cats in their neighborhoods. Until a humane solution is established to effectively reduce the free-roaming cat population, the Society's policy, as voted by the Board, is to urge cat owners to "Keep Cats Safe Indoors." This slogan will be published in each 'Elepaio.

#### FINANCES AND DONATIONS

A big mahalo to all who renewed memberships and donated to the Society during 2021. Donations keep us active and working for Hawai'i's native wildlife. Those who donated \$400 or more are: Anderson-Beck Fund, Honolulu Zoological Society, Wendy Johnson, Stephen Haus, Nathan Baker, Susan Sola, Yvonne Chan & Benjamin Godsey, and Mark Watanabe.

## HAWAII'S BIRDS, 6TH AND 7TH EDITION

The Society's 7th edition of Hawaii's Birds began islandwide distribution in January, 2021. The pocket-sized, 160page book is the first new edition in 15 years. In spite of lower-than-usual visitor numbers, the books sold about 7,000 of the first printing of 10,000. Cost is \$15.00 *(www.hawaiiaudubon.org/store)*. An order to print another 10,000 books is currently in progress.

At the time of releasing the 7th edition of Hawaii's Birds in late 2020, HAS still had an inventory of more than 3,000 books of the 6th edition. Fulfilling its mission statement to protect Hawai'i's native wildlife through education, the Society donated the remaining books to many O'ahu's private and public schools as well as other educational institutions. Teachers at all grade levels were thrilled to receive this wonderful resource for learning about Hawai'i's birds and their habitats.

### Hawaii's Birds Book Review by Adele Chong

Adele enjoys volunteering for the habitat restoration efforts at the Freeman Seabird Preserve. She loves the beautiful views of the ocean on Saturday mornings while pulling invasive weeds and learning about native plants.

"The 7th Edition of this book, published in late 2020, is the first new edition in 15 years. The book's 160 pages are packed with interesting information. From the inside cover graphic of the Parts of a Bird, to the Introduction (a succinct history of "Hawai'i's native avifauna") to the map of the Hawaiian Archipelago inside the back cover, every available space is used to educate the reader. There are sections on Seabirds, Shorebirds, Waterbirds, Open Country Birds, Forest Birds, and Urban Birds. Each section contains an overview of the category of birds, then pages devoted to individual bird species including: multiple beautiful and clear color photographs; the name used by the American Ornithological Society; the Hawaiian name (if applicable); the scientific name; the common name; whether the bird is indigenous, introduced, or endemic; distribution; description; voice; habits; and Hawaiiana, if applicable. Navigating between the sections is facilitated by color coding on the top corner of each page.

The section on Introduced Birds also states the bird's native region. Following these sections is a 4-page table of Endemic Birds of Hawai'i, listed by family, noting if the bird is endangered or threatened, and columns showing the status of the bird in the North West Hawaiian Islands, Kaua'i, O'ahu, Maui, Moloka'i, Lana'i, and Hawai'i, the status ranging from common to extinct, and 7 others in between. The book is about 5"x7", easy to fit into a pocket, and have handy when out and about. Included are pages of Popular Birding Sites for Kaua'i, O'ahu, Maui, and Hawai'i, so you don't miss any opportunities!

This book is a great gift for birders, wanna-be birders, and people who just like to learn new things, both in Hawai'i and throughout the world."

#### MEMBERSHIP

As of December, the Hawaii Audubon Society had 364 members/subscribers, current and with recent expiration (within 6 months). An additional 1,480 members were National Audubon Society/Hawaii Audubon Society shared members in December 2021.

#### TOURS

**Manu-o-Kū tours** by Susan Scott (size and frequency low due to Covid-19.)

- July 13, International Marketplace interview meeting with HPR's reporter from The Conversation
- March 10, International Marketplace tour of one Florida visitor by special request
- December 19, International Marketplace tern walk with volunteer Melody Bentz

### Paikō Lagoon Wildlife Sanctuary trips by Alice Roberts

- Farewell to our Shorebirds, Paikō Lagoon, April 10
- Visit Paikō at LOW LOW tide (-0.03'), Paikō Lagoon, June 26
- Welcome Home to Shorebirds, September 18

#### EVENTS

**Manu-o-Kū Festival**. The annual celebration of Honolulu's official city seabird was held on May 8-14 both virtually and in person at Waikiki's International Marketplace's Tree House. The festival is sponsored annually by the Conservation Council of Hawai'i, in partnership with the Hawaii Audubon Society.

