



Field Guides Tour Report

Hawaii 2017

Mar 30, 2017 to Apr 8, 2017

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The breathtaking Na Pali Coast as seen from Koke'e State Park on Kaua'i. (Photo by guide Doug Gochfeld)

When many people hear the name Hawaii, their minds go right to white sand beaches: surfers riding the crests of beautiful blue waves, tropical drinks under palm trees, and enjoying *luaus* complete with lei-wearing hula dancers. However, these volcanic rocks poking out of the middle of Pacific Ocean are much more than the thin layer of beach and rock that rings most of the islands. The natural ecosystems on these relatively young (in geological terms) landmasses are evolutionary masterpieces, and we were fortunate to be able to explore a really representative cross section of the natural wonders that the islands have to offer.

As is the case with most visitors to Hawaii, we started off on Oahu, since the air hub for the island is the Honolulu airport. From our base in Waikiki, we explored a good portion of the island during our full day there, starting off at Kapiolani Park right across the street, and immediately picking up a bunch of established introduced species under a canopy of calling and courting White Terns. There were quite a few Common Waxbills around, along with abundant Red-vented Bulbuls, a pair of very affectionate Japanese White-eyes, our first Yellow-fronted Canaries of the trip, Rose-ringed Parakeets, and a really good number (around 70!) of striking Java Sparrows. After a delicious breakfast we made our way to the Aiea Loop Trail, where our quarry was the two remaining Oahu endemic passerines: Oahu Amakihi, and Oahu Elepaio. The former is part of the large family of Hawaiian Honeycreepers that are thought to have descended from some wayward Rosefinches from Asia, while the latter is part of the old world Monarch Flycatcher family. We had great luck with both, even finding an Elepaio nest being tended by both adults! From here, we navigated around the north side of the island, passing some of the famous surfing beaches of Oahu, complete with their impressive rolling surf. We made our way to the Kahuku area, where the shrimp ponds produced our first views of Hawaiian Coot and the endemic subspecies of Common Gallinule and Black-necked Stilt. After enjoying those waterbirds, we headed to the Kahuku golf course, which is one of the best places to see Bristle-thighed Curlew in Hawaii. It didn't disappoint, as we saw almost 20 scattered around the area, and a few more in flight in the distance. One of these was sporting a field-readable flag, and it turned out to be a bird banded in the same area on Halloween in 2013. An ocean-viewing overlook here also produced a Brown Noddy, a Wandering Tattler, our first Red-footed and Brown boobies, and a fantastic experience with a Laysan Albatross that made a couple of great flybys, one of which was right over the beach in front of our faces. The drive back to Waikiki produced some good views of Chestnut Munia, and then concluded with another great meal upon our arrival.

The next day we headed over to the Honolulu airport after breakfast for our flight to Kaua'i. We arrived around noon, met our legendary on-island guide David Kuhn, and headed to Kilauea. Immediately upon our arrival to Kilauea Point we were surrounded by seabirds coasting on the updrafts created by

the trade winds interacting with the cliffs. Red-tailed Tropicbird was the first bird many people saw there, and that species put on a fantastic show, with up to three participating in courtship flights together. Red-footed Booby was the dominant species here, with close to 1500 counted, most of which were on arboreal nests on the cliffside to the east. We got to watch these graceful flyers trying their hand at harvesting vegetation from the cliffs, which requires them to become terrestrial and shed their "graceful" tag. Great Frigatebirds were patrolling the skies looking for easy meals, and Laysan Albatrosses were bussing by below eye level at point-blank range. We also saw a couple of White-tailed Tropicbirds here, our first Nenes (Hawaiian Geese) of the trip, and had an unexpected Black-footed Albatross putting on a show off the point. We left Kilauea Point and then headed for one last stop in Princeville, where we saw some Laysan Albatrosses, including some of their poodle-like youngsters, lounging on people's front lawns. There were also dozens of Nene, formerly on the brink of extinction, on the nearby golf course. Who said you can't have great birding on a travel day?!

The next couple of days saw us exploring Kaua'i, including visits to Hanalei NWR (Hawaiian Ducks, Eurasian Wigeons, Chinese Hwamei), and the Salt Ponds on the western side of the island (Hawaiian Monk Seal!). We also took a boat ride off the western side of the island, which brought us up close and personal with several of the Forster's form of Brown Booby, plenty of Red-footed Boobies, Black Noddies, and Wedge-tailed Shearwaters, cool flying fish, and gave us a couple of Humpback Whale encounters. The cherry on top of the boat ride was our sighting of two Hawaii-endemic Newell's Shearwaters, one of which gave phenomenal looks as it did loop-de-loops right in front of the boat. Our visit to the Alakai Swamp, up in the mountains off the Nā Pali coast, was a great exploration of a mostly old-growth native Kaua'ian forest, though it was disconcerting how few native birds were there. David was, as ever, a fount of information about the local flora, and we did connect well with Anianiau, Hawaii Amakihi, Apapane, and even I'iwi for some. On the way out we got a great flyby of a Pueo, the Hawaiian Short-eared Owl. We then got to see some amazing scenic views of the Nā Pali coast and the vast interior Kaua'i forest from the overlooks in Koke'e State Park, and some of us finished up our final evening on Kaua'i with a dusk vigil at the Wailua River Mouth, seeing a few Wedge-tailed Shearwaters and a bunch of northbound flocks of Red-footed Boobies.

