

Hawai'i

1/5-16/5 2010



Puaiohi (*Myadestes palmeri*) ©M. Lagerqvist

A trip report by Markus Lagerqvist

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Foreword

The Hawaiian Islands had for years been high on my wish list of top birding destinations. The mix of many unique endemics combined with a high degree of threatened species also makes it a destination to visit sooner rather than later. Of 59 endemic bird species (not counting species only known from fossils) 27 are already extinct or probably extinct and one is extinct in the wild. Of the remaining 31 endemics almost a third are critically endangered.

The Hawaiian Islands extend some 2,400 km from Kure Atoll in the northwest to the island of Hawai'i in the southeast. Of the endemic species 27 occur on the four main islands in the southeast, while the remaining four occur on a few of the more remote north western islands.

We visited the four main islands of Hawai'i, Maui, O'ahu and Kaua'i and our main goal with the trip was to see as many as possible of the 27 endemics occurring on these islands. Apart from me our group consisted of Eja Blomqvist and Magnus Jäderblad.

Most of the birding sites are very well known and easily accessible so we chose to arrange the trip on our own and only use guides where needed. This turned out well and we saw 26 of the 27 endemics, as well as a lot of other birds, many introduced, and a few interesting mammals.

This report consists of three parts; a diary, a summary with a few recommendations on guides and accommodation and finally a trip list of all the birds recorded – all in all 92 species.

The birding sites are not described in detail since they are all well covered in site guides like "Enjoying Birds and Other Wildlife in Hawai'i".

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at markus.lagerqvist@usa.net

Itinerary

2/5	-Honolulu, O'ahu
3/5	O'ahu
4/5	O'ahu-Maui
5/5	Waikamoi Preserve, Maui
6/5	Waikamoi Preserve, Maui
7/5	Waikamoi Preserve, Maui-Hilo, Hawai'i
8/5	Saddle Road, Hawai'i
9/5	Hakalau Forest Reserve, Hawai'i
10/5	Hilo-Volcanoes NP/Kona coast, Hawai'i
11/5	Kona coast, Hawaii-Kaua'i
12/5	Kaua'i
13/5	Alaka'i Wilderness, Kaua'i
14/5	Sea birding, Kaua'i
15/5	Koke'e, Kaua'i-Honolulu, O'ahu
16/5	Honolulu, O'ahu-



Diary

1/5 On our way – at last!

Due to the volcanic ash cloud from the eruption of Ejafjallajökull volcano on Iceland that brought havoc to the European airspace for a couple of weeks we almost didn't make it to Hawai'i. We had to reschedule our trip twice and with participants flying three different routes it was a complicated affair to co-ordinate our airline bookings, unfortunately resulting in one participant having to cancel the trip altogether.

Apart from the international flights we also had to reschedule all our carefully planned local arrangements with guides, local flights, hotels, rental cars etc. which was no less complicated.

On May 1st we finally left Sweden; me flying from Gothenburg and Eja and Magnus from Stockholm. The three of us met up in Paris and there our flight troubles continued. After having boarded the plane we could not take off due to a malfunctioning flight computer, which had to be replaced. The delay resulted in us missing our connecting flight to Honolulu from Minneapolis. Instead we had to fly from Minneapolis to San Francisco and from there take another flight to Honolulu. At 10 p.m. we finally arrived, hoping that the rest of the trip would be less traumatic.

However, our prayers were not answered and our troubles continued – my check-in luggage arrived but there was no sign of Eja's or Magnus's bags. Being late in the evening there was nothing we could do about it and we collected our Alamo rental car and drove to the Waikiki Prince Hotel to get a few hours sleep before our first day of birding.

2/5 O'ahu – endemics and other target species

We started the day with a 5.30 breakfast at the nearby McDonald's before meeting up with local birder Kurt Pohlman. We had originally planned to do O'ahu on our own but due to a lucky coincidence I got in touch with Kurt just a few weeks before departure since we were both going to Bougainville in July. We therefore decided to spend a day birding together on O'ahu.

Since our focus on this trip was on endemics we started the day by driving the short distance to the start of the Kuli'ou'ou Valley Trail in the outskirts of Honolulu. The Kuli'ou'ou Valley is the most easily accessible site for the rare and endangered **O'ahu 'Elepaio**. The trail starts at the end of a residential street and then follows a small stream up in the mountains. As you follow the stream you pass through a series of 'Elepaio territories. This morning the weather was cloudy with a light drizzle and the birds were not very vocal. Passing through the first three territories we heard two birds calling briefly but couldn't locate them. In the fourth territory we encountered a more vocal individual that eventually gave us decent views. We also heard one more bird calling from the next territory.

With the trickiest of the O'ahu endemics in the bag we continued a short drive to our next stop, the 'Aiea Loop trail, also in the outskirts of Honolulu. We headed straight to the area around the lookout at the top of the loop and were almost immediately rewarded with good views of two **O'ahu 'Amakihis**. In the same area we also saw several **'Apapanes**. If you have plenty of time it is also possible to spot introduced Mariana Swiftlets flying over the distant ridges, but we had more

pressing targets ahead of us and the weather was getting worse. We hurried down but didn't make it back to our car without getting totally soaked in the heavy rain.

From Honolulu we drove north along the windward coast making a few short stops along the way. While having a lunch break at 'Āina Haina we saw our first **White Tern** flying by and at Paiko Lagoon we picked up a few lingering shorebirds that hadn't migrated north yet.

Our next stop was James Campbell National Wildlife Refuge on the north coast. This site is famous for its wintering Bristle-thighed Curlews and also a good place to pick up some of Hawai'i's endemic wetland birds. We parked behind the cemetery and followed the trail towards the dune area. We were a little worried that the curlews had left for the season, but Kurt was confident that there would still be birds left and also told us that a few birds normally spend the summer. He was right and it didn't take us many minutes before we encountered a small group of **Bristle-thighed Curlews** that gave us great views.



Bristle-thighed Curlew (*Numenius tahitiensis*) © Markus Lagerqvist

Since it was the breeding season parts of the reserve were closed to the public but with a spotting scope you still get good views of the wetland from outside the closed area. This way we added **Hawaiian Coot**, **Hawaiian Stilt** and the distinct local race of **Common Gallinule** to our list of Hawaiian endemics. The Hawaiian Ducks at the site are all Mallard hybrids and not tickable.

Our next site was a short stop at Nu'upia pond at Kāne'ōhe Bay. Here we saw a lone **Black Noddy**. With all our target endemics seen we decided to spend the last part of the afternoon sea birding from the Hālonā Blowhole. You're not likely to see any of the endemic seabirds here but it's a good spot to look for Christmas Shearwater and Spectacled Tern, which both breed in small numbers on

the nearby islet Moku Manu. An even better vantage point would have been from Ulupa'u Head, but it's on a military base that's almost impossible to get permit to enter, even for local birders.

Late afternoon is a good time to sea watch from Hālonā Blowhole as the birds return to land and among the many **Wedge-tailed Shearwaters** and **Sooty Terns** we had good views of a single **Christmas Shearwater** and Magnus spotted a distant **Spectacled Tern**. As the light faded we thanked Kurt for a very successful first day with all of O'ahu's target species seen and headed back to the airport to see if Eja's and Magnus's bags had arrived.

3/5 O'ahu – Hawaiian Monk Seal and sea birding

Since the bags hadn't arrived the night before we started the day with yet another visit at the airport, but still no news. We then continued west to look for the critically endangered **Hawaiian Monk Seal** at perhaps the most reliable site – the Ka'ena Point Natural Area Reserve. The seals are often found resting on the cliffs at the very tip of the peninsula, beyond the lighthouse. From the parking where the paved road ends at Wai'anae it's a several km long walk – it can be very hot and sunny so bring plenty of water and sunscreen! The area around the lighthouse also hosts a small colony of **Laysan Albatross** and we saw two chicks at very close range and also two adult birds.



Laysan Albatross (*Phoebastria immutabilis*) © Markus Lagerqvist

Mission accomplished we returned to Waikīkī for a couple of hours siesta. At 3 p.m. me and Magnus returned to Hālonā Blowhole to once again meet up with Kurt and spend some more time sea birding. We had a good time with at least a thousand **Wedge-tailed Shearwaters** and once again a single **Spectacled Tern**. We also had very distant views of a **Masked Booby**.

A forth visit to the airport also paid off and Eja and Magnus finally got their bags – it turned out that they had never made it on to the plane in Paris, despite our delay there!

4/5 O’ahu to Maui

Since our plane to Maui wasn’t scheduled to leave until 2.10 p.m. we decided to return to the Kuli’ou’ou Valley to see if we could get better views and maybe some photos of the **O’ahu ‘Elepaio** – this turned out well and we got prolonged views of this exclusive bird.



O’ahu ‘Elepaio (*Chasiempis gayi*) © Markus Lagerqvist

On departing Honolulu our bad luck with airlines continued. After our plane left the gate and was getting ready to take off from the runway a passenger got some kind of seizure and the plane had to drive back to the gate and bring aboard a medical emergency team to get the passenger off. We then made a new try, but as the plane was once more ready to take off from the runway another passenger suffered a heart condition and we had to drive back to the gate and get the medical emergency team back on again!

