

Hawaiian Islands Region

ROBERT L. PYLE

Trade winds were abnormally light and irregular, causing a hot, dry fall throughout most of the islands, with many daily temperature records set or tied. Kaua'i did have one storm in early November with heavy rains and severe flooding, but no hurricanes came near Hawaii this year. Regular species of migrant shorebirds arrived in lower numbers, but a few unusual species added some spice to the season.

Abbreviations: F.F.S. (*French Frigate Shoals*); H. (*Hawai'i I.*); K. (*Kaua'i I.*); M. (*Maui I.*); O. (*O'ahu I.*).

Albatross to Waterfowl

The first Laysan Albatross of the season was reported flying over Kilauea Point N.W.R., K., Nov. 12 (CD). In the Shearwater Aid program on Kaua'i, 22 Hawaiian (Dark-rumped) Petrels (*Endangered*) and 941 Newell Shearwaters (*Threatened*) were retrieved through early December, most of them banded and released. The

petrel number is high, but the shearwater number remains lower for the 4th year following hurricane *Iniki*. At least 20 Newells were watched for 5 minutes flying over a lighted parking lot in Kapaa, K. after dark Sept. 30 (TS). These birds are often attracted to lighted areas on dark nights as they depart their mountain nesting grounds during fall. Two Newells, two-three Christmas Shearwaters, and three Band-rumped Storm-Petrels were reported seen at sea 5 mi s.e. of Hilo harbor, H., July 29 (KI).

Single Great Blue Herons (stragglers in Hawaii) observed well Nov. 15 at Waiakea Pond and 5 km away at Loko Waka Pond in Hilo, H. were thought to be different birds (EV). The sightings were made 10 minutes apart, with no indications of movement by either bird. One Fulvous Whistling-Duck, remnant of a small population formerly established near Kahuku, O., was noted throughout the season at Amoriant Aquafarm and adjacent Ki'i Unit, James Campbell N.W.R., O. (v.o.). A flock of 12 Greater White-fronted Geese, another straggler to Hawaii, was first seen Oct. 6 at Hanalei N.W.R., K., and remained through November (CD). One Canada Goose was among them Nov. 30. Six Nene (*Endangered*) observed in the museum parking lot at Koke'e, K., Aug. 13 were apparently from the group released last spring 10 km away in Nualolo Valley. Visitors feeding these generally fearless birds could become a problem here if the birds are allowed to remain (TS).

Good numbers of Koloa (Hawaiian Duck, *Endangered*) are still found at

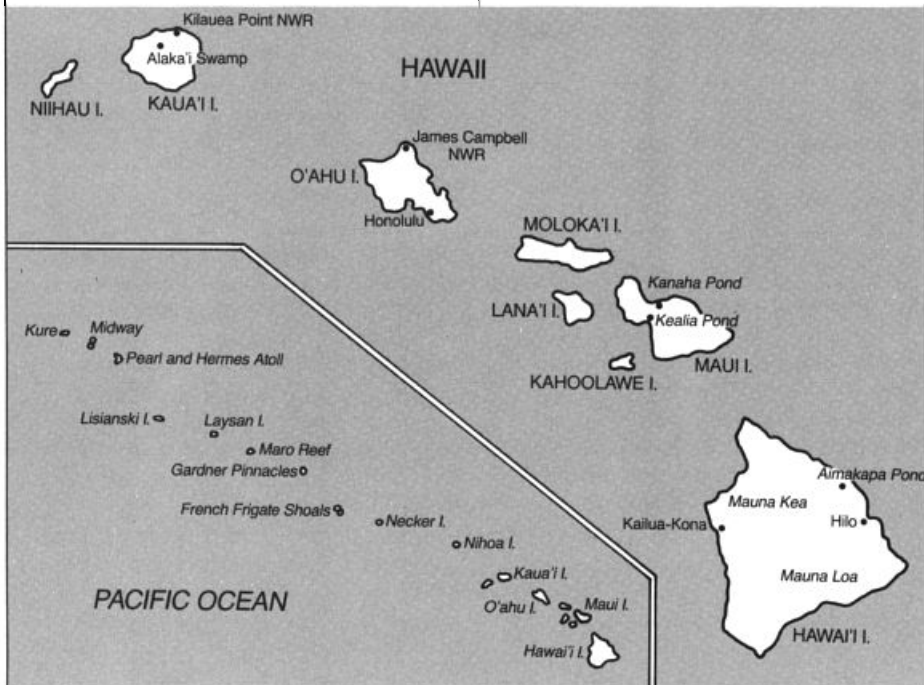
favored wetlands on O'ahu, but some recent Mallard parentage is clearly evident in many of them and is probably present in most or all by now. Restoration of a pure Koloa population on O'ahu has become impossible unless all of the larger, dominant feral Mallards can be eliminated and no more allowed to be brought here. Highest counts for N. Pintails were 150 at Hanalei N.W.R., K., Nov. 30 (CD), and 110 at Kealia N.W.R., M., Nov. 2 (MN). At Kealia, N. Shovelers peaked at 263 Oct. 17 (MN). All are good high counts for the state.