TheHanaumaBayEducationProgram,www.youtube.com/c/HanaumaTalks,invitedHAStopresent virtual talksabout native birds for the month ofApril. They were:

- April 1: Susan Scott: Every Kolea Counts
- April 8: Teya Penniman: Birds not Mosquitoes: Saving our Native Forest Birds
- April 15: David Hyrenbach: Act Locally, but Think Globally: Considering Multiple Ocean Drivers of Wedge-tailed Shearwater Populations
- April 22: Rich Downs: White Terns
- April 29: Tom Fake: Bird Photography

## **ANNUAL MEMBERS MEETING**

The originally scheduled annual meeting at the Waikiki Yacht Club was rescheduled as a virtual meeting: *bit.ly/3AUgFw3*. HAS Board member Wendy Kuntz prerecorded the streaming program with awards presented to:

- Michelle Hester, Freeman Seabird Preserve, Wedgie Researcher and Developer
- Thane Pratt, Research Program (Christmas Bird Count Hawai'i editor and Kona Circle organizer)

- James Dittmar, Conservation Award (Ae'o protection at Rim Island II)
- Raiden Rabanal Amit Barrientos, Youth Ambassador for Birds of Hawai'i (Manu-o-Kū monitoring)
- Dr. Brian Walsh and staff, Corporate Conservation Award, Feather and Fur Animal Hospital
- Eliot Carter, Youth Environmental Journalism Award ('Elepaio Lovebird article)

Wendy Kuntz presented a memorial tribute to Dr. Leonard Freed, 1947-2021, University of Hawai'i, Emeritus Professor. Susan Scott presented a slide show highlighting 82 years of the Society's activism.

#### **CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT**

Sponsored by the National Audubon Society, the Annual Christmas Bird Count is the longest running citizen science project in the U.S. The ongoing pandemic reduced counter numbers, but Hawai'i's bird fans participated in the 122nd Count from December 14, 2020, to January 2, 2021, throughout the state. See 'Elepaio, 81:6 for a detailed schedule of the 2021 CBC.

#### **2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Officers**: President Linda Paul, Vice President Elizabeth Kumabe-Maynard, Treasurer John Harrison, and Recording Secretary Susan Scott (May-December.)

**Directors:** Alice Roberts, Rich Downs, Wendy Kuntz, Pat Moriyasu, Yvonne Chan, and Colleen Soares.

## OTHERS

Volunteer Executive Director: WendyJohnson

Office and Communications Manager: Laura Zoller

Managing Editor: Susanne Spiessberger

Scientific Editor: Glenn Metzler

Of the 500 or so Audubon branches in the U.S., Hawai'i's is the only one that publishes a peer-reviewed journal and a bird guide. The Society, active since 1939 through wars, pandemics, and extinctions, remains special in countless ways. But we knew that.

Thank you all for your support! We look forward to an active, healthy, and fun 2022. Stay tuned for tours, programs and meetings.

# **KEEP CATS SAFE INDOORS!**

Keep Cats and Birds Safe

## 2021 Shearwater Nesting at Freeman Seabird Preserve: 'Ua'u kani Enjoy Persistent La Niña Conditions

by

K. David Hyrenbach, Professor of Oceanography, Hawai'i Pacific University, khyrenbach@hpu.edu

Michelle Hester, Executive Director, Oikonos Ecosystem Knowledge, michelle@oikonos.org

We report on the ongoing monitoring and restoration efforts of the Freeman Seabird Preserve (FSP) by Hawaii Audubon and Hawai'i Pacific University since 2009, share findings from the 2021 breeding season, and briefly discuss the plans for future monitoring, habitat restoration, and predator control at the site.

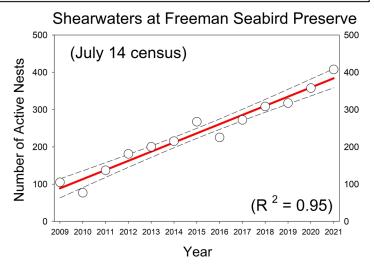
#### 2021 Update

With participation by over 20 volunteers, we documented 408 active nests of 'Ua'u kani, Wedge-tailed Shearwaters (*Ardenna pacifica*), at FSP. Once more, this year's nest count is the highest to date, surpassing the previous peak of 358 nests in 2020 (Hyrenbach & Hester 2021).



**Figure 1.** A record 408 wedge-tailed shearwater pairs attempted to breed this year at the Freeman Seabird Preserve.

Overall, the annual population surveys continue to show a statistically significant trend (F = 224.494; df = 1, 11; p < 0.001) with an average increase of 24.5 (+/- 5.9 S.D.) nests per year, which captures 95 % of the variability in the 13-year time series (2009-2021; Fig. 2). This trend suggests that the colony continues to grow, in part due to the collaborative restoration efforts. The July 14 count of 408 active nests (occupied by an incubating adult or an egg)



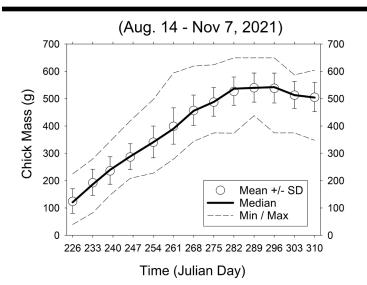
**Figure 2.** Trend in the number of Wedge-tailed Shearwater active nests at the Freeman Seabird Preserve, derived from the annual colony-wide census during the peak incubation period (July 14), showing the best-fit linear regression (solid line) and the 95% confidence interval envelope (dashed lines).

was followed by a count of 276 chicks on September 14. This represents a loss of 25.0 % of the nests during the twomonth period following peak egg laying and the first half of chick rearing. Furthermore, by monitoring 60 nests weekly between July and November, we learned that 21.7 % of eggs failed before hatching while only 4.3 % of the chicks were lost. This loss rate is similar to the one documented in 2020, when 26.8 % of the nests were lost during the same time period (Hyrenbach & Hester 2020). These observations suggest that the foraging conditions were good during chick rearing in 2021. The weekly monitoring also revealed that 2021 was characterized by a slightly earlier timing of breeding (phenology), compared with previous years. In 2021, chick hatching dates spanned from July 28 to August 25, with a mean of August 6 (+/- 5.4 S.D. days).