After finally arriving at Kahului airport on Maui we picked up our car and drove straight to our accommodation – the God’s Peace of Maui B&B, conveniently located in Makawao. As it was getting late in the afternoon we quickly unloaded our things and then drove up to the summit of Haleakalā volcano, enjoying the magnificent sunset above the clouds. We also had a look at the endemic silversword plants (*Argyroxiphium sandwicense*). On the way down we made a short stop along the road from where we could hear the **Hawaiian Petrels** calling. We ended the day with a tasty pizza from Valentino’s in Makawao.

5-6/5 Maui – Waikamoi Preserve

The best site to see all of Maui's endemic birds is at the Waikamoi Preserve. However, access is restricted and you need permit and a guide to enter the preserve. We had therefore arranged to meet Chuck Probst at Hosmer Groove, where we enjoyed great views of several **I'iwis** feeding in the flowering bushes. A little after 7 p.m. we entered the preserve with Chuck and started our search for Maui's four endemic taxa. **Maui 'Alauahio** was very common and we saw about 30 of this diminutive honeycreeper during the day. The **Maui 'Amakihi** – the local race of Hawai'i 'Amakihi – was a little less common but still easily found.



Maui 'Alauahio (*Paroreomyza montana*) © Markus Lagerqvist

The remaining two endemics – 'Ākohekohe and Maui Parrotbill – are both critically endangered and a lot more challenging. They are only found along the so called Rose Gardner Memorial Boardwalk – a raised wooden boardwalk ending with a viewing platform. To find the birds you slowly walk the boardwalk back and forth, or watch from the viewing platform hoping for them to turn up in the surrounding trees. Getting close to the viewing platform we heard the characteristic *whee-o, whee-o* call of the 'Ākohekohe and started searching through the flowering 'ōhi'a lehua trees. It took some searching, but after a while Magnus spotted a bird from the platform, feeding in the red flowers. The remaining time in the preserve, until mid-afternoon, we spent looking for the parrotbill, but without any sign of the bird. Before driving down to Makawao we also spent a little time scanning the slopes of Haleakalā for Nēnē, without seeing any.

The next morning we met Chuck at 6.30 for another day at Waikamoi, searching for the elusive parrotbill. The windy, rainy and cold weather didn't make our search any more pleasant and after eight hours of fruitless searching we called it a day and headed down to Makawao, warming

ourselves with a hot Mexican dinner. At dusk we found ourselves back on Haleakalā, for another go at the **Hawaiian Petrels** at their breeding colonies. We parked at the Kalahaku overlook and the petrels were calling all around us on the slopes – this time we got a good look at a bird flying into the colony.

7/5 Maui to Hawai'i

Since our flight to Hilo didn't leave until late afternoon, we had one last chance to see the parrotbill. This morning we entered Waikamoi at 5.45 in the morning and headed straight for the boardwalk. It was still cold and windy, but at least it didn't rain and I had my long johns on, which made birding a lot more pleasant. We spent another seven hours on the now intimately familiar boardwalk, but the parrotbill still refused to reward our tenacity with even a brief showing and we finally had to admit defeat. At 4.35 p.m. we left Maui, flying via Honolulu to Hilo on Hawai'i, where we arrived at 7.10 p.m. on our first uneventful flight of the trip! After a quick dinner at McDonald's and some grocery shopping we headed to our home for the next three nights – the Dolphin Bay Hotel.

8/5 Hawai'i – The Saddle Road

We made an early start heading west along the Saddle Road arriving early morning at the Pu'u Lā'au Reserve on the slopes of Mauna Kea volcano. This area of dry māmane forest is the last remaining habitat for the declining and critically endangered Palila. We parked our car at the small hunting cabin by the eucalyptus grove and walked slowly up-hill. The **Palila** feed on the green seed-pods of the māmane trees and the best way to locate the birds is to listen for their whistling contact calls.



Palila (*Loxioides bailleui*) © Markus Lagerqvist

We only had to spend maybe ten minutes before we heard them calling and could then easily locate the birds. Since they kept moving around a lot it was difficult to count them, but we saw at least four, maybe as many as eight individuals, and got great views of this very smart looking finch.

Much more common was the **Hawai'i 'Amakihi**, here of the nominate race *virens*, and we probably had around 50 birds. In the bushy areas close to the eucalyptus grove we also saw a couple of skulky **Hawai'i 'Elepaio**s – here of the pale variant, known as “Mauna Kea 'Elepaio”. Other species seen included **Short-eared Owl** of the local race *sandwichensis*, and introduced game birds like **Erckel's Francolin** and **Gambel's** and **California Quail**.

After having seen our targets we headed back along the Saddle Road to the Pu'u'ō'ō Trail to look for our most wanted species – the weird 'Akiapōlā'au. The weather here was wet, foggy and cold – a dramatic change from the dry and hot Pu'u Lā'au Reserve, just a few km away! The landscape is surreal, as you walk through old lava flows surrounding isolated, still standing, patches of forest, so called kīpukas.



'Akiapōlā'au (*Hemignathus wilsoni*) © Markus Lagerqvist

The **'Akiapōlā'au** is another critically endangered honeycreeper with a declining and fragmented population estimated at 1,200 birds. The Pu'u'ō'ō trail is one of the most reliable sites for the species and the third kīpuka, counting from the Saddle Road, seems to be especially good. They like to feed in stands of old koa trees and we spent most of the day carefully looking through all the koa stands. Our search eventually paid off as we got a brief view of a bright yellow male in a large patch of koas a couple of hundred meters off the west side of the trail, before entering the forest trail through what we presumed to be the third kīpuka.

Other target species seen included the endemic solitaire **‘Ōma‘o**, which seemed to be fairly common and the dark variant of Hawai‘i **‘Elepaio**, sometimes called “Volcano ‘Elepaio”.

We ended the day by driving down the coast as far as we could before reaching a point where the road was closed due to the ongoing volcanic eruptions, and got distant views of the red lava flowing down the slopes into the sea.

9/5 Hawai‘i – Hakalau Forest

Having seen all our targets the previous day we only had three endemics left, all found in Hakalau Forest National Wildlife Refuge. The only way to enter the refuge is to sign up for a guided tour with Hawaii Forest & Trail. The tours are not designed for hard-core birders, but are general nature tours. At 8.15, before driving into the reserve we enjoyed an outdoor breakfast buffet at our pick-up point – the Mauna Kea State Park.



I‘iwi (*Vestiaria coccinea*) © Markus Lagerqvist

Driving up to the refuge we spotted a couple of Hawaiian Ducks in a small pond, but couldn’t be sure if they were the real thing or Mallard hybrids. The first birds seen at arrival was a group ten **Nēnēs** walking on the lawn where you park the tour bus. From there you walk along a gravel road and make short walks along trails into the forest. The weather was great and the birding activity good and we soon found our first target, a **Hawai‘i Creeper** feeding along a large tree trunk – the first of six birds seen during the day. We soon also found the radiantly orange **Hawai‘i ‘Ākepa** and shortly thereafter a pale phase **Hawaiian Hawk**, perched in a tree at close distance. Apart from this individual we also saw three soaring birds during the day.

With all our targets in the bag we could relax and enjoy being shown the beautiful forest with its many rare endemic plants. Apart from the three targets we got many good views of more common species like **Hawai'i 'Elepaio**, **'Ōma'o**, **'I'iwi**, **'Apapane** and **Hawai'i 'Amakihi** and the introduced, but nonetheless very handsome **Kalij Pheasant**.

After being dropped off at Mauna Kea State Park we drove up to the Mauna Kea summit and enjoyed fantastic views as the sun was setting over the harsh, moonlike landscape. The summit at 4,207 m. is only a short walk from the parking by the large telescopes. Counting from the ocean floor Mauna Kea rises over 10,000 meters making it the highest mountain on the planet!

10/5 Hawai'i – Hilo to the Kona Coast

Today the plan was to drive to Captain Cook on the Kona coast, on the other side of the island, doing some birding and visiting Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park en route.

However, since we got such a brief view of the **'Akiapōlā'au** the first day, we decided to spend the first morning hours along the Pu'u'ō'ō Trail. This paid off and we could study a young bird making use of its peculiar bill when feeding in a stand of koa trees. Happy with the experience we continued to Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park for some sightseeing. The view of the steaming Halema'uma'u crater from the Kīlauea overlook was impressive and not to be missed, and we also enjoyed the **White-tailed Tropicbirds** flying around in the caldera. Walking through the Thurstone Lava Tube was another interesting experience.

However, we also had a target bird in the park – the distinct endemic *melanogenys* race of **Black Noddy**, which differs from other races by its brighter orange feet and paler rump. To find the birds you drive the Chain of Craters Road all the way down to the coast. We didn't drive all the way to the Hōlei Search Arch but stopped at the first lookout and got fantastic views of the birds flying back and forth to the steep cliffs below us.

