

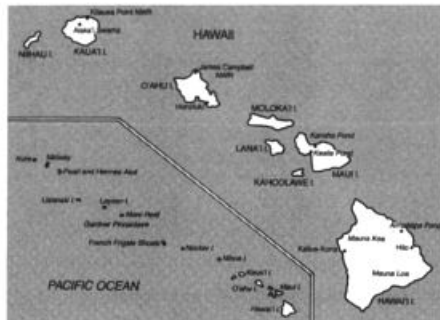
Bernadino), Shirley Carter, Ryan Chornock, Charles T. Collins, David Compton, Daniel S. Cooper, **Elizabeth Copper** (*San Diego*), Therese R. Clawson, Brian E. Daniels, **Don Desjardin** (*Ventura*), **Tom M. Edell** (*San Luis Obispo*), Claude G. Edwards, Alan M. Eisner, Richard A. Erickson, Wayne Ferren, John Gallo, **Kimball L. Garrett** (*Los Angeles*), Peter A. Ginsburg, Karen S. Gilbert, Martin Gilbert, Carina Gjerdrum, Steven Glover, Tom Gray, Robert A. Hamilton, Robert W. Hansen, Lori Hargrove, Karen A. Havlena, **Matthew T. Heindel** (*Kern*), D. Mitch Heindel, **Tom & Jo Heindel** (*Inyo*), Roger Higson, Brad Hines, Mark A. Holmgren, Marshall Iliff, Curtis O. Johnson, Paul Jorgensen, Ann and Tom Keenan (A&TK), Steven A. Laymon, **Joan E. Lentz** (*Santa Barbara*), John S. Mariani, Elizabeth Mason, Chet McGaugh, Margaret McIntosh, **Robert McKernan** (*Riverside*), William J. Moramarco, Brennan Mulrooney, Stephen J. Myers, Bill O'Connell, Leo Ohtsuki, Bob Pann, **Michael A. Patten**, Robert Patton, James E. Pike, Jill Raffleson, Michael M. Rogers, Michael San Miguel, Bill Sauer, Susan Smith, Emilie Strauss, Scott B. Terrill, David Trissel, Philip Unitt, Ken Weaver, Richard E. Webster, Grant B. Weybourn, Mary Whitfield, Judy Wickman, **Douglas R. Willick** (*Orange*), Mark C. Wimer, Tom E. Wurster, Alice and Howard York (A&HY), Dick Zembell. An additional 50+ observers who could not be individually acknowledged submitted reports this season.

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# hawaiian islands region



## ROBERT L. PYLE

The severe drought of winter and spring was relieved in late spring and summer in much of the state, but persisted through summer on parts of Hawai'i Island. Hilo, the state's rainiest town, had one percent of its normal rainfall in January, usually its rainiest month, but had climbed back to 64 percent of normal by mid-July. Unsuccessful breeding by many endemic forest birds, and more visiting shorebirds over-summering here rather than departing for Arctic breeding grounds, were attributed to poor food and environmental conditions carried over from the severe winter/spring drought. Such severe droughts followed by nesting disruptions have occurred at the end of previous strong El Niño periods in the past, and this year's events may well have followed from last year's El Niño conditions.

**Abbreviations:** H. (*Hawai'i Island*); K. (*Kauai Island*); M. (*Maui Island*); O. (*O'ahu Island*); J.C.N.W.R. (*James Campbell N.W.R., O'ahu*); Ke.Po. N.W.R. (*Kealia Ponds N.W.R., Maui*); Ki.Pt. N.W.R. (*Kilauea Point N.W.R., Kauai*); W.T.P. (*Water Treatment Plant*).