Osprey to Terns

An Osprey was first seen diving on fish at Hanalei Bay, K., Nov. 8 (*vide* TT), and later appeared at nearby Hanalei N.W.R., K., Nov. 28 (CD). A Peregrine observed at Hanapepe airstrip, K., Sept. 23 (DP) was early for this straggler species, which now is recorded at least once every winter in Hawaii. A small falcon identified carefully as a Merlin was seen twice at Pu'u Lani Estates in Pu'uuanahulu, H., Oct. 30 (†WS), but was not found again. Hawaii has one previous record of Merlin. A single Red-billed Francolin seen several times during on Ainahou Rd. off of Chain-of-Craters Road, H. (FW) is apparently a remnant from several introduced in that area years ago.

Seven Hawaiian (Common) Moorhens (*Endangered*) at Waiawa Unit, Pearl Harbor N.W.R., Aug. 25 (PD), and five at tiny Kaelepu Pond Sanctuary in Kailua Oct. 14 (LT) were good counts for this species at these locations on O'ahu. Two ad. Hawaiian Coots (*Endangered*) were found Aug. 23 in a forested area on Kawaikoi Stream up from Camp 10 Road in Koke'e, K. (TS), an interesting locality for this endemic species usually found in lowland wetlands.

One-two Black-bellied Plovers, casual in Hawaii, were at Kealia N.W.R., M. throughout the fall (MN), and another was seen at Ki'i Unit, James Campbell N.W.R., O., Nov. 25 (PD). At Kealia N.W.R., counts of 257 Hawaiian (Black-necked) Stilts (*Endangered*) Sept. 5 and 208 Oct. 3 (MN) were unusually high. Two vagrant species studied carefully by Donaldson at Ki'i Unit were a Spotted Sandpiper (Aug 19 & 27) and a Whimbrel of the Asiatic race (Sept. 3). Bristle-thighed Curlews were reported unusually frequently this season. One evidently over-summering at Ki'i Unit (Refuge staff) was seen Aug. 5 & 21 (PD). Three were there Aug. 27, increasing to six through early September, then dropping to three in October. One was still there Nov. 25,



unusually late. Bruner was surprised to find two Bristle-thigheds mingling with people at Haleiwa Beach Park, O., Sept. 17. At Hanapepe airstrip, K., four Bristle-thigheds were found Sept. 29 (DK), and one—two were reported there regularly through Nov. 30 (v.o.). A Buff-breasted Sandpiper, very rare vagrant in Hawaii, was studied closely in early September by Refuge staff at Tern I., F.F.S. (MW *et al.*). Detailed descriptive notes were provided.

A strange tern in nearly basic plumage was observed well by 4 observers independently on different dates in late September & Oct. 1 at Aimakapa Pond & Reef, H. (DP, EV, RD, KK). All judged it to be a *Chlidonias*, one favoring a White-winged Tern, the others believing it more likely a Whiskered Tern. Detailed descriptive notes were provided by two observers. Neither species has been recorded previously in Hawaii.

Sandgrouse to Estrilids

Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse introduced on Hawai'i I. years ago still persist near Waimea. Seven were found Oct. 5 back of the W. Hawaii Cement Plant off of Hwy. 190 (KK), and four were observed Oct. 28 in flight along Hwy 190 3 mi s. of Waimea (WS). Rose-ringed Parakeets continue to hang on in s. Kaua'i. Seventeen were reported flying over a yard in Omao, K., Aug. 14 (DJ), and seven were seen Nov. 17 in a yard in Lawai (RLP), a few km from Omao. They appear regularly in the National Tropical Botanical Gardens just s. of Lawai, where six were reported Oct. 12 (*vide* DJ) and one was seen Nov. 15 (RLP). The only known nesting site in Hawaii for Gray Swiftlets is at the end of a blind aqueduct tunnel at the head of N. Halawa Valley, O., a site very difficult to reach. A visit there Aug. 25 found 11 occupied nests (5 with single eggs, 5 with single chicks, one with an adult) and 5 more nests unoccupied (TC, DW). The species has persisted in this area since several hundred were released on O'ahu during the early 1960's.