Day five saw us traveling to Hawaii, the eponymously named Big Island. We spent midday in Hilo, having lunch and then heading over to Waiakea Pond where we had our first tastes of Yellow-billed Cardinal and Saffron Finch, an easy-to-see Mongoose, a few Nene, and a couple of species of lingering boreal migrant waterfowl: Ring-necked Duck and Canada Goose. We then drove towards our lodging in the town of Volcano, keeping a vigilant eye out for Hawaiian Hawk (the I'o) along the way. This paid off, as we found one about halfway there, and were able to get everyone out to enjoy the first of what would end up being several views of this Big Island endemic. After checking into Kilauea Lodge (and seeing a couple of additional I'o flying over the grounds), we made our way into Volcanoes National Park. We visited the Jagger Museum overlooking the always smoking Kilauea Caldera, which even had White-tailed Tropicbirds (which nest on the walls of the crater) circling around down inside the smoke! From there we made our way down to Chain-of-Craters Road (with some getting their first excellent views of Kalij Pheasant along the way). This is a winding road that starts up high on the flank of Kilauea and terminates at the cliffs overlooking the Pacific Ocean. The area is pockmarked with many fairly recent lava flows, and you can see the very first plant colonizers starting to take hold here, a great window into how these islands of molten rock started their march to the beautiful natural wonderlands that they became. At the end of the road we got excellent views of many of the local melanogenys subspecies of Black Noddy, seeing their characteristic white tails and orange feet really well. After experiencing the sunset and Noddies on Chain-of-Craters, we made our way back to Kilauea Lodge for another excellent dinner of various foods imported from all over the world.

There wasn't even a hint of morning light yet when we were awakened by the pre-dawn chorus of Apapanes tinkling through the forest around the lodge. They serenaded us through our morning walk and were still singing and flying in flocks around the blooming Ohia trees when we departed the lodge after breakfast to make another run into the National Park. After visiting the fascinating Thurston lava tube (where we saw our first Omaos, the endemic Hawaiian thrush), we made our way over to Kipuka pua'ulu, also known as Bird Park. Here, in a very short time we were able to get good looks at Red-billed Leiothrix and Japanese Bush-Warbler, a couple of introduced species that are much easier to hear than to see. We also got a peek at the Rapid Ohia Death in the flesh (or in the bark), which is a fungal pathogen that has ravaged the native Ohia trees around Mauna Loa and Kilauea on the Big Island, killing hundreds of thousands of these really important endemic trees across at least 50,000 acres. The disease is currently mostly restricted to a portion of the Big Island, thankfully, and there are efforts underway to contain it. After this contrast between the good and the grim, we then headed to the Kona coast via the new, well-paved Saddle Road that cuts through the middle of the island between the high volcanoes of Mauna Kea and Mauna Loa. We saw a couple of additional Hawaiian Hawks along the way, and we had a very productive stop where we picked up our only Red Avadavats of the tour, as well as some African Silverbills. As we neared the village of Waikoloa, we started to keep an eye out for the Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse that sometimes frequent the area, and lo and behold, as we approached the first intersection in town we saw one flying parallel to us just off the road. We drove alongside it for a bit, watched it land, and then maneuvered to try and see some on the ground. We ended up seeing several flying around, and a couple that gave excellent views on the ground. There were also Gray Francolin, Wild Turkey, African Silverbills, Saffron Finches, and a Java Sparrow here. We finished our whirlwind of a day at Waikoloa Village, which would be our home base for the remainder of the tour.

