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SEABIRDS OF EASTER ISLAND

An important report on the seabirds of Easter Island, soon to be published in a scientific journal, has been made available to us and we are pleased to print excerpts here for the benefit of Chilean ornithologists.

"The Island first became well-known on account of the enormous stone statues which were found there in quantity and whose origin has greatly intrigued archaeologists from the time of Mrs. Routhedge (The Mystery of Easter Island) published in 1919 onwards. Heyerdahl to the contrary, the consensus of opinion among archaeologists today is that the island was settled originally by a people of Polynesian origin, and there can be no doubt that the affinities of the present inhabitants, as also those of the seabirds, are with Polynesian rather than with any part of the Americas.

It is also quite clear that originally there were no landbirds at all and even today they are limited to 4 species - The House Sparrow, Diuca Finch, Chilean Tinamou and Chimango Carrion Hawk - all of them introduced since the Chilean occupation of the island in 1888. Even around the coasts the lack of birds is at once apparent - no gulls, no cormorants, no oyster-catchers or other waders - only an occasional booby (gannet) or tropic bird against the dark background of lava cliffs.

During our three weeks stay on the island (December 10th-30th. 1968), of which 12 days were spent on the islet of Moto-Nui, we obtained specimens or entirely reliable sight records of the following species:

<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>Islanders' Name</u>	<u>English Name</u>	<u>Status</u>
<i>Puffinus hativitis</i>	Kumá	Christmas Island Shearwater	Specimens & eggs
<i>Pterodroma neglects</i>	Kakápa	Kermadec Petrel	specimen and 1 egg
<i>Pterodroma heraldica</i>	Kakápa	Herald Petrel	specimen not nesting.
<i>Fregeta Minor</i>	Makócha	Great Frigate-bird	specimen not nesting.
<i>Haeton rubricauda</i>	Taváke	Red-tailed tropic bird	specimen and 1 egg
<i>Sterna fuscata luctuosa</i>	Manutara	Sooty Tern	specimen & eggs
<i>Anous stolidus pileatus</i>	Tuán	Brown Noddy	specimen & eggs.

<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>Islanders' Name</u>	<u>English Name</u>	<u>Status</u>
<i>Procelsterna albivittata</i> skottsbergi	Tavi	Grey Noddy	Scarce, not nesting
<i>Sterna lunata</i>	Manutara	Grey-Backed Tern	Scarce, not nesting
<i>Sybis alba rayana</i>	Kiakia	White Tern	Scarce, not nesting
<i>Sula dactylatra</i>	Kena	Blue-faced Boody	Scarce, not nesting

To this list should be added:

<i>Macronektes gigantea</i>	Rurú	Giant Petrel, as a ringed specimen of this bird was picked up and reported by the islanders not long before our visit.
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Of these 12 species, the Sooty Tern is of world-wide distribution within tropical seas, the Giant Petrel is a wanderer or vagrant from sub-antarctic latitudes while all the rest are of Polynesian origin. It can be said, therefore, that the birds of the American continents are not represented at all.

The finding and identification of Puffinus nativitatis, duly confirmed by leading ornithologist of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, is of particular interest, not only because it represents a new species for Chilean territory but also because it clears up the mystery of the "Brown-plumaged petrel" repeatedly reported from Easter Island and thereby satisfies the main objective of our trip.

A comparison of these 4 specimens with that taken on Moto-Nui in 1934 shows that the latter was mis-identified as Puffinus Tenuirostris and invalidates the writer's statement in "Birds of Chile" Vol. I page 91 that "a race of the Mutton Bird of Australia and New Zealand is known to nest on islets around Easter Island."

At the time of our stay between 80 and 100 pairs of this Shearwater were breeding underneath tilted lava slabs on the steep slopes of Moto-Nui, the entrances being usually but not always covered with coarse grass. During the daylight hours at several of these nesting sites either one or two Birds without eggs were present but the majority were occupied only at night.

During the evening hours two other petrels flew around and over the islet at high speed, occasionally alighting on the grassy plateau at the top. We shot one of each for positive identification and found them to be the Herald and Kermadac, respectively. They look very similar in flight but can be distinguished by the white shafts on the under surfaces of the primaries of the Kermadac, and also by the loud, piercing cry of the Herald. This call, coming from a petrel, is quite startling and might easily be mistaken for that of the Peregrine Falcon.