From Hawai'i Volcanoes we continued along the coast, making a short stop at the Punalu'u Black Sand Beach before arriving at Mānuka State Park. Our reason for stopping here was to see the intermediate variant of the **Hawai'i 'Elepaio** – the "Kona 'Elepaio". Having all our bags in the car we didn't want to leave it unattended since car burglaries are quite common on Hawai'i. We therefore planned to take turns walking the trail, but found the 'Elepaio right by the car park after only five minutes! Having seen our last target bird for the day we didn't linger and continued straight to our hotel, the Manago Hotel in Captain Cook.

After a really tasty dinner at a Japanese restaurant we had one last target for the day – the **Hawaiian Hoary Bat** – the only native land mammal on the Hawaiian Islands. We drove to our stake-out at Keauhou Bay, just North of Captain Cook. We sat down on the small beach and at dusk we easily found a couple of bats flying around the bay.



Hawaiian Black Noddy (*Anous minutus melanogenys*) ©Markus Lagerqvist

11/5 Hawai'i to Kaua'i

With no more targets left we decided to do some more non-birding activities. We started with some great snorkelling at Two-Step, a few km south of Captain Cook and continued with a visit to the adjacent historical park at Pu'uhonua o Hōnaunau – very interesting and recommended! Before heading to Keahole-Kona airport we also made a short stop at Kealahou Bay where we saw the white obelisk commemorating the place where Captain Cook was killed in 1779.

At 15.35 we left Hawai'i, arriving in Lihue on Kaua'i at 5.10 p.m.. Being quite late we headed straight to Wailua Bay a short drive north from the airport. This is one of the best spots to see **Hawaiian Petrels** from shore as they gather here late in the afternoons before they follow the Wailua River inland to spend the night in the mountains. The petrels were numerous and we estimated that we saw around 200 birds. Other sea birds included **Wedge-tailed Shearwater** and a single **Pomarine Skua**.

As the sun was setting we headed back to Lihue and the Kaua'i Palms Hotel and had a good dinner at a nearby Chinese restaurant.

12/5 Kaua'i – wetland and sea birds

Today our targets were mainly wetland and sea birds and we started by driving to the Hanalei National Wildlife Refuge on the north coast, which is the most reliable site for **Hawaiian Duck**. You view the reserve from a viewpoint right by the main road and a spotting scope is very useful. We found around ten ducks, and also saw **Hawaiian Coot**, **Common Gallinule** and a few **Hawaiian Stilts**.

Continuing west towards Ha'ena the road passed over a small wetland and making a short stop on the bridge we could enjoy much closer views of the same species!

After a short, unproductive stop at Ha'ena State Park we headed east again to the Kīlauea Point National Wildlife Refuge. We didn't expect to see any new species here, but we still wanted to visit this famous refuge. The birding was brilliant, and also offered great photographic opportunities with close-up views of species like **Nēnē**, **Laysan Albatross**, **Magnificent Frigatebird**, **Red-tailed** and **White-tailed Tropicbird** and thousands of **Red-footed Boobies**.

We now had to drive back to our hotel in Lihu'e to collect our bags before heading up to the Koke'e State Park. On the way we made a couple of short stops, first at Kīpu where we ticked off the introduced **Western Meadowlark** and then at Waimea for a tasty lunch at the Shrimp Station. We then headed up the scenic Waimea Canyon Drive, making a stop and enjoying the breathtaking views from the Waimea Canyon lookout – not to be missed!

Well at Koke'e we offloaded the bags at our cabin and headed back down to the coast again for some afternoon sea birding. Our target was the near endemic Newell's Shearwater, and one of the best spots to see the species is from Makahū'ena Point on Kaua'i's south coast. We found a great spot on the cliffs close to the small lighthouse and started scanning the sea. The sea birding was great and we saw six **Newell's Shearwaters**, 20 **Hawaiian Shearwaters**, around a hundred **Wedge-tailed Shearwaters** and one very probable **Sooty Shearwater**.

As the sun was setting we ended a hectic, but successful day's birding and headed up to our cabin to prepare a home cooked dinner accompanied with a local Longboard Island Lager.

13/5 Kaua'i – The Alaka'i Wilderness

Today was our big day on Kaua'i with six endemics on the target list. At 6 a.m. local birder David Kuhn picked us up with his 4WD outside our cabin and we headed on bumpy dirt roads deep into the Alaka'i Wilderness Preserve to the Mōhihi trail. With us for the day was wildlife photographer Greg Homel.

In the past all of Kaua'i's endemics could be found along the more easily accessible Pihea Ridge and Alaka'i Swamp trails, but several of the species are decreasing at an alarming rate and can now only reliably be found in the more remote eastern parts of the Alaka'i Wilderness. Since we only had one day with David we decided to put all our efforts into seeing the three most difficult species – Puaiohi, 'Akikiki and 'Akeke'e – and not spend any time looking for other birds.

After parking our car we therefore walked without stopping until we reached the best habitat. We passed by a couple of calling **Kaua'i 'Amakihi**s, and caught untickable views of two birds, but since we counted on seeing the 'Amakihi later on anyway we didn't "waste" any time to get better views.

Our first target was the critically endangered Puaiohi, which has an extremely small population of only a couple of hundred birds. Thanks to a successful captive breeding program the population is for the moment kept stable. To find **Puaiohi** it's a huge advantage to have a knowledgeable guide who knows exactly where the territories are. At the first territory we reached we carefully positioned ourselves at a good vantage point and well in place David whistled a couple of times.

This worked like clockwork and a bird quickly responded and landed in the open on a branch a few meters from us – almost too easy! During the day we saw two more Puaiohis this way and also heard a couple.

For the next two targets the strategy was to spend time in good habitat where the birds are known to occur and carefully watch and listen for their calls. While searching, David told us about the bleak prospects for these birds. The populations of especially 'Akikiki and 'Akeke'e are declining fast and drastically and their ranges have contracted eastwards to the more remote parts of the Alaka'i Wilderness following the same pattern as now almost certainly extinct species like Kaua'i 'Ō'ō, 'Ō'ū and Nukupu'u. One of the most alarming threats to these birds is that avian malaria now has been found even in the highest reaches of the Alaka'i plateau. According to David, 'Akeke'e is now the most difficult species to find, and at high risk of being next in the long row of Hawaiian endemics being lost for ever.



'Akikiki (*Oreomystis bairdi*) © Markus Lagerqvist

We were lucky with great weather and the beautiful forest on the plateau was magical. The charismatic **Kaua'i 'Elepaio** was common and gave us several wonderful close-up views and we also quickly found the tiny **'Anianiau** working through the canopy. To our relief we also soon caught up with a calling **'Akeke'e** and got good views of this honeycreeper with its unique, side-crossed bill. The **'Akikiki** caused us more trouble and it took us a couple of hours searching before we finally heard a bird calling. We only managed brief views of this individual, but soon found another in the same area that gave us wonderful and prolonged views.

That only left us with the more common Kaua'i 'Amakihi but despite listening and looking for it all the way back to the car we failed to find it. This species is still found around the cabins at Koke'e and we spent the last hour of the afternoon looking for it, but only managed to add the introduced **Chinese Hwamei** to our list.

14/5 The Ka'ulakahi Channel and Lehua Islet

We had originally planned to do a proper pelagic from Kaua'i, but all our rescheduling and losing a member of the group had forced us to cancel our plans. Having already seen our target seabirds from shore we were also less pressed. We still thought it would be fun to get out to sea so we booked ourselves on a snorkelling trip with Holo Holo Charters (more info on holoholokauaiboattours.com) crossing the Ka'ulakahi Channel going to Lehua Islet off Ni'ihau. This is the same area as you go on a pelagic, with the difference that the snorkelling boats won't stop for any seabirds.

We left Port Allen in the morning and began by cruising along the spectacular Na Pali coast. Apart from the breathtaking scenery we got great views of **Black Noddys** and also saw a single **Spectacled Tern**. We then crossed the deep, bird rich waters of the Ka'ulakahi Channel. Unfortunately the boat drives fast across the channel and it's almost impossible to use your binoculars, but we still managed to identify a fair number of seabirds on the two crossings. The best ones included six **Newell's Shearwaters**, at least two **Christmas Shearwaters** and one **Pomarine Skua**.



Hawaiian Monk Seal (*Monachus schauinslandi*) © Markus Lagerqvist

Anchoring at Lehua Islet we saw one **Hawaiian Monk Seal** and enjoyed a couple of hours of snorkelling, picking up a lot of reef fishes, including Hawaii's national fish – the attractive Humuhumunukunua'ā, also known as Lagoon Triggerfish.

After dinner back at our cabin in Koke'e we drove up to the Pu'u o Kila lookout at the beginning of the Pihea Ridge trail and enjoyed yet another spectacular sunset. The evening was a bit windy, but after dark we could still hear Newell's Shearwaters calling from their colonies on the steep mountain slopes and also saw a **Common Barn Owl**.