For the final two days we were under the able guidance of Hawaii Forest & Trails, and we started off day seven with a nice picnic breakfast before heading to what is undoubtedly one of the most magical locations on the Hawaiian Islands: Hakalau National Wildlife Refuge. Created as the first NWR specifically aimed at forest-dwelling species, Hakalau is a wonderland filled with all the remaining species of Hawaiian endemic passerines. We were surrounded by I'iwi calls as soon as we arrived, and we didn't stop hearing them until we left. Apapanes were flying all over the canopy, Omaos were common and cooperative, and Hawaii Amakihi were abundant throughout. Hakalau also gave us the Big Island's most range-restricted endemics: Hawaii Creeper, Hawaii Akepa, and Akiapolaau. One Akepa pair was visiting a nest cavity, and we got to watch them, the Creepers, and the "Aki" all using their unique bills to fill the different foraging niches that they evolved into. It was a truly fantastic day, made even better by a couple of Hawaiian Hawks (including one on a nest!), and some great views of a few more Pueos engaged in their late-afternoon foraging over the grasslands on the way out. Our final birding day consisted of a trip to the dry forest on the leeward side of Mauna Kea (Hakalau is on the windward, and therefore wet, side), where we visited Pu'u La'au to target the most finch-like of all the extant Hawaiian Honeycreepers, the Palila. There are fewer than two thousand of these left on the planet, and they are all in this corridor of dry forest on the dry slope of Mauna Kea. We had great success with the species, and we ended up seeing at least five individuals, several of them very well. After our victory here, we headed to Kipuka 21 for lunch and a last experience with a couple of the wet forest birds we encountered the day before. We had some looks at I'iwi, and a really friendly Omao here, before we blasted back towards the western side of the island once more. Our final birding stop of the tour was the Kealakehe Wastewater Treatment Plant, which hosts several breeding pairs of Hawaiian Stilts, many Hawaiian Coots, and often a bunch of other migrant and wintering waterbirds. The other dominant species here was Pacific Golden-Plovers, of which there were dozens, many of them in full breeding regalia. Shorebirds included a dozen Wandering Tattlers, many Ruddy Turnstones, our first Sanderlings, and a mega bonus in the form of a vagrant Marsh Sandpiper that wintered at this site. This old world shorebird species was balanced out by three each of White-faced Ibis and Least Tern, both rarities from the east. A Bufflehead and Cackling Goose rounded out the new birds for the tour at this site, and we all headed back for a final dinner after a fantastic final day in the field.

This year's tour was a great success, made all the more so by this cohesive, fun, and friendly group, and Dan and I wish to thank all of you for your wonderful companionship in this adventure. Huge thanks also to Caroline Lewis, who managed this tour to perfection, allowing everything to run as smoothly as could be, to David Kuhn for his expertise on everything Kaua'i, and to Gary, Taj, and Mark of Hawaii Forest & Trails for their excellent

guidance around some of Mauna Kea's most sensitive and rewarding spots. We had an amazing time on this tour, and we genuinely hope to see you all on a future avian voyage.

--Doug

KEYS FOR THIS LIST

One of the following keys may be shown in brackets for individual species as appropriate: * = heard only, I = introduced, E = endemic, N = nesting, a = austral migrant, b = boreal migrant

BIRDS

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

ACKLING GOOSE (MINIMA) (*Branta hutchinsii minima*) – One of these tiny, dark-breasted, Cackling Geese had been wintering at Kealakehe WTP, and was hanging out with the closest relatives it could find, a couple of domestic/barnyard ducks. [b]

CANADA GOOSE (*Branta canadensis*) – A couple of these at our first birding stop in Hilo at Waiakea Pond were a mild surprise, though these had apparently been wintering at this location. [b]

HAWAIIAN GOOSE (*Branta sandvicensis*) – Nene! One of the most famous endangered birds in the USA, it has been brought back from the brink of extinction over the last few decades, and we saw good numbers of these around Kaua'i and a handful on the big island, including in the uplands at Hakalau. [E]

EURASIAN WIGEON (*Anas penelope*) – Two males were a big surprise at the overlook over Hanalei NWR on Kaua'i. While very distant, they were in good light, and eventually woke up and swam around and were joined by a pair of American Wigeon for comparison. [b]

AMERICAN WIGEON (*Anas americana*) – A pair with the aforementioned Eurasian Wigeon at Hanalei. These were in one of the cells that is fairly distant from any of the easily accessible pools, and this was the only vantage point where they would have been visible from a publicly accessible location. [b]

MALLARD (*Anas platyrhynchos*) – A handful of these were on Oahu, and then again in Hilo.

HAWAIIAN DUCK (*Anas wyvilliana*) – Most of the ones on Kaua'i are thankfully still quite pure, though this species has been essentially hybridized out at all the other main islands, and there don't seem to be any solidly pure ones left on Oahu or Hawai'i. [E]

NORTHERN SHOVELER (*Anas clypeata*) – A female was swimming around with the Wigeon at Hanalei. [b]

RING-NECKED DUCK (*Aythya collaris*) – A late wintering female-type at Waiakea Pond in Hilo was a nice pickup, as most of these should be substantially farther north at this time of year. [b]

BUFFLEHEAD (*Bucephala albeola*) – Another surprise, this female/immature-type that had been wintering at Kealakehe WTP stuck around long enough for us to see it on the final day of the tour. [b]

Odontophoridae (New World Quail)

