

# Hawaiian Islands Region

ROBERT L. PYLE

Record-breaking hot weather continued through June and July, but the frequent light rains of spring tapered off and normally dry conditions prevailed through the summer.

Abbreviations: H. (*Hawai'i I.*); K. (*Kaua'i*); M. (*Maui I.*); O. (*O'ahu I.*).

## Petrels to Sanderling

Two Hawaiian (Dark-rumped) Petrels (*Endangered*) were noted July 21 flying inland at dusk from Haena Beach on the n. shore of Kaua'i, and two again were seen there July 26. Other birds probably including this species were flying inland farther east both evenings (TS). Research in the past few years has demonstrated that a thriving population of Hawaiian Petrels is now nesting on Kaua'i. Four Bulwer Petrels were observed flying to and from Moku Manu islet off O'ahu June 3 (EV). Small numbers of Bulwers nest on various islets off O'ahu, but are not often seen flying during daylight. From a vantage point at Pa'akahi Pt. beyond Hanapepe airstrip, K., three Newell Shearwaters (*Threatened*) were seen July 20 flying over Hanapepe Bay and then inland. Many more were flying farther offshore, where they were estimated to outnumber the more common Wedge-tailed Shearwaters by 40:1 (TS). But 5 days later (July 25) and 17 km e. at Makauena Pt., Wedge-taileds outnumbered Newells by 50:1 (TS). These are 2 good spots to look for Newells and Wedge-taileds together in summer. A loose group of 17 Masked Boobies (seen from a boat) flying around Moku Manu islet June 3 (EV) provided an unusually high count for this species in the Main Hawaiian Is. A few Masked Boobies reside and nest on Moku Manu, but are rarely reported elsewhere in the Main islands. Larger numbers breed on the uninhabited Northwest Hawaiian Is.

The two Great Blue Herons remaining from last winter at Nuupia Ponds, O., were seen there occasionally through the summer and into fall (MR). The total

population of free-flying Nene (*Endangered*) on Kaua'i was estimated at 280 birds June 30, up from 197 a year earlier. These included 50 goslings known to have fledged successfully, and an additional 30 captive birds released into the wild (TT).

**SA** The Nene population on Kaua'i started from a small captive flock inadvertently freed during hurricane *Iwa* in 1982, with subsequent supplementary introductions of additional captive birds. These Nene mostly frequent lowland areas, suggesting that the species may prefer and fare better at lower elevations. But on Maui and Hawai'i, Nene inhabit primarily higher elevations, and have much poorer success raising young. Kaua'i is the only main island without mongoose, which may be a factor in the Nene remaining at low elevations there.

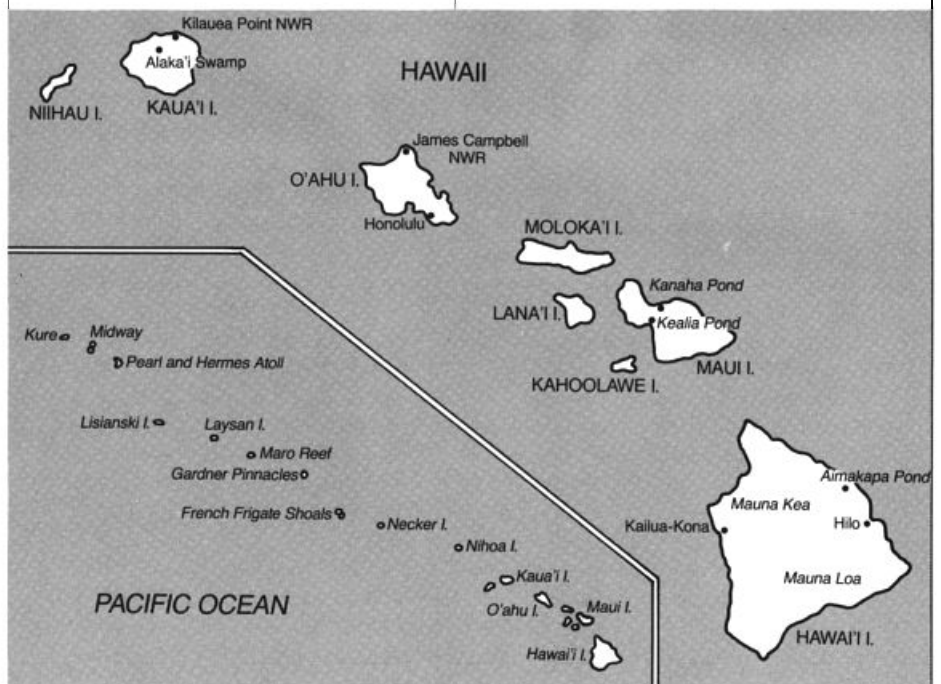
Up to 13 Koloa (Hawaiian Duck, *Endangered*) were observed at Kanaha Pond, M., this summer (FD, MN). One pair successfully fledged five young, the first known successful nesting on Maui in recent times (FD). It is not clear whether these birds may have moved in from O'ahu or another island, in which case they would probably have some partial Mallard ancestry, or whether some may be descendants from the group of 14 pure Koloa from the Captive Propagation Facility released several years ago in upper Keanae Valley, M. A large raptor, probably an Osprey, has been reported by citizens several times this sum-