While the growth curves were similar to those recorded in previous years of good food provisioning (2011 and 2020), the chicks attained the largest masses recorded to date in 2021. The maximum chick weights ranged from 461 to 650 grams, with a mean of 555.2 (+/- 51.7 S.D. grams).

Chick masses started declining in the middle of October, and fledging started the first week of November (Fig. 3).

and



**Figure 3.** Time series of chick mass collected during the 2021 breeding season, showing the mean +/- S.D., the median, and the range (maximum – minimum) of weekly measurements. Sample size = 47 chicks.

We continue to learn how ocean conditions impact shearwater breeding success and 2021 added another La Niña year (the cool phase of the El Niño-Southern Oscillation climate pattern) to our time series. In fact, this was an unusual "double-dip" event, with La Niña conditions persisting from late spring (May – June) of 2020 through early winter (January – February) of 2022. Breeding Wedge-tailed Shearwaters likely benefitted from enhanced tradewinds and ocean productivity during the last two breeding seasons (2021 and 2022), as evidenced by the high chick survival and peak masses. With forecasters estimating a 51% chance that neutral oceanographic conditions will return to the Pacific Ocean in April – June 2022 (See NOAA's Climate Prediction Center ENSO Diagnostic Discussion, www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis\_

*monitoring/enso\_advisory/)*, we anticipate that 2022 will be an "average" year for 'Ua'u kani breeding at the Freeman Seabird Preserve.

#### **Ongoing Efforts**

Habitat restoration efforts continued during 2021. From January through March, while the shearwaters were at sea, Hawaii Audubon Society members and other volunteers removed alien plant species and improved natural nesting sites. This was also the third season we deployed 14 ceramic nests before shearwaters returned to prospect for breeding sites, and monitored them weekly for occupancy. Thirteen of the fourteen artificial ceramic nests were occupied by pairs who laid eggs. Eleven of the thirteen eggs hatched, and nine chicks successfully fledged from the ceramic nests, with a hatching success of 84.6 % and a fledging success of 81.8 %. Overall, the reproductive success, expressed as the proportion of pairs that laid an egg in July and successfully fledged a chick in November, was not significantly different when we compared the ceramic nests (69.2 %) and the other nests (68.5 % in natural rock crevices and roof tile burrows) (Fisher's Exact Test, Chi-squared = 0.0024, df = 1, p = 1). We are encouraged by the quick acceptance of the customized ceramic nests by the shearwaters, with occupancy increasing from 71.4 % in 2020 to 92.8 % in 2021. Moreover, for the third year in a row, the breeding performance in the new ceramic nests was not statistically different from the control nests, ensuring these new artificial nests provide safe nesting sites (Hyrenbach & Hester 2020, 2021).

With participation from the community, additional restoration and management efforts in 2022 will involve monitoring the colony and enhancing the breeding habitat at the Freeman Seabird Preserve.

<u>Habitat Restoration</u>: From January through March, volunteers will remove alien weeds, plant native species, and improve the existing rock nesting sites on the terrace.

<u>Research</u>: Population censusing and nest monitoring for phenology, chick growth, and reproductive success will continue in 2022, to augment our 13-year time series. Fundraising efforts will focus on a tracking study to finally learn where in the big Pacific Ocean the FSP breeders spend winter.

<u>Predator Control</u>: Ongoing surveillance for predators is planned during the 2022 nesting season, to minimize and document predation by rats, cats and mongooses on breeding shearwaters.

#### Acknowledgements

Funding from Disney Conservation Fund, Atherton Family Foundation, and the Hawaii Audubon Society. In-kind support from HPU and Oikonos. We thank the many volunteers and students who contributed to the restoration and monitoring efforts.

#### **Literature Cited**

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Hyrenbach, K.D., and Hester, M.M. 2021. 2020 Shearwater Nesting at Freeman Seabird Preserve: Highest breeding pairs, average chick success, and increasing occupation of ceramic homes. 'Elepaio 81(2): 13-14.

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 Hawai'i 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.		
<ul> <li>□\$25 Hawaii Audubon Society Regular Member</li> <li>□\$15 Hawaii Audubon Society Student Member</li> <li>□\$28 Canada &amp; Mexico</li> <li>□\$40 Hawaii Audubon Society Family Membership</li> <li>□\$33 Other</li> <li>□\$100 Hawaii Audubon Society Supporting Member</li> <li>□\$ Donation</li> <li>Donations are tax-deductible and greatly appreciated.</li> </ul>		
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Mahalo for your concern and commitment to protecting Hawai'i's native wildlife and ecosystems.		
Announcements	Farewell to our Shorebirds	
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