CALIFORNIA QUAIL (*Callipepla californica*) – We had a few of these off the Old Saddle Road around the Palila site on the final day, but the most reliable place by far was Mauna Kea Park along the Saddle Road, where we connected with this species on three different days. [I]

Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)

CHUKAR (*Alectoris chukar*) – This is a fairly habitat-specific species on the Big Island, and there are a couple of spots along the Saddle Road where it is reliable. We saw it at one such spot on the last two days of the tour. [I]

ERCKEL'S FRANCOLIN (*Pternistis erckelii*) – The most common and widespread of the Francolins in Hawaii, we had plenty of these on both Kaua'i and Hawai'i. [I]

BLACK FRANCOLIN (*Francolinus francolinus*) – Some nice views and really nice audio experiences with this species at various points along the old saddle Road and west of there on the Big Island. [I]

GRAY FRANCOLIN (*Francolinus pondicerianus*) – This Francolin is fairly sparse in Hawaii, and we were fortunate to pick it up on morning one in Waikiki, as well as at Waikoloa on the Big Island, where it was with a Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse and a Wild Turkey, making for an interesting combination of game birds from far flung parts of the world. [I]

RED JUNGLEFOWL (*Gallus gallus*) – Wild types are widespread and abundant on Kaua'i, and are also found around Kilauea Caldera and Mauna Loa. They don't seem to be present in any substantial numbers on the upper slopes of Mauna Kea or around Kona though. [I]

RING-NECKED PHEASANT (*Phasianus colchicus*) – We had the typical subspecies on all three islands, including the the golf course on northern Oahu. They were most common in our travels around the Big Island. [I]

RING-NECKED PHEASANT (GREEN) (*Phasianus colchicus versicolor*) – We had one of these striking-looking dark individuals on our final day, running alongside the road as we drove the Saddle Road towards the Palila site. [I]

KALIJ PHEASANT (*Lophura leucomelanos*) – Common around Volcanoes NP, and we even had a male up at Hakalau. [I]

WILD TURKEY (*Meleagris gallopavo*) – Several places around the Big Island, mostly on the lower slopes of Mauna Kea. [I]

Diomedidae (Albatrosses)

LAYSAN ALBATROSS (*Phoebastria immutabilis*) – A couple of exciting flybys started us off for the species at the Kahuku golf course. Then we got some more extended and repeated views at Kilauea Point and Princeville, including a handful of adults sitting on the ground, and a couple of fluffy and flightless youngsters. It really is amazing to see how ungainly they are on land given their incomparable grace when in flight.

BLACK-FOOTED ALBATROSS (*Phoebastria nigripes*) – A surprise at Kilauea Point, we had it flying loops around the island off shore of the lighthouse for a couple of minutes, giving those present some real good views.

Procellariidae (Shearwaters and Petrels)

WEDGE-TAILED SHEARWATER (*Ardenna pacifica*) – The common Procellariid on our boat trip off Kaua'i, we saw several light morphs (the common version) quite well. We then had a few more in our evening seawatching at the Wailua River Mouth.

NEWELL'S SHEARWATER (*Puffinus newelli*) – Two of these on our boat trip off Kaua'i, including one that gave some exceptionally good views as it flew loops in front of the boat, including some high arcing, very atypical for this genus of shearwaters. This Hawaiian endemic was the highlight of

the pelagic for many. [E]

Phaethontidae (Tropicbirds)

WHITE-TAILED TROPICBIRD (*Phaethon lepturus*) – The go-to Tropicbird on most of the islands, where they nest on inland cliffs, including inside the Kilauea Caldera. We also saw a couple out at Kilauea Point, the only place we go where Red-tailed is the dominant Tropicbird.

RED-TAILED TROPICBIRD (*Phaethon rubricauda*) – Wow! What a great show we got from these during our magical afternoon at Kilauea Point on Kaua'i. We had a bunch of these birds, including several in tandem courtship/display flights, and as close as you could want.

Fregatidae (Frigatebirds)

GREAT FRIGATEBIRD (*Fregata minor*) – Several putting on a reasonably good show at Kilauea Point, and then a couple more at various other places around Kaua'i, including at the Kikiaola Boat Launch where we boarded our boat.

Sulidae (Boobies and Gannets)

BROWN BOOBY (*Sula leucogaster*) – One flying off shore at the Kahuku golf course on Oahu, and then several great views during our boat trip off Kaua'i, including a group of 12-15 individuals.

RED-FOOTED BOOBY (*Sula sula*) – Encountered frequently from shoreline vantage points on Kaua'i, though our first views was looking off shore at Kahuku golf course on Oahu. Our best views were of course at Kilauea Point, but we also had some real nice ones on our pelagic trip, including one that came in right overhead and that we could've almost reached out and grabbed as it floated over the boat.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubulcus ibis*) – Scattered throughout the islands, the species was least evident during our time on the Big Island, where we didn't pick it up until the very last evening.