mer at various reservoirs widely dispersed on Kaua'i (TT). Ospreys are accidental to casual visitors to Hawaii.

Reports of 200 Hawaiian Coots and 50 Hawaiian (Black-necked) Stilts, both *Endangered*, at Kuilima Water Treatment Ponds near Kahuku, O., in August are large counts, suggesting an influx of these birds this summer from the former ponds at Amorient Aquafarm, which has ceased operations (PD). Forty-four Hawaiian Stilt chicks were banded this summer at Kanaha Pond, M. (FD). Two stilts were watched July 11 at a small rainwater pond along a major highway in Kapolei (LS), a newly developing suburban area in s.w. O'ahu. Both were seen again Aug. 1, and four were there Aug. 6 (DM). Although *Endangered*, the stilts are adaptable and sometimes are not shy. Up to four Wandering Tattlers at Kealia Pond, M., June 20–July 3 (MN) may have been oversummering. During the 3rd week of July, Ruddy Turnstones began returning to Nuupia Ponds, O. (MR), and were also seen then at Kihei and Kanaha Pond, M., along with more tattlers and a Sanderling (MN).

## Swiftlets to Waxbills

A visit July 9 to the traditional nesting tunnel at the upper end of N. Halawa Valley, O., yielded a count of approximately 30 Guam Swiftlets (formerly called Uniform Swiftlet, Island Swiftlet, etc.). Fifteen nests were found in the tunnel, some with small nestlings and others with a single egg (EV). One pair of Alala (Hawaiian Crow, critically *Endangered*) in the captive flock at Maui Bird Conservation Center



(formerly Endangered Species Facility at Olinda, M.) laid 4 clutches and successfully produced five chicks this year, the 2nd productive year for this captive flock. One other chick from another pair died in infancy (RD). The wild crows on Hawai'i I., now estimated at 14 birds, were much less successful. Only one pair produced eggs, only one of which was fertile (RD). This chick was hatched successfully and reared at Keauhou Bird Conservation Center, H. Surveys for the potentially Endangered O'ahu Elepaio recorded 14 birds, including two fledglings, in upper North Halawa Valley July 9, and six birds, including one pair with an active nest, in South Halawa Valley July 26 (EV). Numbers of Elepaio throughout O'ahu remain far lower now than they were a few decades ago.

The team monitoring the *Endangered* Puaiohi in the Alaka'i Swamp, K., found 45 nests constructed this year, attributed to about 30 nesting pairs, a good high count. Pairs were generally successful in fledging young, but vulnerability to predation during the first few days after fledging remains a problem for chick survival (TS). Five Puaiohi eggs from the Alaka'i were sent to the Conservation Center on Hawai'i I. All five chicks hatched successfully and are doing well (TS). Unfortunately, no Kamao, Ou, or Nukupuu have been encountered this year. Neither Kamao nor Ou have been reported since before hurricane *Iniki* struck in 1992. In the Honolulu Zoo, a pair of Apapane laid eggs June 2 & 3. They hatched June 16, the first known successful breeding in captivity.