15/5 Kaua'i to O'ahu

This was our last day of birding and we still needed one more species – the supposedly common **Kaua'i 'Amakihi**. David had given us some advice on good spots to see the bird and we spent the morning walking the Pihea Ridge Trail. This turned out well and even though it took some searching we finally all got good views of our last Kaua'i endemic. As a bonus we also got views of the common, but very skulky, **Japanese Bush Warbler**.

On our drive down to the coast we made a stop to walk the short 'Iliou Nature Loop to enjoy the spectacle of the impressive flowering of the endemic iliau plants (*Wilkesia gymnoxiphium*).

Since we again had a late afternoon flight we spent the last hours on Kaua'i sea birding from Ninini Point close to the airport. This didn't yield any new species but we saw around 40 **Hawaiian Petrels**, several **Christmas Shearwaters** and a lone **Laysan Albatross**. Compared to Makahū'ena the viewing distance was longer here and you needed a really good scope to id many of the birds.

15/5 O'ahu – a last day of sightseeing

We all had international flights leaving Honolulu in the evening and having seen all our targets on O'ahu I spent the day sightseeing, visiting famous sites like Pearl Harbor and the Bishop Museum. Among the most interesting items on display at the museum were the 'ahu 'ulas – feathered cloaks worn by the Hawaiian royalty. A single cloak could contain feathers from as many as 80,000 birds – yellow and black feathers from the now extinct mamos and 'ō'ōs were among the most popular. Sad but fascinating!

Magnus and Eja choose instead to spend the day snorkelling and birding. A second visit to the 'Aiea Loop Trail didn't yield in any new birds but an hour's sea watching from the Hālonā Blowhole resulted in much closer views of a **Masked Booby**.

Our flights back home were surprisingly uneventful.

End of trip.

Guiding

Hawaii Forest & Trail

e-mail: info@hawaii-forest.com

web page: www.hawaii-forest.com

tel: 1-(800)-464-1993

To enter the Hakalau Forest you need to book the Hakalau Birdwatching Adventure through Hawaii Forest & Trail. The tour costs \$179 per person/day. The tour starts at the Hawaii Forest & Trail headquarters in Kailua-Kona, or at any one of several pick-up locations along the way. For more information and online booking visit their web site.

The Nature Conservancy/Chuck Probst

e-mail – Rene Miller, The Nature Conservancy: rmiller@tnc.org

web page: www.nature.org

tel - The Nature Conservancy: 1-(808) 572-4459

Access to the Waikamoi Preserve must be booked through The Nature Conservancy. To gain entrance you must pay a donation of \$50 per person/day. The Nature Conservancy has several guides working for them. When booking, be sure to ask specifically for Chuck Probst, who's a specialist of the reserve's birds and also great guide.

David Kuhn

e-mail: soundshawaiian@gmail.com

David is an excellent guide whose intimate knowledge of the Alaka'i Wilderness and its birds is invaluable when searching for the more difficult Kaua'i endemics. David charges \$175/day for the first person and \$75 per additional person for a shorter hike, and an extra surcharge of \$100 for longer hikes into the Alaka'i Wilderness, such as the Mōhihi trail. David can also help you arranging a pelagic from Kaua'i.

Accommodation

Waikiki Prince Hotel, Waikīkī

Web site: www.waikikiprince.com

E-mail: info@waikikiprince.com

Tel: +1-(808) 922-1544

Nothing fancy, but perfectly adequate and cheap, located in downtown Waikīkī, just a block from Waikīkī Beach. A small double room costs \$70 per night plus \$10 for parking.

God's Peace of Maui, Makawao

Web site: www.peaceofmaui.com

E-mail: info@peaceofmaui.com

Tel: 1-(808) 572 5045

A well located B&B on the way from the airport to Waikamoi with a friendly and relaxed atmosphere. You can stay in a room in the main house or rent a cottage if you're a group. Single rooms cost \$65 and doubles \$70 per night.

The Dolphin Bay Hotel, Hilo

Web site: www.dolphinbayhilo.com

E-mail: john@dolphinbayhotel.com

Tel: 1-(808) 935-1466

A great choice in Hilo with very friendly and helpful staff. Have a chat with the owner John Alexander to get advice if you want to go snorkelling, visit the volcanoes or get the latest information on lava flows. A standard studio for two persons costs \$119 for the first night and \$109 for the following.

Manago Hotel, Captain Cook

Web site: www.managohotel.com

E-mail: manago@managohotel.biz

Tel: 1-(808) 323-2642

Conveniently located in the middle of the Kona coast this hotel, founded in 1917, is something of an institution and also offers great value for money. Rates for a non smoking room start at \$59 for a single and \$62 for a double/night.

The Kauai Palms Hotel, Lihu'e

Web site: www.kauaipalmshotel.com

E-mail: kauaipalmshotel@gmail.com

Tel: 1-(808) 246-0908

Nothing out of the ordinary but good value for money and conveniently located in Lihu'e's restaurant district. Room rates start at \$75 per night.

The Lodge at Kokee, Koke'e State Park

Web site: www.thelodgeatkokee.net

E-mail: info@thelodgeatkokee.net

Tel: 1-(808) 335-6061

Renting a cabin is a perfect choice when birding in Koke'e and Alaka'i as you stay right in the reserve. There is a restaurant on the grounds but it's only open between 9 and 16 – when you'll probably be out birding, so it's a good idea to bring your own food and prepare in the cabin. Rates start at \$65 per cabin per night, with an additional charge of \$5/person/night for parties of more than two persons.



Kaua'i 'Elepaio (*Chasiempis sclateri*) © Markus Lagerqvist

Car rental

We rented all our cars from Alamo Rent A Car and it worked very well. Due to our troubles with the volcanic ash we had to reschedule our car bookings several times, but this was no problem at all and could easily be done on their excellent web site at www.alamo.com without any extra cost.

Warning: Car burglaries are common; be careful not to leave valuables in the car, especially if you park it at isolated spots, like the Pu'u'ō'ō trail.

Recommended reading

Pratt, Douglas; Bruner, Phillip; Berrett, Delwyn: *“The Birds of Hawaii and the Tropical Pacific”*, Princeton University Press, 1987

Covers a lot more than Hawai‘i, but the best field guide for the region.

Denny, Jim: *“A Photographic Guide to the Birds of Hawai‘i”*, University of Hawai‘i Press, 2010

A good complement to the above, includes updated information on where to find the birds.

Onley, Derek; Scofield, Paul: *“Albatrosses, Petrels and Shearwaters of the World”*, Christopher Helm, 2007. A good aid to identify some of the trickier sea birds, with updated information on taxonomy.

Pratt, Douglas: *“Enjoying Birds and Other Wildlife in Hawai‘i”*, Mutual Publishing, Third Edition, 2002

This book is a must as it contains great descriptions and maps of all the birding sites.

Insight Flexi Map: *“Hawaii 1:270 000 / 300 000”*

An easy to use and detailed road map.

Trip reports from www.travellingbirder.com



Akeke‘e (*Loxops caeruleirostris*) ©Markus Lagerqvist

Hawaiian endemics not recorded

We only failed to see one targeted endemic. One more endemic is possible to see on Midway and two more species occurs on Nihoa and Laysan – but access to these two islands is restricted to biologists and researchers. One species is extinct in the wild, but with a captive population.

- **Laysan Duck** (*Anas laysanensis*): Critically Endangered. Occurs on Laysan and Midway, where it has been reintroduced. This was the only possible endemic we didn't try to see due to the high cost of flying to Midway.
- **Hawaiian Crow** (*Corvus hawaiiensis*): Extinct in the wild. There is a captive population but attempts to reintroduce the species to the wild have failed due to predation from Hawaiian Hawks. New attempts might be made in the future if a suitable site is found.
- **Millerbird** (*Acrocephalus familiaris*): Critically Endangered. Nowadays only occurs on Nihoa, and access to the island is restricted to biologists and researchers.
- **Laysan Finch** (*Telespiza cantans*): Vulnerable. Only occurs on Laysan, and access to the island is restricted to biologists and researchers.
- **Nihoa Finch** (*Telespiza ultima*): Critically Endangered. Only occurs on Nihoa, and access to the island is restricted to biologists and researchers.
- **Maui Parrotbill** (*Pseudonestor xanthophrys*): Critically Endangered. The only targeted endemic that we failed to see. The easiest accessible site is the Waikamoi Preserve, but it's very rare and it's a matter of luck or spending enough time to locate it there. Chuck Probst thought that parrotbills might be easier to see later in the season. When we visited they were on the nest and the males tend to stick close to the nest. Later they seem to have wandering trios or foursomes that criss-cross the boardwalk within their five hectare territory and thus make it more likely to encounter them. In 2009 there were good sightings of parrotbills into July and August.

The parrotbill is more common in the East Maui Wilderness, but access it difficult and you would either need plenty of time to hike in or hire a helicopter to bring you in and out.