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) – An amazingly widespread bird around the globe, and Hawaii hasn't escaped the clutches of its residence.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

WHITE-FACED IBIS (*Plegadis chihi*) – A rare addition at the Kealakehe WTP on the last evening, three of these vagrants had been wintering at this location, and we were fortunate that they were in parts of the compound that were close to our viewing area. We had one very boldly-marked adult, and a couple of younger birds that weren't showing much in the way of breeding plumage.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

HAWAIIAN HAWK (*Buteo solitarius*) – We had good luck with the I'o (the Hawaiian name) this year. We had at least three on the way to and at Volcano on our first day on the Big Island, then we had a pair circling in the distance over the foothills of Mauna Kea at the scenic pull-off on the Saddle Road, and then we had multiples at Hakalau, including one bird sitting on a nest, and a light morph perched near the entrance. [E]

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

COMMON GALLINULE (HAWAIIAN) (*Gallinula galeata sandvicensis*) – We had this in the northern section of Oahu and then in good numbers at Hanalei on Kaua'i. [E]

HAWAIIAN COOT (*Fulica alai*) – All three islands, essentially anywhere with appropriate wetland habitat. This endemic coot has a very extensive forehead shield, coming up over the face and sometimes extending about halfway back on the crown. [E]

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

BLACK-NECKED STILT (HAWAIIAN) (*Himantopus mexicanus knudseni*) – At the shrimp ponds on Oahu, at Hanalei on Kaua'i, and then a bunch at Kealakehe on the final evening, including several on nests, at least one of which contained two eggs. [E]

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

PACIFIC GOLDEN-PLOVER (*Pluvialis fulva*) – Of species that were encountered on every single day of the tour, this was the only one that is naturally occurring on the Hawaiian Islands. It's a great treat to see them so much and so well. By the time the tour ended, many of these birds were in full breeding garb, and they will no doubt be back on their arctic breeding grounds in the not-too-distant future. [b]

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

BRISTLE-THIGHED CURLEW (*Numenius tahitiensis*) – One of the rarest long-distance migrant shorebirds in the world, the population of ten thousand breeds in western Alaska and migrates to islands in the central and south Pacific and Oceania for the winter. We encountered up to 25 at the northern tip of Oahu on our first day birding, including one with a back flag on the name with the code "87". [b]

RUDDY TURNSTONE (*Arenaria interpres*) – Common in appropriate habitat which, for this omnivore, is not very specific. We had these on lawns and seaside rocks on Oahu, salt ponds and sandy beaches on Kaua'i, and the wastewater treatment plant on the Big Island. [b]

SANDERLING (*Calidris alba*) – We saved this one until the last afternoon at Kealakehe WTP, where we had ten or so. [b]

WANDERING TATTLER (*Tringa incana*) – Our first was on day 1 on the beach at the Kahuku golf course, and then we had a couple of other singles along the way before the final day when we had about a dozen in the Kealakehe Wastewater Treatment Plant. [b]

MARSH SANDPIPER (*Tringa stagnatilis*) – A great exclamation point on the tour was the Marsh Sandpiper that wintered at Kealakehe Wastewater Treatment Plant, and remained through to the last day of the tour, when we were able to get over to it. This was only the 3rd record of the species for Hawaii, and we were able to watch this delicate, dagger-billed, tringa in fairly good viewing conditions with good scope views for all. [b]

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

BROWN NODDY (*Anous stolidus*) – We had a flyby at the Kahuku golf course but then a Laysan Albatross flew behind it heading the other way and distracted us all from what would end up being our only Brown Noddy of the trip.

BLACK NODDY (MELANOGENYS) (*Anous minutus melanogenys*) – We had excellent views of these both on the boat trip off Kaua'i, and along their nesting cliffs at Chain-of-Craters Road. In addition to great repeated flight views where the uniquely white tail of this subspecies was easily visible, we saw them sitting the water on the boat trip, and standing on ledges at Chain-of-Craters. The ones standing on ledges also showed off their orange legs and feet, another distinctive mark of this subspecies.

WHITE TERN (*Gygis alba*) – These ethereal terns were floating all over the area of our hotel in Waikiki, putting on a splendid show.

LEAST TERN (*Sternula antillarum*) – Another nice surprise at the Kealakehe Wastewater Treatment Plant were 3 of these local rarities that were initially perched, but then took off and flew around calling during the rest of our visit.

