

VICTOR EMANUEL NATURE TOURS, INC.

KAUAI SEABIRDS PRE-TRIP

March 18-19, 2005

&

KAUAI and HAWAII:

The Garden Isle and the Big Island

March 19 – March 27, 2005

Leaders: Bob Sundstrom and Brennan Mulrooney

(Itinerary and lists compiled by Bob Sundstrom)

ITINERARY SKETCH

KAUAI SEABIRDS PRE-TRIP:

Pre-trip Day 1 – Friday, March 18: Arrivals Lihue, Kauai, and get-acquainted dinner. Night in Kapaa.

Pre-trip Day 2 – Saturday, March 19: Early morning departure to Port Allen for catamaran trip to Na Pali Coast and then snorkeling near island of Niihau. Afternoon break prior to dinner with full tour group for the start of Kauai & Hawaii main tour.

KAUAI and HAWAII TOUR:

Day 1 Tuesday, March 19: Arrivals Lihue, Kauai, and get-acquainted dinner with full group. First of three nights in Kapaa.

Day 2 Wednesday, March 20: On the first full day of birding on Kauai, we worked counter-clockwise around Kauai from Kapaa to the north shore, with stops near Kapuna Rd., at Kilauea Pt. National Wildlife Refuge, Hanalei Bay Resort (lunch), Hanalei National Wildlife Refuge, and Wainiha Rd. Seabirds were the principal stars today, with great views of Laysan Albatross, Red-tailed and White-tailed tropicbirds, Red-footed Booby, and Great Frigatebird. Other nice sightings included Nene, Koloa (Hawaiian Duck), and Melodious Laughing-Thrush. Dinner at Coconuts in Kapaa. Night in Kapaa.

Day 3 Thursday, March 21: An early morning departure took us first to breakfast in Kalaheo, before driving up along Waimea Canyon, stopping enroute to bird and enjoy a couple of scenic overlooks. Reaching Kokee Forest, we birded the native forest along roadsides, overlooks, and trails. After lunch at the Kokee general store, we worked back down along Waimea Canyon, stopping for views of Pueo. Back at sea level on Kauai's west shore, we visited the Kekaha Ponds and Hanapepe Salt Ponds. Today's highlights included stunning scenery, and good views of Kauai endemic bird species Akekee, Kauai Amakihi, Anianiau, and Kauai's Elepaio, plus our first Apapanes, Pueos, Japanese Bush-Warbler, Erckel's Francolin, and downy Black-necked Stilt chicks. Dinner at Mema Thai; final night in Kapaa.

Day 4 Friday, March 22: Today we took an early flight to Kona (via Honolulu), arriving in time to board an 11:30 a.m. whale-watching trip out of Honokohou Harbor along the Kona coast, on which we had both saw and heard Humpback Whales. Heading north from Kona, we drove briefly up Kaloko Dr. and then continued north with birding stops near Puu Anahulu (golf club area) and Waimea. Great views of beautiful male Black Francolins today, as well as Warbling Silverbill, Saffron Finch, Yellow-billed Cardinal, and Yellow-fronted Canary. First of two nights in Kamuela/Waimea.

Day 5 Saturday, March 23: After breakfast at the hotel, we drove out the Saddle Rd. to bird near Puu Laau on the dry side of Mauna Kea where we had great luck in finding a number of endangered Palila, plus the *bryani* form of Elepaio and lots of Common Amakihis. Enroute we saw a number of Pueo, including birds perched on fence posts right along the road. After lunch in

Waimea we drove north through the high cattle country on Kohala to the town of Hawi. We birded there and along Upolu Rd near the northwest tip of the Big Island – where we had excellent looks at both Gray and more Black francolins – before driving back to Waimea. Dinner at Merriman’s; last night in Kamuela.