The following five species are officially listed as critically endangered, but are unfortunately in all probability already extinct:

- **Oloma'o** (*Myadestes lanaiensis*)
- **Po'ouli** (*Melamprosops phaeosoma*)
- **O'ahu 'Alauahio** (*Paroreomyza maculata*)
- **Nukupu'u** (*Hemignathus lucidus*)
- **'O'u** (*Psittirostra psittacea*)

Species list

Taxonomy not based on any specific authority.

Endemic target species in **red bold** typeface. Other target species in **black bold** typeface.

Introduced species within brackets.

Ducks

Anatidae

Nēnē

9/5, 10 sp, Hakalau Forest NWR, Hawai'i

12/5, 8 sp, Kīlauea Point NWR, Kaua'i

Branta sandvicensis

NOTE: In the 1950s the Nēnē was close to extinction, but thanks to a successful captive breeding program it has made a strong comeback and can now be seen on Kaua'i, Maui, Moloka'i and Hawai'i.

One of the easiest and most reliable places to see Nēnē is at Kīlauea Point on Kaua'i.

The Nēnē is closely related to the Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*) and is in fact phylogenetically nested within the Canada/Cackling Goose-complex. It is one of three species known to have diverged from a radiation of Canada Geese to the Hawaiian Islands less than 500 000 years ago. The other two species are only known from fossil remains.

[Mallard]

2/5, 5 sp, Paiko Lagoon, O'ahu

3/5, 10 sp, Waikīkī, O'ahu

Anas platyrhynchos

[Mallard x Hawaiian Duck]

2/5, 5 sp, James Campbell NWR, O'ahu

9/5, 2 sp?, Hakalau Forest NWR, Hawai'i

Anas platyrhynchos x wyvilliana

Hawaiian Duck

12/5, 10 sp, Hanalei NWR, Kaua'i

12/5, 9 sp, Ha'ena, Kaua'i

Anas wyvilliana

NOTE: The Hawaiian Duck used to be an abundant species, but today pure Hawaiian Duck can only be found on Kaua'i and the Kohala mountains on Hawai'i. "Hawaiian Ducks" found in other areas are hybrids with Mallards. The most reliable site to find the species is Hanalei on Kaua'i.

New World Quail

Odontophoridae

[California Quail]

8/5, 50 sp, Pu'u Lā'au Reserve, Hawai'i

9/5, >5 sp, Saddle Road, Hawai'i

Callipepla californica

[Gambel's Quail]

8/5, 10 sp, Pu'u Lā'au Reserve, Hawai'i

Callipepla gambelii

Pheasants

Phasianidae

[Grey Francolin]

4/5, 2 sp, Haleakalā NP, Maui

Francolinus pondicerianus

[Red Junglefowl]

11/5, 30+ sp, Lihū'e, Kaua'i

12/5, common, Kaua'i

13/5, Koke'e State Park, Kaua'i

14-15/5, common, Kaua'i

Gallus gallus

[Chukar Partridge]

4/5, 2 sp, Haleakalā NP, Maui

6/5, 2 sp, Haleakalā NP, Maui

9/5, 1 sp, Hakalau Forest NWR, Hawai'i

Alectoris chukar

[Erckel's Francolin]

8/5, 15 sp, Pu'u Lā'au Reserve, Hawai'i

9/5, 20 sp, Hakalau Forest NWR, Hawai'i

13/5, 3 sp, Koke'e State Park, Kaua'i

14/5, 1 sp, Koke'e State Park, Kaua'i

15/5, 5 sp, Koke'e State Park, Kaua'i

Pternistis erckelii

[Golden Pheasant]

5/5, 1 sp, Waikamoi Preserve, Maui

Chrysolophus pictus

[Common Pheasant]

2/5, 2 sp, James Campbell NWR, O'ahu

4/5, 1 male, Haleakalā NP, Maui

5/5, 5 ad + 5 chicks, Haleakalā NP, Maui

6/5, 10 sp, Haleakalā NP, Maui

7/5, 5 sp, Haleakalā NP, Maui

9/5, 5 sp, Saddle Road, Hawai'i

12/5, 1 sp, Kaua'i

Phasianus colchicus

[Kalij Pheasant]

9/5, 3 sp, Hakalau Forest NWR, Hawai'i

Lophura leucomelanos

[Wild Turkey]

9/5, 30 sp, Saddle Road, Hawai'i

Meleagris gallopavo

Tropicbirds

Phaethontidae

Red-tailed Tropicbird

2/5, 1 sp, Hālonā Blowhole, O'ahu

3/5, 3 sp, Hālonā Blowhole, O'ahu

12/5, 10 sp, Kīlauea Point NWR, Kaua'i

14/5, 5 sp, Lehua Islet

Phaethon rubricauda melanorhynchos

White-tailed Tropicbird

- 10/5, 3 sp, Kīlauea Caldera, Hawai'i
- 12/5, 4 sp, Kīlauea Point NWR, Kaua'i
- 12/5, 3 sp, Waimea Canyon, Kaua'i
- 14/5, 5 sp, Na Pali Coast, Kaua'i
- 15/5, 1 sp, Waimea Canyon, Kaua'i

Phaethon lepturus dorothea

Doves and Pigeons

Columbidae

[Common Pigeon]

- 2/5, common, O'ahu
- 3/5, common, O'ahu
- 4/5, common, O'ahu
- 8/5, 4 sp, Hilo, Hawai'i
- 10/5, 9 sp, Kona Coast, Hawai'i
- 11/5, 10 sp, Kona Coast, Hawai'i
- 12/5, 10 sp, Kaua'i

Columba livia

[Spotted Dove]

A common species seen on all dates.

Streptopelia chinensis

[Zebra Dove]

A common species on O'ahu, Hawai'i and Kaua'i.

Geopelia striata

Rails

Rallidae

Common Gallinule

- 2/5, 7 sp, James Campbell NWR, Hawai'i
- 12/5, 3 sp, Ha'ena, Kaua'i
- 12/5, 5 sp, Hanalei NWR, Kaua'i

Gallinula galeata sandvicensis

NOTE: With the recent split of Common Gallinule from the Old World Common Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*) the Hawaiian race *sandvicensis* ended up in the American species. It is however a quite distinct race that could potentially be a future armchair tick.

Both James Campbell NWR and Hanalei NWR are reliable sites for the species.

Hawaiian Coot

- 2/5, 25 sp, James Campbell NWR, Hawai'i
- 12/5, 2 sp, Ha'ena, Kaua'i
- 12/5, 30 sp, Hanalei NWR, Kaua'i

Fulica alai

Albatrosses

Diomedidae

Laysan Albatross

- 3/5, 2 ad + 2 pull, Ka'ena Point, O'ahu
- 12/5, 15 sp, Kīlauea Point NWR, Kaua'i
- 15/5, 1 sp, Ninini Point, Kaua'i

Phoebastria immutabilis

NOTE: Although often thought to be a Hawaiian endemic the Laysan Albatross also breeds on Torishima and Ogasawara Islands off Japan and in small numbers on Guadalupe Island and Revillagigedo Islands off Baja California. During the breeding season the species is easily found at breeding colonies such as Kīlauea Point on Kaua'i or, in smaller numbers, at Ka'ena Point on O'ahu.

Hawaiian Petrel

- 4/5, heard, Haleakalā NP, Maui
- 5/5, 1 sp + heard, Haleakalā NP, Maui
- 11/5, 200 sp, Wailua Bay, Kauaʻi
- 12/5, 20 sp, Makahūʻena Point, Kauaʻi
- 15/5, 40 sp, Ninini Point, Kauaʻi

Pterodroma sandwichensis

NOTE: The Hawaiian Petrel was formerly considered to be conspecific with the Galápagos Petrel (*Pterodroma phaeopygia*) but differs in both biology and morphology. It is a rare seabird with only a few known nesting colonies. The most accessible breeding site is close to the summit of Haleakalā where their cries can be easily heard as they fly into the colony at dusk. With a little luck you can also see their silhouettes against the sky. From shore the species is most easily on Kauaʻi – the best site is Wailua Bay where they gather in large numbers in the late afternoon as they prepare to fly inland to spend the night in the mountains.

Wedge-tailed Shearwater

- 2/5, >50 sp, Hālonā Blowhole, Oʻahu
- 3/5, 2 sp, Kaʻena Point, Oʻahu
- 3/5, >1000 sp, Hālonā Blowhole, Oʻahu
- 11/5, 5 sp, Wailua Bay, Kauaʻi
- 12/5, >100 sp, Makahūʻena Point, Kauaʻi
- 14/5, >50 sp, Kaʻulākahi Channel, Kauaʻi
- 15/2, >20 sp, Ninini Point, Kauaʻi

Ardenna pacifica

Sooty Shearwater

- 12/5, 1 sp?, Makahūʻena Point, Kauaʻi

*Ardenna grisea***Christmas Shearwater**

- 2/5, 1 sp, Hālonā Blowhole, Oʻahu
- 9/5, 1 sp, Hōlei Sea Arch, Hawaiʻi
- 14/5, 2-5 sp, Kaʻulākahi Channel, Kauaʻi
- 15/5, 7 sp, Ninini Point, Kauaʻi

Puffinus nativitatis

NOTE: In Hawaiʻi the Christmas Shearwater only breeds on the north-western islands and on the small offshore islands Moko Manu off Oʻahu and Kaʻula and Lehua. The best way to see this species is on a pelagic off Kauaʻi, but with some patience and a good spotting scope it can also be seen from shore off the west coast of Oʻahu or from Kauaʻi. We recorded good numbers at Ninini Point.