Another striking sight in the evening was the regular arrival of Frigatebirds from all points of the compass and usually at a great height. At first only 2 or 3 would appear, then more and more until in a short time we had 20 or 30 of the great birds searing and circling above us and over the surrounding ocean. Little by little first one and then another would suddenly half close their wings and plunge downwards, only to recover and resume their majestic soaring until we lost sight of them in the gathering darkness. For several days we wondered where they went to until one night our photographer colleague discovered them roosting in a group on the ground on top of a small headland of our islet with lava cliffs dropping to the sea on either side.

From the air we could not be sure whether the soaring birds were the Magnificent Frigatebird from the Galapagos island or the Great Frigatebird of Polynesia, so we shot one for identification. The brown band across the upper surface of the wings showed that it belonged to the latter species.

At the time of our visit the only tern nesting on Moto-Nui was the Brown Noddy, Angus stolidus pileatus. There were about 200 pairs nesting along the ledges of the lava cliffs, especially along the sides of the chasm that separated the islet from the smaller Moto-Ite. Our photographer colleague was able to take series of photographs at close range as the birds flew backwards and forwards from their nesting ledges. Later we also found them nesting on the Motu-Marotiri stack but in smaller numbers.

To find out and also to collect other pertinent information, we arranged with a keen and knowledgeable resident of the island to make monthly all-the-year-round visits to Motu-Nui and Motu-Marotiri and report to us periodically. Consequently a year from now we hope and expect to have valuable supplementary information on the birds of "Isla de Pascua", their habits and respective breeding cycles.

W.R. MILLIE

A. W. JOHNSON

GEORGE MOFFET

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Following the custom in the United States of making a count of the birds in a specific area during the month of December, the "Grupo Ornitológico" de Chile selected the immediate area of the lake at San Sebastián on the coast. The purpose of this count is to determine population fluctuations over a period of years.

Location: San Sebastián Lake; Date: December 14, 1968. Weather: Overcast to clear

<u>Spanish Name</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>Numbers of birds Recorded</u>
1. Huala	Great Grebe	10
2. Blanquillo Común	Silvery Grebe	20
3. Picurio	S. Pied-billed Grebe	16
4. Garza Chica	Snowy Egret	1
5. Huairavo Común	Black-crowned Night heron	20
6. Cisne cuello negro	Black-necked swan	12
7. Pato Jergón Grande	Yellow-billed Pintail	18

<u>Spanish Name</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>Numbers of birds Recorded</u>
8. Pato Colorado	Cinnamon Teal	4
9. Pato Rana de Pico Delgado	Lake Duck	30
10. Pato Rinconero	Black-headed Duck	5
11. Tavita Común	Spot-flanked Gallinule	15
12. Tagua Común	Red-gartered Coot	40
13. Tagua Chica	White-winged Coot	80
14. Chorlo Nevado	Snowy Plover	2
15. Pitoitoi Grande	Greater Yellowlegs	11
16. Perrito	American Stilt	4
17. Pollito de mar Boreal	Northern (red-necked Phalarope) (lobatus)	2
18. Gaviota Dominicana	Kelp Gull	2
19. Gaviota de Franklin	Franklin's Gull	70
20. Tórtola Común	Eared Dove	10
21. Tórtola Cuyana	Picui Ground Dove	12
22. Churrete Común	Dark-bellied Cinclodes	2
23. Colegial Común	Rufous-backed Negrito	17
24. Siete Colores Común	Many-coloured Rush-Tyrant	1
25. Golondrina R. Blanca	Chilean Swallow	25
26. Golondrina R. Negra	Blue & White Swallow	5
27. Chercán Común	House Wren	2
28. Tenca Común	Mocking-bird	15
29. Zorzal Común	Austral Thrush(Robin)	7
30. Tordo Argentino	Shiny Cowbird	5
31. Trile Común	Yellow-winged Blackbird	9
32. Loica Chilena	Red-breasted Meadowlark	2
33. Diuca Común	Diuca Finch	7

After surveying the bird population at San Sebastián, the group proceeded by auto and then by foot along the coast to the mouth of the Maipo River at Santo Domingo. The total list recorded for the day was 58 species. Recorder: Helen Lane.