Pteroclididae (Sandgrouse)

CHESTNUT-BELLIED SANDGROUSE (*Pterocles exustus*) – One of the more unique introduced species on the Hawaiian Islands. The native distribution of this species is across central and northern Africa, and southern Asia (from Iran to India). We had some exciting flight views of and then saw a handful on the ground at close range. This handsome species is the only representative of the order Pteroclidiformes on the Hawaiian Islands. [I]

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) – Yup. [I]

SPOTTED DOVE (*Streptopelia chinensis*) – An introduction, as all doves here are. One of the most widespread species on the islands. [II]

ZEBRA DOVE (*Geopelia striata*) – Like Spotted Dove, all over the place and abundant. Not quite so tolerant of as many habitats as Spotted, but still plenty widespread. [I]

MOURNING DOVE (*Zenaida macroura*) – A couple around our final hotel on the Big Island, and then one perched on the way to our final morning's birding. [I]

Strigidae (Owls)

SHORT-EARED OWL (HAWAIIAN) (*Asio flammeus sandwichensis*) – A great flyby of a hooting bird through the mountains at the Alakai Swamp, and then a bunch of them, including a couple of nice perched birds, through the grasslands on the lower slopes of Mauna Kea during our last couple of days on the Big Island.

Psittaculidae (Old World Parrots)

ROSE-RINGED PARAKEET (*Psittacula krameri*) – Common on Oahu, and also at several places around Kaua'i. [I]

Monarchidae (Monarch Flycatchers)

HAWAII ELEPAIO (MAUNA KEA) (*Chasiempis sandwichensis bryani*) – We had this specialized dry forest taxon of Hawaii Elepaio on the final morning at Pu'u La'au, in the company of Palilas. [E]

HAWAII ELEPAIO (HILO COAST) (*Chasiempis sandwichensis ridgwayi*) – We saw several cooperative ones at Hakalau Forest, and then had one calling the next day at Kipuka 21. [E]

KAUAI ELEPAIO (*Chasiempis sclateri*) – Excellent views of these confiding endemic monarch flycatchers at the Alakai Swamp. [E]

OAHU ELEPAIO (*Chasiempis ibidis*) – These were playing difficult to get for a while, and then we realized why when we found an occupied nest, around which they were trying to be as inconspicuous as possible. We then had good views as we watched one adult come and go, feeding the one on the nest. [E]

Alaudidae (Larks)

EURASIAN SKYLARK (*Alauda arvensis*) – Many on Hawaii throughout the grasslands on the lower slopes of Mauna Kea. [II]

Pycnonotidae (Bulbuls)

RED-VENTED BULBUL (*Pycnonotus cafer*) – Abundant on Oahu. Can be found in the most urban of cityscapes, and in the natural forested habitats up in the mountains. [I]

RED-WHISKERED BULBUL (*Pycnonotus jocosus*) – Like Red-whiskered, we only see them on Oahu, but unlike Red-whiskered they are actually fairly sparse, and we only saw a handful in our day and a half on the island. [I]

Cettiidae (Bush-Warblers and Allies)

JAPANESE BUSH-WARBLER (*Horornis diphone*) – Easy to see, but as always difficult to see, we finally got a good look at one of these introduced Bush-Warblers singing its heart out at Kipuka Pua'ulu near Volcano. [I]

Zosteropidae (White-eyes, Yuhinas, and Allies)

JAPANESE WHITE-EYE (*Zosterops japonicus*) – Abundant everywhere where there are trees. One interesting (and adorable) observation was a pair allopreening in the park across the street from our hotel in Waikiki. [I]

Leiotherichidae (Laughingthrushes and Allies)

CHINESE HWAMEI (*Garrulax canorus*) – Our best view of this was at Hanalei on Kaua'i, where one sat out in the sunlight belting out its loud and complex song. [I]

RED-BILLED LEIOTHRIX (*Leiothrix lutea*) – Fairly widespread on all three islands. Heard in many forested areas, and seen well in a few places as well, with most people getting looks at more cooperative individuals at Aiea on Oahu and Kipuka Pua'ulu on Hawaii. [I]

Muscicapidae (Old World Flycatchers)

WHITE-RUMPED SHAMA (*Copsychus malabaricus*) – This beautiful introduction from south Asia was most abundant along the Aiea Loop Trail on Oahu, but we also had very good views (including of an immature) in Princeville on Kaua'i. [I]

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

OMAO (*Myadestes obscurus*) – We had this endemic Thrush three days in a row on the Big Island. A few of us saw individuals at the Thurston Lava Tube, and then everyone saw them extremely well at Hakalau and/or Kipuka 21. [E]

Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers)

NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD (*Mimus polyglottos*) – We had a brief look at one on Kaua'i, and then there were a couple just above the hunter check station on the way up to Pu'u La'au. [I]

Sturnidae (Starlings)

COMMON MYNA (*Acridotheres tristis*) – Not many in the grasslands along the Saddle Road, where they probably lack the cavities they require for nesting. Other than that, everywhere and everyday. [I]