Newell's Shearwater

- 12/5, 6 sp, Makahūʻena Point, Kauaʻi
- 14/5, 6 sp, Kaʻulākahi Channel, Kauaʻi
- 14/5, heard, Kokeʻe State Park, Kauaʻi

Puffinus newelli newelli

NOTE: Newell's Shearwater is a near endemic species. Apart from breeding the Hawaiian Islands the race *myrtae* occurs on Rapa I. in the Austral Islands. Newell's Shearwater is sometimes considered conspecific with Townsend's Shearwater (*P. auricularis*). The species is most often recorded on pelagics off Kauaʻi, but we had no problem spotting them from shore at Makahūʻena Point.

Frigatebirds

Fregatidae

Great Frigatebird

Fregata minor palmerstoni

- 2/5, 3 sp, Hālonā Blowhole, O'āhu
- 3/5, 1 sp, Ka'ena Point, O'āhu
- 11/5, 1 sp, Wailua Bay, Kaua'i
- 12/5, >10 sp, Kīlauea Point NWR, Kaua'i
- 14/5, >20 sp, Lehua Islet

Boobies

Sulidae

Red-footed Booby

Sula sula rubripes

- 2/5, 5 sp, Hālonā Blowhole, O'āhu
- 3/5, 20 sp, Ka'ena Point, O'āhu
- 11/5, >100 sp, Wailua Bay, Kaua'i
- 12/5, common, Kīlauea Point NWR, Kaua'i
- 14/5, >100 sp, Lehua Islet
- 15/5, 40 sp, Ninini Point, Kaua'i

Brown Booby

Sula leucogaster plotus

- 2/5, 3 sp, Hālonā Blowhole, O'āhu
- 3/5, 3 sp, Ka'ena Point, O'āhu
- 3/5, 20 sp, Hālonā Blowhole, O'āhu
- 12/5, 3 sp, Kīlauea Point NWR, Kaua'i
- 14/5, 20 sp, Lehua Islet
- 15/5, 2 sp, Ninini Point, Kaua'i

Masked Booby

Sula dactylatra personata

- 3/5, 1 sp, Hālonā Blowhole, O'āhu
- 16/5, 1 sp, Hālonā Blowhole, O'āhu

Hérons

Ardeidae

Black-crowned Night Heron

Nycticorax nycticorax hoactli

- 2/5, 5 sp, James Campbell NWR, O'āhu
- 3/5, 5 sp, Waikīkī, O'āhu
- 11/5, 1 juv, Kona Coast, Hawai'i
- 12/5, 1 sp, Wilcox Pond, Hanalei, Kaua'i

[Western Cattle Egret]

Bubulcus ibis

- 2/5, common, O'āhu
- 3/5, common, O'āhu
- 4/5, common, O'āhu
- 5/5, 5 sp, Makawao, Maui
- 7/5, 20, Makawao-Kahului, Maui
- 8/5, 1 sp, Hilo, Hawai'i
- 12/5, >30 sp, Kaua'i
- 14/5, 1 sp, Kaua'i
- 15/5, 5 sp, Kaua'i

Golden Plovers

Pluvialidae

Pacific Golden Plover

2/5, 2 sp, Paiko Lagoon, O'ahu

3/5, 1 sp, O'ahu

4/5, 1 sp, Kuli'ou'ou Valley Trail, O'ahu

Pluvialis fulva

Stilts and Avocets

Recurvirostridae

Hawaiian Stilt

2/5, 20 sp, James Campbell NWR, O'ahu

12/5, 3 sp, Hanalei NWR, Kaua'i

Himantopus knudseni

NOTE: Stilt taxonomy remains controversial with different authorities recognising between one and five species in the Black-winged Stilt complex. The Hawaiian Stilt is often regarded as a race of Black-necked Stilt (*H. mexicanus*) from which it differs in being larger, having more black on head and neck and the white spot above the eye usually smaller or absent. James Campbell NWR is a reliable site to see this endangered shorebird.

Sandpipers

Scolopacidae

Bristle-thighed Curlew

2/5, 6 sp, James Campbell NWR, O'ahu

Numenius tahitiensis

NOTE: The Bristle-thighed Curlew is not an endemic, but is still on the target list for most birders visiting Hawaii as it is one of the easiest and most accessible places to see it. The species only breeds on the Arctic tundra in western Alaska and winters on islands in the central Pacific. James Campbell NWR is a reliable site and good numbers are found here during the winter season. In May most birds will have left for Alaska but a few birds often stay over summer.

Wandering Tattler

2/5, 3 sp, Paiko Lagoon, O'ahu

3/5, 1 sp, Ka'ena Point, O'ahu

12/5, 2 sp, Hā'ena Beach, Kaua'i

Tringa incana

Ruddy Turnstone

2/5, 20 sp, James Campbell NWR, O'ahu

12/5, 15 sp, Kaua'i

14/5, 2 sp, Kaua'i

Arenaria interpres

Sanderling

2/5, 1 sp, James Campbell NWR, O'ahu

Ereunetes albus

Skuas

Stercorariidae

Pomarine Skua

11/5, 1 ad, Wailua Bay, Kaua'i

14/5, 1 ad, Ka'ulakahi Channel, Kaua'i

Stercorarius pomarinus

Gulls, Terns and Skimmers

Laridae

Brown Noddy

- 2/5, 1 sp, Hālonā Blowhole, O'āhu
- 3/5, 30 sp, Hālonā Blowhole, O'āhu
- 14/5, 3 sp, Ka'ulākahi Channel, Kaua'i

Anous stolidus pileatus

Hawaiian Black Noddy

- 2/5, 1 sp, Nu'upia pond, O'āhu
- 10/5, >40 sp, Hōlei Sea Arch, Hawai'i
- 100/5, >100 sp, Na Pali Coast, Kaua'i

Anous minutus melanogenys

NOTE: Even though the Black Noddy is a widespread species it is worth looking for the distinct Hawaiian subspecies *melanogenys* which differs from other races by brighter orange legs and a paler rump and tail. The cliffs around the Hōlei Sea Arch at the end of the Chain of Craters road in Volcanoes NP on Hawai'i is a great place to get close-up views of this beautiful and distinct tern.

White Tern

- 2/5, 1 sp, 'Āina Haina, O'āhu
- 3/5, 3 sp, Waikīkī, O'āhu
- 4/5, 2 sp, Waikīkī, O'āhu

Gygis alba candida

Sooty Tern

- 2/5, >200 sp, Hālonā Blowhole, O'āhu
- 3/5, >500 sp, Hālonā Blowhole, O'āhu

Onychoprion fuscatus O'ahuensis

Spectacled (Grey-backed) Tern

- 2/5, 1 sp, Hālonā Blowhole, O'āhu
- 3/5, 1 sp, Hālonā Blowhole, O'āhu
- 14/5, 1 sp, Na Pali Coast, Kaua'i

Onychoprion lunatus

NOTE: If you haven't birded the Pacific this attractive species will probably be on your target list. In Hawai'i it mainly breeds the north-western islands, but there's also a small colony on Moku Manu off O'āhu and with patience it can be spotted among the much more common Sooty Terns from Hālonā Blowhole. It's also regularly recorded on pelagics off Kaua'i.

Laughing Gull

- 2/5, 1 sp, James Campbell NWR, O'āhu

Leucophaeus atricilla megalopterus

Ring-billed Gull

- 2/5, 2 sp, James Campbell NWR, O'āhu
- 14/5, 1 sp, Ka'ulākahi Channel, Kaua'i

Leucophaeus delawarensis

Hawks

Accipitridae

Hawaiian Hawk

- 9/5, 4 sp, Hakalau Forest NWR, Hawai'i

Buteo solitarius

NOTE: Hawaiian Hawk is the only extant raptor on the islands and is now restricted to the island of Hawai'i. It can be elusive and is easily overlooked but can be found all over the island. Hakalau Forest is one of the most reliable sites to see this species.

Barn Owls***Tytonidae***

[Common Barn Owl]

14/5, 3 sp, Koke'e State Park, Kaua'i

*Tyto alba***Typical Owls*****Strigidae***

Short-eared Owl

8/5, 1 sp, Pu'u Lā'au Reserve, Hawai'i

9/5, 1 sp, Hakalau Forest NWR, Hawai'i

12/5, 1 sp, Waimea Canyon Dr., Kaua'i

14/5, 2 sp, Waimea Canyon Dr., Kaua'i

15/5, 1 sp, Waimea Canyon Dr., Kaua'i

Asio flammeus sandwichensis

NOTE: The Short-eared Owls on Hawai'i belong to the endemic subspecies *sandwichensis*, but it differs only marginally from the nominate race and probably only colonised the islands after they were settled by the Polynesians.