## GREBES TO DUCKS

The single Pied-billed Grebe was still at Kona W.T.P., H., July 22 (TM). A *Pterodroma* petrel finally identified by consensus as a dark-morph **Kermadec Petrel** (CM, PD, TS, RD et al.) came regularly to Moku-aeae islet of Ki.Pt. N.W.R. near sunset each evening from late June until July 23. It continued coming irregularly until at least early September, and would spend much of its time in waning sunset working along

**SA** In a thorough study of the 'Io (Hawaiian Hawk, *Endangered*) throughout Hawai'i I. this spring and summer, Klavitter found and tracked an even 50 nests. Eighteen of these failed, 22 fledged successfully, and ten were still active with large chicks at summer's end. Nests were found in all 11 districts of the island, but concentrations were in Hamakua, lower Puna (coastal), and S. Kona. Additional nests were definitely present, but not found. Ten nests involved mixed pairs of light and dark morphs, with more dark morphs in Hamakua than elsewhere. More sub-ad. birds (by plumage) than expected were found in the nesting pairs, with sub-ad. females outnumbering sub-ad. males. Nine eggs removed from abandoned nests were being analyzed for fertility and cause of death. The 'Io has been pre-dating heavily on recently released 'Alala (Hawaiian Crow, critically *Endangered*), but otherwise they seem to be doing quite well.

Kilauea Pt. at eye level, affording good views. Twice in late August it was seen briefly chasing Nene (*Endangered*) at Kilauea Pt. (CM). The only prior records of this species in Hawaii are a 1923 specimen from Kure, and a few sightings from ships at sea, mostly 100–200 mi offshore. Bulwer's Petrel nests were found on islets off windward O'ahu: 2–3 on S. Mokulua, and at least 4 on nearby Popoia (DS). Numerous Christmas Shearwaters nesting under encroaching vegetation on a little-used runway at Kure Atoll were banded during a state survey trip in late June (DW). A few Newell's Shearwaters (*Threatened*) returned again to the vegetated slope behind the headquarters building at Ki.Pt. N.W.R. Ten artificial burrows were installed there in March. Pairs later occupied at least 2, and were heard calling frequently during May evenings (CM). One egg was laid in June which evidently did not hatch (TT), and the other pair was still interacting in August (CM). This is the first and only locality where Newell's have been found

nesting at low elevation. One Leach's Storm-Petrel with a rump pattern "like Guadalupe types" of n. Mexico was seen well 5 mi off Midway Atoll June 3 (PP), an unusual summer record in the c. Pacific.

An ad. female and an imm. Great Frigatebird were well-observed June 24 flying over the Alaka'i Trail picnic area in the c. Kaua'i mountains (DK), a rather unusual locality for the species. One Great Blue Heron at Nu'upia Ponds, O., June 6 (RLP et al.) was perhaps a remnant from the two-three seen there regularly in recent years. A remarkably high count of 378 Black-crowned Night-Herons at Ke.Po. N.W.R. June 1 was evidently a temporary concentration, as summer counts thereafter were 60 or less (MN).

Four Koloa (Hawaiian Duck, *Endangered*) were found June 5 on Kehena Res. in the Kohala Mts., H. (AE). A scruffy male N. Shoveler was at Kaelepulu Sanctuary in Kailua, O., June 1 (MW) and June 6 (RLP), an odd summer occurrence.

#### HAWKS TO SWIFTLETS

Counts of Hawaiian Coots (*Endangered*) at Ke.Po. N.W.R. fell from spring highs to 231 June 1 and to 140-175 thereafter (MN). More Pacific Golden-Plovers and Ruddy Turnstones were reported over-summering in June than normally seen, and at many more localities (v.o.). Severe dry conditions in late winter and spring probably diminished available food and prevented larger numbers from acquiring fat reserves necessary to make the long overwater trip to the Arctic. Some over-summering birds in partial or full breeding plumage, rarely seen here in summer, may have developed that far but still lacked enough reserves to make the long trip. This anomalous climatic event may also be related to reports of higher numbers of Wandering Tattlers in June, and to the presence of five Bristle-thighed Curlews over-summering in Ki'i Unit, J.C.N.W.R. (MS, PD). One Bristle-thighed was reported at Makahuena Pt., K., June 13 (*vide* TS).