Three Red-crested Cardinals were observed July 13 at 3100 ft in Koke'e, K., an unusually high elevation for this species. A few Red-crested were seen in the same area at this time last year, perhaps a seasonal wandering (TS). Two ♂ Red Bishops were watched singing near each other at Nuupia Ponds, O., July 22 (MR). Escapes of this species have been noted around Honolulu in past decades, but not in recent years. Orange-cheeked Waxbills continue to be reported occasionally in the c. isthmus of Maui, where a group of nine were found July 3 at Kealia Pond (MN). Elsewhere, established Orange-cheekeds are known only from a few localized sites in windward O'ahu.

**Contributors:** Francis Benevides, Reg David, Peter Donaldson, Fern Duvall, Diane Marshall, Mike Nishimoto, Mark Rauzon, Tom Snetsinger, Lonnie Somer, Tom Telfer, Eric VanderWerf.

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

# West Indies Region

## ROBERT L. NORTON

Two hurricanes, *Bertha* and *Cesar*, passed through the Region this season, rather early and from unexpected source areas. *Bertha* passed north of the Virgin Islands and curled northwest toward the Bahamas in early June, while *Cesar* raced west along the north coast of South America in late July, eventually passing south of San Andres in the southwestern Caribbean. Precipitation measured at Cruz Bay, St. John, United States Virgin Islands, (100+ yr POR) was 11 percent below average for the period: -71 percent in June and +48 percent in July. The last six-month yield of -20 percent indicates a return to a drought cycle.

A mid-June report from the Turks and Caicos provided the only Antillean report (Bainton, Hallet, and White). What impressed the observers the most there was the "outstanding shorebird and wader habitats, including old salt ponds or salinas." Indeed, the Turks and Caicos contain a recognized wetland of international importance since becoming a signatory—the sole participant in the West Indies—to the RAMSAR Convention in 1990. Resident birders, ornithologists, conservationists, government agencies, and the concerned public greatly contributed to the data base (Aldridge, St. Leger, and Bradley) and ultimate success of the government's proposal in 1987. Many smaller satellite parks and

conservation areas have been approved in a larger plan to conserve wetlands.

Abbreviations: GT (*Grand Turk*); Provo (*Providenciales*); T&C (*Turks and Caicos*).

## Grebes to Terns

A Least Grebe nest and juveniles seen June 20 at Provo confirm breeding there. There were 11 Least Grebes at Whitby Salina and one at Cottage Pond June 21, both N. Caicos. Pied-billed Grebes were also present at Flamingo Pond and Cottage Pond, N. Caicos, June 21. White-tailed Tropicbirds at White Sands Beach (one) and North Cr. (three), GT June 7–18 and three at Long Cay and 12 near S. Dock, Provo, June 23, suggested breeding throughout these islands (Buden 1987). An imm. Brown Booby seen at Long Cay off GT June 18 provided only the 2nd report from that area since 1930 (Buden). Two Great Blue Herons seen June 22 at Flamingo Pond, N. Caicos, were probably not breeders. There is no evidence to date of nesting by this heron in the T&C. A Great Egret seen June 17 at GT, and 25 Snowy Egrets seen June 21 between Pumpkin Bluff and Flamingo Ponds, N. Caicos, appear to represent the first records there, respectively (Buden).

Greater Flamingos were seen June 17 at GT (18), at Provo June 20 (two), and at Flamingo Pond June 21 (1200) and Pumpkin Bluff Pond (>200), N. Caicos. These counts were very encouraging, especially on N. Caicos, where residents have been concerned that increased air traffic might prevent the National Bird from nesting there once again. The numbers seen at Pumpkin Bluff Pond suggest that some breeding may have been attempted. An estimated 6000–7000 old mounds