Parrots***Psittacidae***

[Rose-ringed Parakeet]

2/5, 1 sp, 'Āina Haina, O'ahu

11/5, 2 sp, Lihu'e, Kaua'i

12/5, 1 sp, Lihu'e, Kaua'i

*Psittacula krameri***Monarchs*****Coliidae*****Hawai'i 'Elepaio*****Chasiempis sandwichensis***

"Mauna Kea 'Elepaio"

8/5, 2 sp + heard, Pu'u Lā'au Reserve, Hawai'i

var. "bryani"

"Volcano 'Elepaio"

8/5, 5 sp, Pu'u'ō'ō Trail, Hawai'i

9/5, 10 sp, Hakalau Forest NWR, Hawai'i

10/5, 7 sp, Pu'u'ō'ō Trail, Hawai'i

var. "ridgwayi"

"Kona 'Elepaio"

10/2, 2 sp, Manukā State Park, Hawai'i

var. "sandwichensis"

NOTE: The 'Elepaio has traditionally been considered one species with five races, one on O'ahu, one on Kaua'i and three on Hawai'i. However, recent genetic studies have shown that the O'ahu and Kaua'i races merit species status but found no genetic evidence of geographic population structure on Hawai'i. The 'Elepaio on Hawai'i is therefore better considered to be monotypic.

If you still want to see the different "variants" of Hawai'i 'Elepaio the pale "Mauna Kea 'Elepaio" is found in the same area as the Palila at the Pu'u Lā'au Reserve. The intermediate "Kona 'Elepaio" is easily found at Manukā State Park on the Kona coast and the dark "Volcano 'Elepaio" is common in the kīpukas along the Saddle road or at Hakalau Forest NWR.

Kaua'i 'Elepaio

13/5, 25 sp, Mōhihi Trail, Kaua'i
15/5, 5 sp, Pihea Trail, Kaua'i

NOTE: For information on taxonomy – see Hawaii 'Elepaio above. The Kaua'i 'Elepaio is one of the most common of the Kaua'i endemics and is easily seen in the Alaka'i Wilderness Reserve.

Chasiempis sclateri

O'ahu 'Elepaio

2/5, 2 sp + heard, Kuli'ou'ou Valley Trail, O'ahu
4/5, 2 sp, Kuli'ou'ou Valley Trail, O'ahu

Chasiempis gayi

NOTE: For information on taxonomy – see Hawaii 'Elepaio above. The O'ahu 'Elepaio is the most difficult of the three species with a population of only a few hundred individuals. The most easily accessible site is along the Kuli'ou'ou Valley Trail in the outskirts of Honolulu. If you miss it there a larger population is found in the nearby Wailupe Valley but it's a longer walk to get into good habitat.

Larks

Alaudidae

[Eurasian Skylark]

5/5, 5 sp, Haleakalā NP, Maui
6/5, 3 sp, Haleakalā NP, Maui
7/5, 2 sp, Haleakalā NP, Maui
8/5, 10 sp, Saddle Road, Hawai'i
9/5, 10 sp, Saddle Road, Hawai'i

Alauda arvensis

Bulbuls

Pycnonotidae

[Red-whiskered Bulbul]

2/5, 1 sp, Kuli'ou'ou Valley Trail, O'ahu
3/5, 1 sp, O'ahu
4/5, 1 sp, Kuli'ou'ou Valley Trail, O'ahu

Pycnonotus jocosus

[Red-vented Bulbul]

2/5, common, O'ahu
3/5, common, O'ahu
4/5, 10 sp, O'ahu

Pycnonotus cafer

Cettid Warblers

Cettiidae

[Japanese Bush Warbler]

5/5, 1 sp + heard, Waikamoi Preserve, Maui
6/5, heard, Waikamoi Preserve, Maui
7/5, heard, Waikamoi Preserve, Maui
13/5, heard, Koke'e State Park, Kaua'i
15/5, 2 sp + heard, Pihea Trail, Kaua'i

Horeites diphone

White-eyes

Zosteropidae

[Japanese White-eye]

A common species seen on most dates

Zosterops japonicus

Laughingthrushes

Leiothrichidae

[Chinese Hwamei]

- 13/5, 1 sp, Koke'e State Park, Kaua'i
- 14/5, 5 sp, Koke'e State Park, Kaua'i
- 15/5, 1 sp + heard, Koke'e State Park, Kaua'i

Leucodioptron canorum

[Red-billed Leiothrix]

- 2/5, 5 sp, Kuli'ou'ou Valley Trail, O'ahu
- 4/5, 5 sp, Kuli'ou'ou Valley Trail, O'ahu
- 5/5, heard, Waikamoi Preserve, Maui
- 6/5, 4 sp, Waikamoi Preserve, Maui
- 7/5, 2 sp, Waikamoi Preserve, Maui
- 8/5, 3 sp, Pu'u'ō'ō Trail, Hawai'i
- 9/5, heard, Hakalau Forest NWR, Hawai'i

Leiothrix lutea

Mockingbirds and Thrashers

Mimidae

[Northern Mockingbird]

- 4/5, 2 sp, Makawao-Pūlehu, Maui
- 6/5, 1 sp, Makawao-Pūlehu, Maui
- 7/5, 1 sp, Makawao-Pūlehu, Maui
- 9/5, 1 sp, Saddle Road, Hawai'i
- 15/5, 3 sp, Kaua'i

Mimus polyglottos

Starlings

Sturnidae

[Common Myna]

- A common species recorded on all dates

Acridotheres tristis

Thrushes

Turdidae

'Ōma'o

- 8/5, 7 sp, Pu'u'ō'ō Trail, Hawai'i
- 9/5, 10 sp, Hakalau Forest NWR, Hawai'i
- 10/5, 4 sp + heard, Pu'u'ō'ō Trail, Hawai'i

Myadestes obscurus

NOTE: The endemic solitaires of Hawai'i are a sad story with three species now extinct and the Puaiohi critically endangered. The one exception is the 'Ōma'o which is still common and easily found in the kīpukas along the Saddle road or at Hakalau Forest NWR.

Puaiohi

- 13/5, 3 sp + 2 sp heard, Mōhihi Trail, Kaua'i

Myadestes palmer

NOTE: The Puaiohi is one of the rarest birds of Hawai'i with a population of only 200-500 birds restricted to the Alaka'i Wilderness Preserve on Kaua'i. Thanks to a successful captive breeding program the population is now stable. You should not use playback in the preserve and the species can be very difficult to find without knowing where their territories are located. To have a better chance it's recommended to hire a guide with knowledge of the birds, such as David Kuhn.

Old World Flycatchers

Muscicapidae

[White-rumped Shama]

Copsychus malabaricus

2/5, 2 sp + heard, Kuli'ou'ou Valley Trail, O'ahu

4/5, 5 sp, Kuli'ou'ou Valley Trail, O'ahu

12/5, 3 sp, Kaua'i

13/5, 2 sp + heard, Koke'e State Park, Kaua'i

14/5, 2 sp, Koke'e State Park, Kaua'i

15/5, 5 sp + heard, Pihea Trail, Kaua'i

Waxbills, Munias and Allies

Estrildidae

[African Silverbill]

Euodice cantans

14/5, 1 sp, Waimea Canyon Dr., Kaua'i

[Java Sparrow]

Lonchura oryzivora

3/5, 5 sp, Wai'anae, O'ahu

[Scaly-breasted Munia]

Lonchura punctulata

2/5, 5 sp, Nu'upia pond, O'ahu

12/5, 1 sp, Kaua'i

[Chestnut Munia]

Lonchura atricapilla

2/5, 10 sp, Nu'upia pond, O'ahu

12/5, 10 sp, Kaua'i

[Common Waxbill]

Estrilda astrild

2/5, 20 sp, James Campbell NWR, O'ahu

3/5, common, Ka'ena Point, O'ahu

Sparrows

Passeridae

[House Sparrow]

Passer domesticus

A common species, recorded on most dates

Finches

Fringillidae

'Akikiki

Oreomystis bairdi

13/5, 2 sp, Mōhihi Trail, Kaua'i

NOTE: The 'Akikiki is, together with the 'Akeke'e, probably the most threatened Hawaiian endemic. The species used to be common on Kaua'i but the population is now declining very rapidly and the range is contracting following the same pattern as species that has previously gone extinct on Kaua'i. It is now only reliably found in the eastern part of Alaka'i and in 2007 the population was estimated at around 1,300 birds.

Maui 'Alauahio

Paroreomyza montana

5-6/5, 30 sp, Waikamoi Preserve, Maui

7/5, 20 sp, Waikamoi Preserve, Maui

NOTE: The Maui Alauahio is still common and easily found at the Waikamoi Preserve.

Palila***Loxioides bailleui***

8/5, 4-8 sp, Pu'u Lā'au Reserve, Hawai'i

NOTE: The critically endangered Palila is restricted to a small area of dry māmane forest on the upper slopes of Mauna Kea volcano. It is the only one of three extant finch-like Hawaiian honeycreepers that can be seen by visiting birders, since access to both Nihoa and Laysan is prohibited.