FIELD TRIP TO "ESTUARIO DE YALI"

Date: April 19 1969

Tour Leaders: A.W. Johnson & Jack Ewer.

Weather: Full autumn sun.

Other participants: Jaime Alvarez, Mary Grey

Legg, Mr. & Mrs. Larry Lane, Carlos Morán, Ernest Carhart, Brian Lavercombe, Mr. & Mrs. Berton M. Bailey.

A total of 59 birds were identified not including several doubtfuls. The most interesting record for the day, sighted by Dr. Alvarez, were the 19 Burrowing Parrots. A fleeting view of a large heron-like bird evoked considerable discussion on whether it was the White-necked Heron (*Ardea cocoi*) or the rare Maguari Stork (*Euxenura Galeata*).

Some of the more interesting birds recorded were:

1. Greater Bahaman Pintail (approx. 8 birds)	Pato Gargantillo	Anas bahamensis r.
2. Red Shoveler (cinnamon body, grey head)	Pato Cuchara	Anas Platalea
3. American Oyster-Catcher	Pilpilén Común	Haematopus ostralegus
4. Two-banded Plover	Chorlo de Doble Collar	Charadrius falklandicus
5. Collared Plover	Chorlo de Collar	C. collaris
6. Snowy Plover	Chorlo Nevado	C. alexandrinus
7. Rufous-Chested Plover	Chorlo Negro	Zonibyx modestus
8. White-rumped Sandpiper	Playero de Lomo Blanco	Erolia fuscicollis
9. Sanderling	Playero común	Crocethia alba
10. Greater Yellowlegs	Pitoitoi Grande	Tringa melanoleuca
11. Lesser Yellowlegs	Pitoitoi Chico	T. flavipes
12. Turnstone	Chorlo Vuelvepiedras	Arenaria interpres
13. Burrowing Parrot	Loro Tricagüe	Cyanoliseus patagonus
14. Burrowing Owl	Peguén	Speotyto cunicularia c.

REPORT FROM LLIFEN, LAGO RANCO

Mr. A.W. Johnson reports a list of 56 birds recorded during the month of February from Llifén, Lago Ranco. Some of the interesting ones recorded are:

1. Carpintero Chico (Dendrocopos lignarius)
2. Chucao (Scelorchilus rubecula r.)
3. Churrín del Sur (Scytalopus magellanicus)
4. Churrín de la Mocha (Eugralla paradoxa)
5. Choroy (Enicognathus l.)
6. Dormilona rufa (Muscisaxicola capistrata)
7. Huet-Huet (Pterotochos tarnii)
8. Martín pescador
9. Pato Corta Corrientes
10. Pato Quetru Volador (Tachyeres patagonicus)
11. Torcaza

CLAVE DE CICONIFORMES DE CHILE - Escrito por PATRICIO DROUILLY

See the Noticiario Mensual of the Museo Nacional de Historia Natural, Año XIII-

N° 149, December 1968 for the "Key to the Ciconiformes of Chile" (Hérons, Storks and Allies) written by Patricio Drouilly L.

BIRDS RECORDED NEAR ZAPALLAR

An interesting estuary near Zapallar was discovered by Berton M. Bailey. The following birds were recorded on February 2 and 3.

1. White-necked Heron (*Ardea cocoi*) One bird observed at close quarters.
2. Black-bellied Plover (*Squatarola squatarola*)
3. Pectoral Sandpiper (*Erolia melanotos*)
4. Western Willet (*Catoptrophorus semipalmatus inornatus*)
5. Hudsonian Godwit (*Limosa haemastica*) One bird observed on several occasions during day. Up-turned bill and white rump were good marks.