At least one, perhaps two, Laughing Gulls not in ad. breeding plumage remained at Ke.Po. N.W.R. through June (AE, KI) to July 6 (MN), and one was at Ki'i Unit, J.C.N.W.R., until July 21 (MS). A few Franklins' Gulls from this spring's big flight remained into summer. One in first-summer plumage was at Kona W.T.P. June 4 (AE et al.), and two-three in summer plumage remained at Ke.Po. N.W.R. until mid-June (AE, KI, MN et al.). One at Ki'i Unit, J.C.N.W.R., was last reported June 23 (MS).

The annual survey trip to the nesting colony of Guam Swiftlets in upper N. Halawa Valley June 25 found 30 occupied nests, 18 with an egg, 9 with a chick, and 3 with a setting adult (DW, DS, KI). Fifteen-twenty adults were seen flying in and out of the nesting tunnel. This is far more nests than have been counted in prior years, and indicates a minimum population of 60 birds. Farther down the valley a few swiftlets were observed foraging above high cliffs (DW).

#### 'ALALA TO JAVA SPARROW

No eggs were laid by 'Alala this year on Hawai'i I., either in the wild or in captivity. Pairs in the captive flock in large outdoor aviaries at Keauhou Bird Conservation Center went through courtship and some nest building, but stopped before laying any eggs, which has not happened before in the captive flock. Cause for the interruption has not been determined, but it may be related to environmental anomalies resulting from the extraordinary drought last winter and spring (CK).

Poor breeding this year by Palila (*Endangered*) on Mauna Kea and by the endemic forest birds at Hakalau Forest N.W.R. has also been attributed to effects of the severe spring drought. A very dry period with subsequent poor breeding by native passerines has happened with El Niño events in the past, and this may well be another such case.

Maui I. was less seriously affected. Nesting by passerines in the wild and by 'Alala in captivity was late, but generally successful. The captive 'Alala flock at Olinda produced 4 fertile eggs, which were incubated and hatched successfully at Keauhou Center. Unfortunately, two of the 'Alala hatched in 1997 and released last winter were found dead this year, leaving four of the 1997 class still extant in the wild at the end of the summer, among the 10 young birds released since 1993 (DB).

Puaiohi (*Endangered*) on Kaua'i also had a "dismal" breeding season this year (TS). Earlier clutches had higher failure rates, with few 2nd attempts and no 3rd attempts recorded. Only 18 active nests were found, compared to 79 last year, and by July 9 only one nest was still active with nestlings. Not later nesting attempts were expected (TS). Eight Puaiohi were detected in the Mohihi Trail area June 19 (DK). On Maui, one juv. Maui Parrotbill (*Endangered*) and 15-20 'Akohekohe (*Endangered*), including some juveniles, were found along the trail in Waikamoi Preserve June 20 (KI,

JJ). These rare species have been reported less frequently in the last 2-3 years.

A pair of White-rumped Shamas was watched bringing nest material and actively nest building inside Koko Crater in extreme s.e. O'ahu July 8 (MW). While hiking along Na Pali Trail to Hanakapiai Falls along the remote n.w. coast of Kaua'i July 4, Kuhn found Japanese Bush-Warblers, White-rumped Shamas, Greater Necklaced Laughing thrushes, and Hwamei along with more common landbird species, but no Red-billed Leiothrix. A pair of Red-crested Cardinals observed in spring in Koke'e Meadow, K., was feeding a recent fledgling there June 11 (TS). This is an unusually high elevation for this species, although a few individuals have been noted in recent years in Koke'e and along its ascending access road. Numerous Yellow-billed Cardinals, including some juveniles, were found around Manago Hotel and vicinity in Captain Cook, H. (PP). Java Sparrows were seen June 9-12 on the hospital grounds at Waimea, a far western locality for this species on the s. coast of Kaua'i (JD).

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