Thraupidae (Tanagers and Allies)

RED-CRESTED CARDINAL (*Paroaria coronata*) – This is the species of South American cardinal that we see on Oahu and Kaua'i. Because of its striking plumage and the excellent views we had of it, it was also one of the birds of the trip for Frank, Al, Maureen, and Jan. [I]

YELLOW-BILLED CARDINAL (*Paroaria capitata*) – We had good looks in Hilo shortly after our arrival on the Big Island. We then had a slew of them at Kealakehe WTP on the final afternoon. [I]

SAFFRON FINCH (*Sicalis flaveola*) – This striking orange-faced finch is widespread and common on the Big Island. [II]

Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)

NORTHERN CARDINAL (*Cardinalis cardinalis*) – This familiar denizen of North America is spread throughout the Big Island, even in dense forest, where it is stealthier than it seems to be in its native range. [I]

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

WESTERN MEADOWLARK (*Sturnella neglecta*) – We saw some of these around the northern part of Kaua'i, as well as outside of our hotel on Kaua'i. [I]

Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies)

PALILA (*Loxioides bailleui*) – Our final morning was dedicated specifically to finding this gem of the remaining endemic birds on the Big Island, and we were highly successful. After one fairly cooperative male, we came upon another group of 4 individuals, a couple of which perched out in the open for prolonged periods of time. It was a really great experience to cap off our endemic fix! [E]

APAPANE (*Himatione sanguinea*) – This is perhaps doing the best of all the endemic passerines in Hawaii, apparently in large part due to a resistance to avian malaria. We saw numbers of them on Kaua'i and in both regions of our Big Island exploration. We were especially inundated with their song at and around Volcano, where the pre-sunrise chorus of them was absolutely astounding (and heartening!). [E]

IIWI (*Drepanis coccinea*) – Boom. Voted the bird of the trip by a landslide, and with good reason. This charismatic honeycreeper, with its bright orange-red sickle-shaped bill is the iconic songbird of Hawaiian forests, and Hakalau NWR is THE best place to see (and hear!) them in great numbers. Despite them being the most common bird for us at Hakalau (probably around 100 individuals), we never for a second tired of their antics. [E]

AKIAPOLAAU (*Hemignathus wilsoni*) – We finally connected with an "Aki" after a long dry spell during most of our time at Hakalau. When we did finally connect with it, boy did we have a great experience. After fleeting views and some waiting around, Gary finally found one in the forest, and we were afforded a couple of minutes of watching it do its thing with that crazy beak of its. This amazing example of adaptive radiation was tied for second place in the voting for bird of the trip. [E]

ANANIAU (*Magumma parva*) – These beady-eyed, bright yellow endemics fill a similar niche to many of our North American wood-warblers, as it moves through the mid-story and canopy gleaning insects from under leaves and branches, as opposed to utilizing nectar or picking under bark like most of the other remaining endemic passerines. We had good views of a couple at Alakai Swamp. [E]

HAWAII AMAKIHI (*Chlorodrepanis virens*) – The Hawaii version of Amakihi seems to be doing the best of all the Amakihis. They were truly abundant at both Hakalau and Pu'u La'au, which was great to see. This species is doing well at low elevations, perhaps indicating a budding resistance to the avian malaria that has ravaged so many of Hawaii's other endemics. [E]

OAHU AMAKIHI (*Chlorodrepanis flava*) – We had a handful on our walk around the Aiea Heights Loop Trail, and it was the first endemic passerine that we connected with. [E]

KAUAI AMAKIHI (*Chlorodrepanis stejnegeri*) – We had a much better time with this species than they did last year, and we actually got some really nice looks at these along the trail through the Alakai Swamp. [E]

HAWAII CREEPER (*Loxops mana*) – Some really good up-close looks at a couple of these displaying their characteristic treecreeper-like behavior at Hakalau. [E]

AKEKEE (*Loxops caeruleirostris*) – This Kaua'i endemic has become really difficult, to the point where we don't really expect it any more. We were fortunate to even be in the presence of one, despite the fact that it was a very frustrating bird and most people didn't get any kind of a look. [E]

HAWAII AKEPA (*Loxops coccineus*) – Another Hakalau specialty, this one has evolved a laterally asymmetrical bill in order to get into leaf and flower buds of Ohia trees in search of arthropods. We got to watch a pair working the canopy in this way near their nest, and then we ran into several others on the rest of the trek through this great forest. [E]

HOUSE FINCH (*Haemorhous mexicanus*) – All over the place, with a handful of yellow and orange variations as well. [I]

YELLOW-FRONTED CANARY (*Serinus mozambicus*) – Great views at Kapiolani Park in Waikiki, and then some more at various places on the Big Island. [I]

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*) – Indeed. [II]

Estrildidae (Waxbills and Allies)