The best site to see the species is Pu'u Lā'au Reserve where they can be detected by listening for their contact call –a clear and loud, bell-like whistle.

‘Ākohekohe***Palmeria dolei***

5/5, 1 sp + heard, Waikamoi Preserve, Maui

NOTE: The only easily accessible site to see this spectacular and critically endangered species is at the Waikamoi Preserve on Maui. It is scarce and can be tricky to find but listen for the characteristic whee-o, whee-o call and look for them feeding in the red flowers of the ‘ōhi’a lehua trees.

‘Apapane***Himatione sanguinea***

2/5, >5 sp, ‘Aiea Loop Trail, O‘ahu
 4/5, 2 sp, Kuli‘ou‘ou Valley Trail, O‘ahu
 5-7/5, common, Waikamoi Preserve, Maui
 8/5, 15 sp, Pu‘u‘ō‘ō Trail, Hawai‘i
 9/5, >50 sp, Hakalau Forest NWR, Hawai‘i
 10/5, 20 sp, Pu‘u‘ō‘ō Trail, Hawai‘i
 13/5, 15 sp + heard, Mōhihi Trail, Kaua‘i
 15/5, 20 sp, Pihea Trail, Kaua‘i

NOTE: The ‘Apapane is the most common of the Hawaiian honeycreepers and the fact that it seems to have developed some resistance to avian malaria offers hope for the future.

‘Iiwi***Vestiaria coccinea***

5/5, 20 sp, Hosmer Grove/Waikamoi Pr., Maui
 6-7/5, 15 sp, Hosmer Grove/Waikamoi Pr., Maui
 8/5, 10 sp, Pu‘u‘ō‘ō Trail, Hawai‘i
 9/5, 50 sp, Hakalau Forest NWR, Hawai‘i
 10/5, 5 sp, Pu‘u‘ō‘ō Trail, Hawai‘i
 13/5, 3 sp + heard, Mōhihi Trail, Kaua‘i
 15/5, 2 sp, Pihea Trail, Kaua‘i

NOTE: The ‘Iiwi is still fairly common, especially on Maui and Hawai‘i where good numbers were recorded at Waikamoi Preserve, along the Pu‘u‘ō‘ō trail and at Hakalau Forest NWR.

‘Akiapōlā‘au***Hemignathus wilsoni***

8/5, 1 male, Pu‘u‘ō‘ō Trail, Hawai‘i
 10/5, 1 subad, Pu‘u‘ō‘ō Trail, Hawai‘i

NOTE: The ‘Akiapōlā‘au is perhaps the most special and sought after of all Hawaiian endemics. Since the Nukupu‘u is now generally thought to be extinct the “Aki” is the only surviving species with this unique bill design. The species is considered endangered and can be tricky to find. One of the most reliable sites is the Pu‘u‘ō‘ō Trail where it should be looked for feeding in Koa trees. It is also frequently encountered in the Hakalau Forest NWR.

‘Anianiau

13/5, 7 sp + heard, Mōhihi Trail, Kaua‘i
 15/5, 3 sp + heard, Pihea Trail, Kaua‘i

Magumma parva

NOTE: The ‘Anianiau is doing better than some of the other Kaua‘i endemics and is still easily found in Koke‘e State Park, eg. along the Pihea and Alaka‘i Swamp Trails.

Hawai‘i Creeper

9/5, 6 sp, Hakalau Forest NWR, Hawai‘i

Loxops mana

NOTE: Hawai‘i Creeper and Maui Parrotbill are the only Hawaiian honeycreepers for which no native name is known. Hakalau Forest NWR is a reliable site for this endangered and declining species.

‘Akeke‘e

13/5, 3 sp + 1-2 heard, Mōhihi Trail, Kaua‘i

Loxops caeruleirostris

NOTE: The ‘Akeke‘e is following the same pattern of rapid decline and contracting range as the ‘Akikiki. Only a few years ago it was still easily found but it is now the most difficult of the Kaua‘i endemics and there is a great risk that ‘Akeke‘e will be the next Hawaiian endemic to become extinct. It is now only found in the eastern part of Alaka‘i.

Hawai‘i ‘Ākepa

9/5, 7 sp, Hakalau Forest NWR, Hawai‘i

Loxops coccineus

NOTE: The Hawai‘i ‘Ākepa is also known as ‘Akakane. The species is considered endangered and is most easily found at Hakalau Forest NWR.

Hawai‘i ‘Amakihi

8/5, 50 sp, Pu‘u Lā‘au Reserve, Hawai‘i
 9/5, 20 sp, Hakalau Forest NWR, Hawai‘i
 10/5, 20 sp, Pu‘u‘ō‘ō Trail, Hawai‘i

Chlorodrepanis virens virens**Hawai‘i ‘Amakihi**

5/5, 7 sp, Waikamoi Preserve, Maui
 6-7/5, 5 sp, Waikamoi Preserve, Maui

Chlorodrepanis virens wilsoni

NOTE: The nominate subspecies is common and easily found on Hawai‘i. It was especially numerous at the Pu‘u Lā‘au Reserve. The “Maui ‘Amakihi” (race *wilsoni*) differs by having a faint white wing bar as an immature. Although not as numerous it is still easily seen at the Waikamoi Preserve.

O‘ahu ‘Amakihi

2/5, 2 sp + heard, ‘Aiea Loop Trail, O‘ahu

Chlorodrepanis flavus

NOTE: The ‘Aiea Loop Trail is a reliable stake-out for this species which seem to be developing resistance to avian malaria.

Kaua‘i ‘Amakihi

13/5, 2 sp + heard, Mōhihi Trail, Kaua‘i
 15/5, 2 sp + heard, Pihea Trail, Kaua‘i

Chlorodrepanis stejnegeri

NOTE: This species is doing much better than some of the other Kaua‘i endemics and can readily be found at the Koke‘e State Park – the Pihea Trail is a good place to look for it.

[House Finch] *Burrica mexicana*
A common species, recorded on most dates

[Yellow-fronted Canary] *Ochrospiza mozambica*
8/5, 3 sp, Pu'u Lā'au Reserve, Hawai'i
11/5, 1 sp, Pu'uhonua o Hōnaunau, Hawai'i

New World Blackbirds *Icteridae*

[Western Meadowlark] *Sturnella neglecta*
12/5, 2 sp, Kīpū, Kaua'i
12/5, 2 sp, Kīlauea, Kaua'i

Cardinal-Grosbeaks *Cardinalidae*

[Northern Cardinal] *Cardinalis cardinalis*
Recorded in small numbers on most dates,
appeared to be less common on Maui

Tanagers *Thraupidae*

[Red-crested Cardinal] *Paroaria coronata*
Fairly common on O'ahu and Kaua'i,
not recorded on Hawai'i or Maui

[Yellow-billed Cardinal] *Paroaria capitata*
10/5, 1 sp, Punalu'u Beach, Hawai'i
10/5, 4 sp, Keauhou Bay, Hawai'i
11/5, 5 sp, Pu'uhonua o Hōnaunau, Hawai'i

[Saffron Finch] *Sicalis flaveola*
10/5, 2 sp, Punalu'u Beach, Hawai'i
11/5, 2 sp, Pu'uhonua o Hōnaunau, Hawai'i

NATIVE MAMMALS

Endemic or range restricted species in **red bold** typeface.

Earless Seals

Phocidae

Hawaiian Monk Seal

Monachus schauinslandi

3/5, 1 sp, Ka'ena Point, O'ahu

14/5, 1 sp, Lehua Islet

NOTE: The native name for this species is 'Ilio-holo-i-ka-uaua, which means "dog that runs in rough water". It is one of the rarest seals in the world with a population of only about 1,100 individuals and is considered to be critically endangered. With a little luck they can be seen eg. along O'ahu's east coast, but the most reliable site is at Ka'ena Point.

Vesper Bats

Vespertilionidae

Hawaiian Hoary Bat

Lasiurus cinereus semotus

10/5, 1-3 sp, Keauhou Bay, Hawai'i

NOTE: The Hawaiian Hoary Bat is Hawaii's only native land mammal. They are widespread on the islands but can nonetheless be tricky to find. Keauhou Bay on Hawai'i is a well known stake-out.

Rorquals

Balaenopteridae

Humpback Whale

Megaptera novaeangliae

2/5, 2 sp, Hālonā Blowhole, O'ahu

3/5, 1 sp, Hālonā Blowhole, O'ahu

Marine Dolphins

Delphinidae

Spinner Dolphin

Stenella longirostris

14/5, 25 sp, Na Pali Coast, Kaua'i

REPTILES

Sea Turtles

Cheloniidae

Green Turtle

Chelonia mydas

8/5, 1 sp, Hilo, Hawai'i

12/5, 3 sp, Makahū'ena Point, Kaua'i

14/5, 2 sp, Na Pali Coast, Kaua'i