Day 6 Sunday, March 24: Driving south from Kamuela/Waimea after breakfast, we made a series of birding stops enroute to Kona, getting nice views of Gray Francolin in Waimea and our first view of a soaring Hawaiian Hawk or Io along Kaloko Drive. Near Honokohou Harbor, a walk down the beach took us to Aimakapa Pond and some great views of Hawaiian Coots, as well as stilts, tattlers, and other shorebirds, as a Green Sea Turtle foraged very close to shore. Further south, we had a much better view of a soaring Hawaiian Hawk, stopped for lunch at the historic Manago Hotel, and visited a Kona coffee roaster, before driving on to Hawaii Volcanoes National Park. First of three nights at Volcano House in the National Park.

Day 7 Monday, March 25: An early departure from the Volcano House took us down through Hilo for a four-wheel drive excursion to the east side of Mauna Kea into Hakalau Forest National Wildlife Refuge. There we birded until mid-afternoon under ideal weather conditions, finding loads of amazing scarlet Iiwis, plus endangered endemics Akepa, Akiapolaau, and Hawaii Creeper, as well as Omao and Elepaio. Returning through Hilo, we had dinner at Café Pesto, before returning for a second night at Volcano House.

Day 8 Tuesday, March 26: A full day in and near the national park: Breakfast overlooking Kilauea Caldera, and then birding in Bird Park on the Mauna Loa Rd., with amazing views of Elepaio right next to the trail and Kalij Pheasants right on the trail. Mid-morning began a tour of Volcanoes Park by exploring Thurston Lava Tube and then Halemaumau Crater and Puu Puai cinder cone and Devastation Trail. After lunch near the park and an afternoon break, we stopped at Jaggar Museum before driving down Chain of Craters Road to the end of road, stopping enroute to look at the pahoehoe and a'a flows and “Pele's hair” in the Mauna Ulu lava fields. Near the end of the road we watched Black Noddies roosting and flying along the black lava sea cliffs, and then the group walked across the pahoehoe flows of recent years to an overlook. As sunset and then dusk arrived we had some wonderful views of red lava flowing in the distance, flowing down the hillside and emptying into the ocean amid enormous steam clouds. Dinner and final night at Volcano House.

Day 9 Wednesday, March 27: A final breakfast overlooking Kilauea Caldera at the Volcano House, then on to Hilo for departures.

BIRD LIST

BIRD LIST LOCATION KEY:

PK = Pelagic Pre-trip sightings
H = Hawaii (a.k.a. the Big Island)
K = Kauai

[**note:** species in *bold italics* are **Hawaiian Islands endemic species or subspecies**
species in ***CAPITALIZED BOLD ITALICS*** are **endangered Hawaiian endemics**
species in **plain bold** are otherwise especially noteworthy sightings, rare or unusual]

TUBENOSES:

Laysan Albatross (*Diomedea immutabilis*) – PK,K. At least a dozen Laysan Albatrosses were seen on the catamaran pre-trip, some close enough to the boat to see very well. The views of albatrosses at Kilauea Pt. National Wildlife Refuge were impeccable, with some adults flying right along the edge of the lighthouse bluff at eye level. A large, gray chick was scoped on the grassy nesting area nearby.

Black-footed Albatross (*Diomedea nigripes*) – PK. One flew fairly close to the catamaran for a good view, while one or two others were seen farther off. Scarce in the nearby area.

Wedge-tailed Shearwater - (*Puffinus pacificus*) – PK,K. This species was seen on the wing during the catamaran trip, and in a nest burrow at Kilauea Pt., where several uttered their eerie cries typically heard only after dark.

TROPICBIRDS, BOOBIES, and FRIGATEBIRDS

White-tailed Tropicbird (*Phaeton lepturus*) – PK,K. Several of these beautiful seabirds were seen in flight at Kilauea Pt., while others were seen flying along the ledges of 3000 ft. deep Waimea Canyon, where they nest in the cliffs

Red-tailed Tropicbird (*Phaeton rubricauda*) - K. We had amazingly close views of these wonderfully elegant seabirds at Kilauea Pt., right down to the wire-like, red tail feathers that give them their name. One of the highlights of the tour!

