



Robert L. Pyle | Peter Donaldson

The weather through mid-February was a mixture of wet and dry. Starting in late February, a blocking pattern over the northern Pacific resulted in persistent heavy rain, especially over Kaua'i and O'ahu. The weather was bad enough to restrict bird observations, especially in wetland areas. Some wetland areas became completely inaccessible, and roads were blocked because of flooding in some areas. This winter was notable for a complete lack of large gulls and for changes in the distribution of estrildid finches and francolins.

Abbreviations: H. (Hawai'i I.); HRBP (Hawaii Rare Bird Documentary Photograph; used with image catalog number from the HRBP file at Bishop Museum, Honolulu); Hakalau (Hakalau N.W.R., Hawai'i I.); Hanalei (Hanalei N.W.R., Kaua'i I.); Honouliuli (Honouliuli Unit of Pearl Harbor N.W.R., O'ahu I.); K. (Kaua'i I.); Kanaha (Kanaha Pond, Maui I.); Kealia (Kealia Pond N.W.R., Maui I.); Kii (Kii Unit of James Campbell N.W.R., O'ahu I.); Kokee (Koke'e S.P., Kaua'i I.); K.P. (Kilauea Pt. N.W.R., Kaua'i I.); M. (Maui I.); Midway (Midway Atoll N.W.R.); O. (O'ahu I.); Ohiapilo (Ohiapilo Pond, Moloka'i I.); Pouhala (Pouhala Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary, O'ahu I.); Waiawa (Waiawa Unit of Pearl Harbor N.W.R., O'ahu I.); Waikamoi (Waikamoi Preserve, Maui I.).

GEESE THROUGH TURKEY

A Greater White-fronted Goose remained at Kii Dec+ (m.ob.); another, first noted at Hanalei 13 Nov (BZ), remained in n. Kaua'i through Feb (m.ob.). Brant were unusually widespread, and these conspicuous birds were frequently reported. There were at least 2 individuals on Kaua'i I., with one bird at Hanalei 7 Dec and an emaciated bird delivered to the refuge staff there the same day (BZ). A Brant at Kii 21 Nov–18 Dec (m.ob.) may have moved to Pouhala, where one individual was observed 17 Dec+ (m.ob.). A Brant at Waiakea Pond, H. 10 Dec (RD) remained

there through at least 3 Feb (m.ob.). Finally, 2 Brant were observed on Moloka'i I. 12–19 Dec (ADY).

Numbers of ducks were higher than they have been for several years. The most numerous migrant ducks in the Region are Northern Shovelers and Northern Pintails. The high count for shovelers was 359 at Kealia 5 Jan (MN)—up from a peak of 238 last winter. The high count for pintail, 255 at Kealia 5 Jan (MN), was much higher than last winter's high count of only 75. Two Gadwalls at Ohiapilo since Nov were joined by 4 more 8 Feb (ADY). Gadwalls are rare in the Region, and 6 is an unusually high count. A female Cinnamon Teal spotted at Honouliuli 15 Feb (PD) was seen again 18 (MM) & 26 Feb (ph. BD). A female Garganey observed at Honouliuli 15 Feb (PD) was spotted again 18, 25 (MM), & 26 Feb (BD). A male Common (Eurasian Green-winged) Teal was observed at Kii 9 Feb (ph. KP); another was at Honouliuli 25 (MM) & 26 Feb (BD).

There were also good numbers of bay ducks. One good find, a female Redhead spotted in Kahuku, O. in late Oct, remained through the period at the Kuilima S.T.P., along with 3 Canvasbacks (m.ob.). Three Canvasbacks were seen regularly at Hanalei in Dec–mid-Feb (BZ, DL), with 4 reported there 15 Feb (JD). Ring-necked Ducks and Lesser Scaup were widespread, with peak counts of 9 Ring-neckeds at Honouliuli 11 Feb+ (m.ob.) and 28 Lessers in Kahuku, O. 19 Jan (MO). The rarest duck of the season was a female Hooded Merganser on O'ahu. The merganser,

first seen at Kii 17 Nov (KP), was seen at Kii 2 Feb (KP) and at Honouliuli 11 Feb (BD, RM, KP, MO).

Gray Francolins have been increasing their range on O'ahu I. They are now being seen regularly in Ewa and Kapolei and have been spotted in early Feb between Ewa and Wai- alua (RM). Three Black Francolins were also spotted between Ewa and Wailua 13 Feb (RM). Black Francolins have been rarely reported on O'ahu. Wild Turkeys are locally common on Hawai'i I., but a count of 100+ birds 26 Dec (H.F.T.) is unusually high.

ALBATROSSES THROUGH FALCONS

Black-footed Albatrosses are reported regularly near the main islands but unlike Laysans are seldom seen on land, so a Black-footed with Laysans at Barking Sands, K. 19 Dec (BZ) is notable. The bird had been banded, and the same individual was spotted on French Frigate Shoals 16 Jan (BZ). A light-morph Northern Fulmar was observed 16 Jan from Makapu'u Pt., O., by a birder familiar with the species in his native Scotland (BD). One Wedge-tailed Shearwater was spotted 28 Jan off Lai'e Pt., O. (BD). Wedge-taileds are rarely reported in Jan. Red-tailed Tropicbirds had not yet returned to a nesting colony in Waimanalo, O. 8 Feb but were back by 16 Feb (MW). A Great Blue Heron was observed at Lokoaka Pond, H. 31 Dec and 6 & 13 Jan (KI); the species is rare but regular in the Region. A white egret, larger than nearby Cattle Egrets, was spotted at Kii 16 (KP, DK), 22 (GS, JA), & 24 Dec (RM, RtM). Most of the observers thought the bird was probably a Great Egret, but the bird never allowed prolonged observation or photographs.