On 22 February Mary Grey Legg and Helen Lane accompanied Bailey to same location. Among the birds observed were:

1. Two-banded Plover (*C. falklandicus*)
2. Semi-palmated Plover (*C. semipalmatus*)
3. Black-bellied Plover (*squatarola s.*)
4. Willet (*Catoptrophorus s.i.*)
5. Ruddy Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres m.*)
6. Black Skimmer
7. American Oyster-catcher
8. Blackish Oyster-catcher
9. Surf-bird (*Pichidanguí*)

SPECIMENS CONFIRMED BY MUSEO NACIONAL

Specimens found on beach at Los Molles, Province Aconcagua, and observed alive on 19, 22, 27, 29 July 1968 by Bailey have been confirmed by the Museo Nacional de Historia Natural as the Slender-billed Prion (*Pachyptila belcheri*). Specimens of the Silver grey Fulmar (*Priocella antarctica*) were also found and observed alive. Other birds observed at Pichidanguí include the Southern Fulmar (*Macronectes giganteus*) 19 Jan 69; 4 & 5 Feb 69. Surf-Birds (*Aphriza virgata*) 1 Feb 69 and confirmed by Legg and Lane on 22 Feb 69 at same location.

EXCURSIONES MENSUALES DEL GRUPO ORNITOLOGICO

A las personas interesadas en participar en las excursiones mensuales, se les recuerda que deben llamar al Teléfono 63215 Anexo 3, durante los primeros días de cada mes. La Secretaria les informará acerca de la fecha y hora de la próxima excursión. Como el principal problema reside en la locomoción, se solicita a las personas que dispongan de vehículo, informar con anticipación el número de pasajeros que podrían llevar.

INFORMES SOBRE AVES CHILENAS

Se ruega a todos los interesados en ornitología chilena, mandar informes de las aves que hayan visto, a la Casilla 9286 - Santiago. Incluir nombre en Inglés o Castellano y en lo posible el nombre científico; además fecha y lugar de observación. Las observaciones hechas en su propio jardín, como también las de sus viajes a distintas regiones de Chile, pueden resultar de interés científico.

BIRDS OBSERVATIONS ON A RECENT TRIP SOUTH - Ernest A. Carhart

As a recent arrival from the States after forty years absence from my native country it was my privilege to add a respectable number of bird species to my life on a ten day trip to the south of Chile.

My first stop was Pucón at the east end of Lake Villarrica where I arrive towards evening on March 17. The lake was dotted here and there with Hualas and Picurios, and the shore with churretes of both the común and the acanelado kinds. In a little clump of reeds I got my first new species - the chercán de las vegas. On the return trip a little huairavillo dropped into this same clump. Right in this area I was able to spot in varying numbers the chercán, chirihue, trile, picaflor chico, cachudito, tijeral, trabajador, pidén, tagua común, taguita, and two of my North American friends, the semipalmated plover! One morning, amid some tender grass next to the reeds I spotted four patos jergón chico, four taguitas, the plovers, a pidén and two taguas swimming nearby. After dusk a pair of ducks dropped into the lake, they proved to be the pato real. Other birds seen later were the rayadito, colegial, blanquillo, chuncho, and the comesebo - the last seen at the termas de Palguín. My last day I saw thirty or more choroyos and my first pequén.

The bay front at Puerto Montt was surprisingly devoid of birds (except for gulls), but my lookout at Ancud on the island of Chiloé near the fort yielded some good finds. I saw my first penguins in the wild (they call them patrancas there), and the cormorán imperial. Also I saw my first parasitic jaeger chasing a tern. This was quite a sight, and the tern complained all the way but had to give up his fish. While I gazed at the sea (there were dolphins as well as penguins in it) a sharp repeated call pulled my eyes upward and a black oystercatcher flew by. On a beach in a little cove a whimbrel from the Arctic shared the domain with a kelp gull.

At Peulla, on the eastern end of beautiful Lake Todos los Santos, I saw my first bandurrias after hearing their metallic call overhead. In a little open water in the marsh bordering the Pangué River I caught a glimpse of a pimpollo and two patos rana de pico delgado. But the greatest thrill came up the road early in the morning after a drippy night. In the half light going up the branch of a tree was a dark bird that looked like a pidén and even flicked its tail like one. But I was able to see the brownish color on its breast. It was the huet-huet, which Mr. Johnson says is so hard to see! On a post near the shore I saw my first martín pescador with his striking reddish belly. This brought an end to my new birds except for the flock of caiquenes I saw north of Lake Nahuel-Huapi from the bus on the Argentine side, and flocks of bandurrias.