Brown Booby (*Sula leucogaster*) – PK,K. Lots of excellent views on the catamaran trip, plus a few seen flying by at Kilauea Pt.

Red-footed Booby (*Sula sula*) - PK,K. Very close views at Kilauea Pt. of boobies flying by, some carrying nest material, while the adjacent hillside hosted hundreds of nesting pairs.

Great Frigatebird (*Fregata minor*) – PK,K. Seen best at Kilauea, where several winged very close by or chased down boobies to pirate their catch.

HERONS:

Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*) – K,H

Black-crowned Night-Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) – K,H; especially numerous at Kekaha ponds on Kauai

GEESE & DUCKS:

NENE (*Branta sandvicensis*) –K,H; Seen first on Kauai at Kilauea Pt. NWR and Hanalei NWR, and later at Big Is. Country Club on Hawaii. Hawaii's state bird is endangered.

Green-winged Teal (*Anas crecca*) – K; a hen at the Kekaha Ponds

KOLOA [HAWAIIAN DUCK] (*Anas wyvilliana*) – K; dozens at Hanalei NWR on Kauai

Northern Pintail (*Anas acuta*) – H; a drake at Aimakapa Pond

American Wigeon (*Anas americana*) - H; a hen at Aimakapa Pond

Ring-necked Duck (*Aythya collaris*) - H; three female at Aimakapa Pond

Lesser Scaup (*Aythya affinis*) - H; six or eight at Aimakapa Pond

EAGLES, HAWKS & ALLIES:

IO [HAWAIIAN HAWK] (*Buteo solitarius*) - H. We saw soaring birds at several locations, first along Kaloko Dr. and then later the same day much closer over the road south of Kona.

Two soared together and seemed interact fairly aggressively at Hakalau Forest NWR.

GALLINACEOUS BIRDS:

Black Francolin (*Francolinus francolinus*) – K,H. This was the most amazing tour for seeing stunning male Black Francolins, starting with a couple at close range near the golf course at Puu Anahulu, and a whole series of birds just southwest of Hawi, among others. A crowing male was heard on Kauai along the Waimea Canyon.

Erckel's Francolin (*Francolinus erckelii*) – K,H. First seen along the road on Kauai near Waimea Canyon, we later saw a number of them – some very close at hand – on the Big Island from Puu Anahulu to the road into Hakalau.

Gray Francolin (*Francolinus pondicerianus*) – H. After looking for this species for some time along back roads, one literally flew in front of the van and landed on the road for close inspection. Seen again very nicely at the Waimea horse arena and Big Is. Country Club.

Chukar (*Alectoris chukar*) – PK,H. We saw a Chukar on the island of Niihau from the catamaran, and others on the east side of Mauna Kea as we were enroute to Hakalau NWR.

Kalij Pheasant (*Lophura leucomelana*) - H; amazingly close views at Bird Park along the Mauna Loa road

Red Junglefowl (*Gallus gallus*) - K; well established in the wild in the Kokee area

Ring-necked Pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*) – K,H

Wild Turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*) - H

California Quail (*Callipepla californica*) - H

MOORHENS & COOTS:

COMMON MOORHEN [Hawaiian subspecies] (*Gallinula chloropsis sandvicensis*) - K

HAWAIIAN COOT (*Fulica alai*) – K,H; seen nicely at Aimakapa Pond, including a great scope study of one on a nest, showing its enormous all-white frontal shield

SHOREBIRDS:

Pacific Golden-Plover (*Pluvialis pacifica*) – K,H. Widespread on both islands, with some nearly in full breeding plumage, ready for the flight to their Alaskan breeding grounds in May.

BLACK-NECKED STILT [Hawaiian subspecies] (*Himantopus mexicanus knudseni*) – K,H.