Ibises remained on Kaua'i, O'ahu, and Maui Dec+ (m.ob.), with single birds on Kaua'i and O'ahu and a high count of 6 on Maui in late Jan (MW). An ibis at Waimea, K. 10 Feb (JD) and one at Hanalei 13 Feb (GE) had red eyes and were thus identified as White-faced Ibis. The rest of the birds are also thought to be White-faced, the only species documented in the Region. An Osprey was observed Dec+ near Honouliuli (m.ob.). Single Peregrine Fal-

SA The Hawaii State Division of Forestry and Wildlife conducted a biological survey of Moku Manu, a small, rocky island off the ne. coast of O'ahu 28 Feb. Eric VanderWerf, of the United States Fish & Wildlife Service, helped survey the birds and reported the results. The ornithological highlight was a **Nazca Booby**, apparently paired with a Masked Booby, on a nest with 2 eggs. (It would be interesting to find out what the offspring will look like.) Other interesting observations included a pair of **Christmas Shearwaters** in a small cave. This species was found breeding on the island around 30 years ago, but there have been no recent records of birds on the island. One hundred sixty Red-footed Booby nests, 123 Brown Booby nests, and 33 Masked Booby nests were counted. Five years ago, Red-footeds had abandoned nesting on Moku Manu because a long drought had killed most of the vegetation suitable for Red-footed nest platforms. There were at least 22 Great Frigatebirds on Moku Manu, including 2 recently fledged imm. birds. At least 70 ad. Gray-backed Terns with 24 nests were counted. Many thousands of Sooty Terns and Brown Noddies were observed but not counted.

cons were spotted at Mokolea Pt., K. 10 Dec (BZ) and along Chain of Craters Rd., H. 12 Dec (KM) and 21 Feb (KH). Ospreys and Peregrines are rare but regular in the Region.

SHOREBIRDS THROUGH PASSERINES

One Killdeer remained at Kii and nearby aquaculture ponds Nov–11 Feb (m.ob.); another was seen at Kealia 25 Jan (MW). An American Avocet, the only one ever reported in the Region, remained at Kealia Dec+ (MN, MW). Bristle-thighed Curlew numbers continued unusually high over the winter, with several counts of more than 30 birds and a peak count of 46 birds 7 Dec (PD). A Whimbrel spotted at Kii 26 Nov (MO) lingered at the refuge Dec+ (m.ob.). A Marbled Godwit that remained at Kii Dec+ (m.ob.) represents only the 3rd record for the Region. A Red Knot, possibly the same bird first seen at Kii Oct 10 (PD), was observed 7 Dec+ (m.ob.). Red Knots are uncommon in the Region. There were good numbers of Dunlins around Pearl Harbor, O., with 6 observed at Pouhala

17 Dec (KP) and 19 Jan (PD). A Curlew Sandpiper made a brief appearance at Honouliuli 15 Feb (PD). Curlew Sandpipers are rare in the Region but have been reported more frequently in the past several years.

Glaucous-winged Gull has been one of the most frequently reported species in the Region, so it is unusual that none were reported this winter. Laughing Gulls were widespread Dec+ (m.ob.). A Bonaparte's Gull spotted at Honouliuli 11 Feb (BD, RM, MO, KP) stayed there Feb+ (m.ob.). A Caspian Tern spotted in Nu'upia Pond 8 Jan (PD, RM) lingered through at least 8 Feb (m.ob.).

Palila (*Endangered*) were reported regularly at Pu'u La'au, H. (H.F.T., DL), but it was troubling to hear reports of people on off-road vehicles roaring through the habitat of this rare bird (DL). Another troubling report came from Kokee, where no 'Iiwi were found during a day of birding 4 Feb (BD). We received no reports of any of the rare Maui forest birds this winter.

Some of the small introduced finches, in-

cluding African Silverbill and Nutmeg Mannikin, were reported to be unusually scarce over the winter in parts of nw. Hawai'i I., where they are usually abundant (DL, RD). On the other hand, a flock of 30 Black-rumped Waxbills 21 Feb (RD) is one of the highest counts ever for the Region.

Contributors: Jeff Albeso, James Bruch, Reg David, Jim Denny, Arleone Dibben-Young (ADY), Brendan Doe, Peter Donaldson, Tom Dove, Gil Ewing, Kumiko Hasegawa, Hawaii Forest & Trail (H.F.T.), Kamal Islam, Dave Kiehl, Dan Lindsay, Richard May, Rita May (RtM), Matt Medeiros, Kathleen Misajon, Aaron Nedig, Mike Nishimoto, Mike Ord, Kurt Pohlman, Ethan Shiinoki, Mike Silbernagle, Greg Smith, Forest & Kim Starr, Eric VanderWerf, Michael Walther, Brenda Zaun. 🐦

Robert L. Pyle, 1314 Kalakaua Avenue, #1010, Honolulu, Hawaii 96826, (rlpyle@hawaii.rr.com);

Peter Donaldson, 2375 Ahakapu Street, Pearl City, Hawaii 96782, (pdnldsn.bird@mac.com)

Scoot on over to the VIREO web site:

www.acnatsci.org/vireo

30,000 photos on line

Lecture Slides
and JPEG's



© Garth McElroy/VIREO