O'ahu Elepaio were recorded this fall at several favored localities. Five were found in N. Halawa Valley Aug. 25 (TC); one Sept. 3 (PD) and three Oct. 7 (EV) on Kuliouou Trail; and one on Woodlawn Trail Oct. 24 (EV). The O'ahu Elepaio has decreased alarmingly in recent decades, and is now an active candidate for Endangered listing. The Puaiohi (critically *Endangered*) is under active study by National Biological Service personnel in the Alaka'i area of Kaua'i. From recent color banding work they estimate a population this fall of around 20 individuals in

their study area, including some juveniles (TS). Another sighting of the very rare Maui Nukupuu (extremely *Endangered*) was recorded by a National Biological Service biologist on the n. slope of Haleakala Mt., Sept. 14 (MR). Akikiki (formerly Kaua'i "Creeper") were observed several times this fall on the Alaka'i, Mohihi, and Pihea Trails out of Koke'e, K., including 15 recorded during 3 days Sept. 26–28 deeper into the Alaka'i area (DK). Iwi have been rare on O'ahu in recent decades, and have not been reported in the Ko'olau Mts. for several years. It was thus remarkable when three were discovered in one spot off the Schofield-Waikane Trail in the central Ko'olau Dec. 5 (*vide* TP), and six were seen and heard the next day at the same place (EV). This group will be monitored regularly through the winter.

An ad. Red-crested Cardinal was observed Aug. 23 with Nutmeg Mannikins on Camp 10 Road at Kawaikoi Stream near Koke'e, K. (TS), an unexpected locality for this species, which is not abundant on Kaua'i. Seven Orange-cheeked Waxbills were reported at Kealia N.W.R., M. (MN), a new locality for them on Maui, where the species has been local and rarely observed. Java Sparrows are common on the Kona side of Hawai'i I., but three–four seen Aug. 8 on the University campus in Hilo (KI) is one of the first reports from across the island on the windward side. And two Java Sparrows observed Aug. 5 at Kalihwai in n. Kaua'i (DJ) may have come from the population at Princeville 5 km away.

Contributors:

Francis Benevides, Phil Bruner, Tonnie Casey, Reginald David, Cris Dippel, Peter Donaldson, Kamal Islam, Dean Jamieson, Karen Kluge, David Kuhn, Mike Nishimoto, Mike Ord, Doug Pratt, Thane Pratt, Michelle Reynolds, William Smith, Tom Snetsinger, Lance Tanino, Tom Telfer, Eric VanderWerf, Mark Webber, Friederike Woog.

—Robert L. Pyle, 741 N. Kalaeo Ave., Kailua, HI 96734.

West Indies Region

ROBERT NORTON

This was a very active hurricane season, with several islands from St. Lucia north to the Virgin Islands directly affected by major storms such as *Iris*, *Luis*, and *Marilyn*. Bermuda had several close calls, too. On tropical storm *Iris'* sortie through the northern Lesser Antilles, it blew down a tent-city and closed Montserrat's airport, where the population was evacuating because of continued temblors, volcanic explosions, and a growing lava dome. Hurricane *Luis*, a Category 4 storm with 140 mph winds, devastated Antigua and St. Martin September 5, and Category 3 hurricane *Marilyn* followed 11 days later, ripping up St. Thomas. Rainfall usually measured by the United States Park Service at Cruz Bay, St. John, United States Virgin Islands, was unavailable.

Reports covering the geographic extremes of the Region from Bermuda to the northeast and Isla de San Andres (formerly St. Andrews) to the southwest give a very good cross-section of the Region. And observations from Abaco, North Andros, Bahamas, Puerto Rico, St. John, Antigua, and Grand Cayman uphold fall-out records and wave dates across Region. Even brief visits to ornithologically little-known places such as Isla de San Andres help make important contributions to our understanding of changing resident and migrant bird status.

The report from Bermuda was extensive, and gives a sense of fall migration as it might be observed along the southwest tropical Atlantic (Florida and the Bahamas) or the Greater Antilles. It appears that a major avian fallout occurred at Bermuda and western Puerto Rico during the last days of September and the first days of October, with unusual numbers and species recorded. Thirty-seven species of wood warblers were recorded from Bermuda between August 2–October 17. Five waterbirds and six landbirds either tied or broke early dates at Bermuda, and many vagrants reappeared after long hiatuses, *i.e.*, Northern Saw-whet Owl. Given the consistent, high level of birding activity and results there, this island should be considered for a continuous-effort monitoring and banding station.

Abbreviations: Ab (*Abaco, Bahamas*); Ag (*Antigua*); Ba (*Bahamas*); Be (*Bermuda*), GC (*Grand Cayman*); ISA (*Isla de San*