COMMON WAXBILL (*Estrilda astrild*) – We had these all over Oahu, where they are the common Estrildid finch. [I]

RED AVADAVAT (*Amandava amandava*) – A good experience with these as they stealthily fed on grasses along the road between the Saddle Road and Kona. We eventually counted at least 18 individuals at this spot, and most people even got good scope views. [I]

AFRICAN SILVERBILL (*Euodice cantans*) – We first encountered them at the Avadavat spot, and then ran into them at several places over the next couple of days, including some cooperative ones at Kealakehe. [II]

SCALY-BREASTED MUNIA (*Lonchura punctulata*) – Had a couple of these at Hanalei on Kaua'i, and then a big flock at Wailoa River SP. [I]

CHESTNUT MUNIA (*Lonchura atricapilla*) – Various places around Oahu, and then at Hanalei on Kaua'i. [II]

JAVA SPARROW (*Lonchura oryzivora*) – This species was introduced from Indonesia, where they are listed as Vulnerable because of the cage bird trade, and are probably harder to see than on the Hawaiian Islands, where they can be seen in numbers on all the major islands. We had around 70 of these at Kapiolani Park in Waikiki, and then we had an immature bird mixed in with Saffron Finches at the Sandgrouse spot. [I]

MAMMALS

HOUSE MOUSE (*Mus musculus*) – A small rodent that was likely this ran across the sidewalk in front of one of the perched Chestnut-Bellied Sandgrouses that we encountered. [I]

SPINNER DOLPHIN (*Stenella longirostris*) – A few people saw some distant ones off shore below Kilauea Point.

HUMPBACK WHALE (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) – A couple of sightings of these behemoths on our pelagic trip, including a mother and calf.

SMALL INDIAN MONGOOSE (*Herpestes auropunctatus*) – A diurnal predator introduced to control the nocturnally active introduced rats. Perhaps a wee bit of a lack of foresight. [I]

HAWAIIAN MONK SEAL (*Monachus schauinslandi*) – We found the of these highly endangered pinnipeds hauled out on a sandy swimming beach on Kaua'i, seemingly oblivious or apathetic to the human beach-use all around them. [E]

WILD BOAR (*Sus scrofa*) – On Kaua'i and the Big Island. [I]

DOMESTIC CATTLE (*Bos taurus*) – Got the island hat trick with these. Yippee. [I]

DOMESTIC GOAT (*Capra hircus*) – On Kaua'i and the Big Island, these are actually a tremendous ecological scourge, contributing to massive amounts of defoliation. They have even driven a handful of highly endangered plant species to the brink of extinction in some locations, where those plants only exist on precipices too steep for goats, where they are susceptible to other threats such as landslides. [I]

DOMESTIC SHEEP (*Ovis aries*) – Big Island. [I]

Herps

GOLD DUST DAY GECKO (*Phelsuma laticauda*) – We had a beautiful one of these vibrant green geckos with red war paint scampering around the wall at our next to last dinner. [I]

METALLIC SKINK (*Lampropholis delicata*) – One posed for a bit on the boardwalk at Alakai Swamp. [I]

COMMON COQUI (*Eleutherodactylus coqui*) – We heard the distinctive onomatopoeic calls of this iconic resident of Puerto Rico while we were at Kilauea Lodge. There is a movement to attempt eradication and/or species control for these in the Hawaiian Islands, though given the numbers of these introduced critters, that seems like an uphill battle. [I]

RED-EARED SLIDER (*Trachemys scripta elegans*) – We saw a bunch of these along the edges of the final pond we came to at Hanalei NWR on Kaua'i.

GREEN SEA TURTLE (*Chelonia mydas*) – Multiple brief sightings looking down from the promontory at Kilauea Point, though none of them hung around for everyone to see.

Other Creatures of Interest

KAMEHAMEHA BUTTERFLY (*Vanessa tameamea*) – One of two butterflies endemic to the Hawaiian Islands. This one resembles the Red Admiral, of the same genus, and is named after the most famous of the old Hawaiian kings. We had these on the Big Island, at both the Bird Park near Volcanoes NP, and at Hakalau. [E]

BLACKBURN'S BLUE (HAWAIIAN BLUE) (*Udara blackburni*) – The other endemic butterfly on the islands, Dan had one on his windshield on Kaua'i, and then we all experienced plenty on the Big Island, at Bird Park (Kipuka pua'ulu), Hakalau, and at Pu'u La'au. [E]

GIANT HAWAIIAN DARNER (*Anax strenuus*) – An endemic Hawaiian dragonfly, this beautiful blue and green beast of an ode was present in numbers on Kaua'i around Waimea Canyon, and then also at a couple of places on the Big Island, including at Hakalau. [E]

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 93 bird taxa and 9 mammal taxa