A somewhat darker faced subspecies of this stilt, we had our best views of them at Aimakapa Pond on the Big Island. At Hanapepe Salt Ponds, we saw a couple of small, gray, downy chicks.

Wandering Tattler (*Heteroscelus incanus*)- K,H; scoped on the black lava rock Kona shoreline

Ruddy Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*) – K,H

Sanderling (*Calidris alba*) - H; seen best on the black lava shoreline near Aimakapa Pond

JAEGERS, GULLS, & TERNS:

Sooty Tern (*Sterna fuscata*) – PK; a pair flew by the catamaran during the return trip

Black Noddy (*Anous minutus*) - H. This Pacific form of Black Noddy has grayish-white dusting on the upper tail surface and orange feet. Despite the windy conditions, we had excellent views of noddies along the black sea cliffs near the end of Chain of Craters Rd.

SANDGROUSE, PIGEONS & DOVES:

Rock Dove (*Columba livia*) – K,H

Spotted Dove (*Streptopilia chinensis*) – K,H

Zebra Dove (*Geopelia striata*) – K,H

OWLS:

Pueo [Short-eared Owl - Hawaiian subspecies] (*Asio flammeus sandwichensis*) – K,H. Our first looks at the Hawaiian subspecies of Short-eared Owl were along the lower part of Waimea Canyon; later we had stunning views of perched and flying birds along the Saddle Rd. on Hawaii.

LARKS to BULBULS:

Sky Lark (*Alauda arvensis*) – H; surprisingly prevalent on grassy areas on the north side of the Big Island, some singing beautifully

BULBULS:

Red-vented Bulbul (*Pycnonotus cafer*) – seen on Oahu at the Honolulu airport during the wait for the flight to Kona.

MONARCHS, FANTAILS, and ALLIES

Elepaio (*Chasiempis sandwichensis*) – K,H. We saw several distinct forms of this endemic on the two islands. It is very likely that the Kauai form (*sclateri*) will be designated a separate species from the Hawaii forms in the near future. On the Big Island we saw the forms *bryani* (Mauna Kea dry side) and *ridgewayi* (at Hakalau and at Bird Park in Volcanoes NP, where we had a terrific view of several next to the trail).

OLD WORLD WARBLERS

Japanese Bush-Warbler (*Cettia diphone*) - K. Heard near Hanalei NWR, then seen at one of the overlooks onto Waimea Canyon: an astoundingly loud singer.

THRUSHES and BABBLERS

White-rumped Shama (*Copsychus malabaricus*) – K; seen very well right at Aloha Beach Resort, and later on the north shore of Kauai.

Omao [Hawaiian Thrush] (*Myadestes obscurus*) - H; seen several places during the walk in Hakalau Forest NWR, and heard at Hawaii Volcanoes National Park

Melodious Laughing-Thrush (*Garrulax canorus*) – K,H; scoped on the ground near Kapuna Rd. on the north shore of Kauai, and heard a number of other places, including Kokee Forest.

Red-billed Leiothrix (*Leiothrix lutea*) - H; heard a lot, seen near Puu Laau on Mauna Kea

MIMIDS

Northern Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*) – K,H. Although scarce and local in the islands, we saw mockingbirds in several places, including the north shore of Kauai, Kekaha Ponds on Kauai, and at the Waimea airport on the Big Island.

MYNAS

Common Myna (*Acridotheres tristis*) – K,H; truly common

WHITE-EYES

Japanese White-eye (*Zosterops japonicus*) – K,H; widespread, in most habitats

EMBERIZIDS

Northern Cardinal (*Cardinalis cardinalis*) – K,H

Red-crested Cardinal (*Paroaria coronata*) – K; a fancy cardinal from Brazil

Yellow-billed Cardinal (*Paroaria capitata*) - H; all along the west half of the Big Island

Saffron Finch (*Sicalis flaveola*) - H; another beautiful introduction to the Kona region

Western Meadowlark (*Sturnella neglecta*) - K; mostly on Kauai's north and east shores, but also seen at the Hanapepe airstrip

INTRODUCED CARDUELINE FINCHES:

House Finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*) – K,H; males tending toward orange to yellow-orange

Yellow-fronted Canary (*Serinus mozambicus*) – H; a fancy exotic from Africa

HAWAIIAN HONEYCREEPERS and FINCHES (DREPANIDINES)

PALILA (*Loxoides bailleui*) - H. We had exceptional good fortune with this endangered Big Island endemic finch, getting nice views of several soon after we arrived in the mamane/naio dry forest on the west side of Mauna Kea.

Common/Hawaii Amakihi (*Hemignathus virens*) - H; quite common and easily seen in the Palila area, and equally prevalent at Hakalau, with males singing constantly at both sites

Kauai Amakihi (*Hemignathus stejnegeri*) – K; excellent views in Kokee Forest of this amakihi species with the long, decurved bill

Anianiau (*Hemignathus parvus*) - K; several bright yellow-green males foraged in the open

AKIAPOLAAU (*Hemignathus munroi*) – H. Just at the end of the walk in Hakalau Forest NWR, a male Aki' began singing in the canopy, where this rare and endangered bird was seen by part of the group.

HAWAII CREEPER (*Oreomystis mana*) - H. An endangered Big Island endemic, we watched several birds foraging and heard a number of males singing (at Hakalau Forest NWR).

AKEPA (*Loxops coccineus*) - H. Brilliant studies of tangerine colored males at Hakalau as they perched in trees for excellent views or hovered in song flights – truly a trip highlight. Another endangered Big Island endemic

Akekee (*Loxops caeruleirostris*) - K. A Kauai endemic, we watched several at some distance foraging in the tops of ohia trees before finding found one in a tree right where we were parked in Kokee forest where we were able to study it in detail.

Iiwi (*Vestiaria coccinea*) – H. A group favorite among the Hawaiian endemics we saw, we were able to watch them all day long at Hakalau Forest NWR, admiring their brilliant red feathers and long, decurved red bills, a nice fit with their varied, reedy voices.

Apapane (*Himatione sanguinea*) - K,H. The most prevalent and widespread of all the Hawaiian endemic forests, this red honeycreeper had a gentle song that became very familiar during our time in the native forest.

OLD WORLD SPARROWS AND ESTRILDID FINCHES

House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) – K,H

Red Avadavat (*Amandava amandava*) - H; very tiny, with deep red rumps and tails

Warbling Silverbill (*Lonchura malabarica*) – H; quite a few, seen well

Nutmeg Mannikin (*Lonchura punctulata*) - K,H

Chestnut Mannikin (*Lonchura malacca*) - K; lots of these handsome exotics

Java Sparrow (*Padda oryzivora*) – K,H

MAMMALS, HERPS & BUTTERFLIES:

Humpback Whale – PK,H. The catamaran trip encountered lots of Humpbacks: breaching, tail-slapping, fin-slapping, and more. The whale-watch trip from Kona got us some very close views of a few whales, but the biggest thrill was hearing a male singing from very near the boat!

Spinner Dolphin – PK

Hawaiian Monk Seal – PK. An endangered species, seen at Niihau.

Small Indian Mongoose – H

Feral Sheep – PK; a few on cliffs above the Niihau shoreline

Feral Goat – PK,K; from the catamaran along the Na Pali coast, and also seen along upper Waimea Canyon

Green Turtle – K,H; at Kilauea Pt. NWR and along the Kona rocky beach

Gold Dust Day Gecko - H; a beautiful, rainbow-colored gecko at the Kona coffee plantation

Green (American) Anole - K

BUTTERFLIES (identified by Brennan):

Blackburn's Blue – K,H

King Kamehameha Butterfly – K

Monarch – K,H
Cabbage White – K,H
Gulf Fritillary – K
Citrus Swallowtail – K,H
Small Lantana Butterfly - K