



## SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT – March 2011

### A New Year, A New Season

As the new year begins, so does another season for the Maui Forest Bird Recovery Project.

We began the year off with January volunteer banding trips into Hanawi Natural Area Reserve. Beginning in 2009, MFBRP began taking on volunteers to assist in banding attempts of juvenile and adult Kiwikiu. January volunteers included Dana Bollin, Zara John, Drew Hyland, Robby Kohley, and returnee Pete Motyka. They aided in banding two new female Kiwikiu and recaptured a very important male who will expand our genetic knowledge of the Parrotbill population (see “Super” article page 3).

Maui Forest Bird Recovery Project’s main field season is between February and July, the key breeding season for the Kiwikiu. As a part of this we welcomed onto our team, six research assistants and one AmeriCorps intern.

Robby Kohley, Cameron Rutt, Stephanie Wheeler, Vitek Jirinec, Joel Kutylowski, and Sarah McDonald will join the MFBRP full-time staff until July. Alex Wang will work with us through the AmeriCorps program until October of this year. Laura Berthold, AmeriCorps intern for the past two years, has also been hired on as a full time employee for MFBRP. She will be assisting in avian conservation and research as well as outreach and planning.

The goals of the season are numerous. The teams will be hiking in and out of Hanawi Natural Area Reserve in order to continue work on our productivity estimates of Kiwikiu pairs. Resights of banded Kiwikiu are one of the teams main goal. These resights aid in territory mapping, calculating adult and juvenile survival, and pair productivity. Adding onto our goals for Hanawi, we will begin to access Waikamoi Preserve on a more regular basis. The first steps in Waikamoi will be to increase the population of color-banded individuals so that we may more closely monitor the population there. Once we have some marked individuals, we will begin to estimate productivity and survival on this far western edge of the Kiwikiu’s range and compare that with the Hanawi population at the core of their range.

We’ve started the season off with a good first trip last month with over 200 resights!

From left to right: Sarah McDonald, Cameron Rutt, Alex Wang, Laura Berthold, Joel Kutylowski, Robby Kohley, Stephanie Wheeler, Hanna Mounce, Kelly Iknayan, and Vitek Jirinec all stand at the trailhead into Haleakala crater.



The banding team at Frisbee Meadows. Left to right: Drew Hyland, Kelly Iknayan, Hanna Mounce, Zara John, Robby Kohley, Alex Wang, Peter Motyka, and Laura Berthold.



## State of Hawaii Forest Bird Transects

The Hawaiian Forest Bird Surveys began in 1976 by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. These surveys used variable circular plot (VCP) point counts to estimate population sizes of forest bird communities. The counts are conducted by experienced personnel, whom are familiar with all of the species that could be found in a particular area, counting all birds seen and heard from one point in the forest during an eight minute period of time. Distances from the observer to the birds are also recorded. Counters are careful not to double-count birds that they may see or hear multiple times. These data are used to estimate the density and abundance of the birds in a given area. Over 400 surveys of forest birds have been conducted in Hawaii since the initial surveys. This has become an interagency project, using many experienced biologists from multiple organizations to perform the data collection for this project.



Alex Wang carefully birds during a point count on East Maui.

These surveys can show where core forest bird populations exist and where protected areas should be established. They help determine management strategies for protection of birds and habitat and give us a monitoring tool in order to detect population declines as early as possible. Statistical analysis of bird abundance levels over the years will create population trends for the forest bird communities. From these data, we can prioritize conservation efforts. From there, we can do species and area specific research and monitoring (like the current MFBRP survival and productivity research in Kiwikiu).

The east Maui forest bird transects have not been surveyed since 2006. Typically every four to five years, the state organizes an effort to perform this task. This year, the Maui Forest Bird Recovery Project will assist the State of Hawaii, Department of Land and Natural Resources-Department of Forestry and Wildlife to organize these transects counts. Staff from MFBRP, TNC, DOFAW, USFWS and other conservation groups as well as dedicated volunteers, will travel to these transects on the windward side of Haleakala and perform the VCP counts during the spring. We thank all those that are assisting in this, as it is a big project and we greatly appreciate all the time other organizations have allocated to the State to help out.

For more information see [http://biology.usgs.gov/pierc/Native\\_Birds/Forest\\_birds.pdf](http://biology.usgs.gov/pierc/Native_Birds/Forest_birds.pdf)

## Maui Brewing Company Benefit Nights



MFBRP will be having pint nights again this year at the Maui Brewing Company. Remember that half of the sales from the night's pints will go to help fund bird research.

The fundraisers will be held on Fridays, **March 25<sup>th</sup>, June 24<sup>th</sup>, September 30<sup>th</sup>, and December 30<sup>th</sup>**. Pint sales are from **6pm to midnight!** Join us for our first one next week!

Kahana Gateway Center - 4405 Honoapiilani Highway  
Just North of Lahaina as you head to Napili

***Please join us and help support the recovery of Maui's native forest birds!!***

## **SUPPORT MAUI BIRDS WITH A DONATION TO MFBRP**

If you'd like to support avian conservation in Maui, please send your tax-deductible donation at any time with a check made out to Tri-Isle RC&D. Mail your check to MFBRP, 2465 Olinda Road, Makawao, HI 96768.

MAUI FOREST BIRD RECOVERY PROJECT – 2465 OLINDA ROAD MAKAWAO, HI 96768  
808.573.0280 [www.mauiforestbirds.org](http://www.mauiforestbirds.org) [info@mauiforestbirds.org](mailto:info@mauiforestbirds.org)

## A Look into a “Super” Kiwiku

Maui Forest Bird Recovery Project began intensely monitoring the Hanawi Natural Area Reserve core population of Parrotbill in 2006. We’ve been increasing our knowledge about this species ever since. One pair that we consistently observe every year, we have fondly nicknamed “the super pair”. This name fits as they usually fledge a chick every year, maintain a larger territory than most of the other Parrotbill, and in 2007, this male was seen feeding three birds in one day- the female, the second-year juvenile (the offspring from the previous year), and a hatch-year juvenile. One of his offspring has one of the longest observed juvenile dependency periods, staying with the pair for up to 17 months.

This male was originally banded in 2003 while MFBRP work was focused on Poouli. He was actually first resighted in an area where a Poouli had been. His age when he was banded was after hatch-year (AHY). This means that the banders could not determine his precise age but he was an adult. When he was recaptured in 2011 he was at least 9 years old.

With 59 resights over the years on this one bird, we’ve seen him and his female with a chick every year since 2006. He’s typically seen singing, foraging in ohia and kanawao, feeding his young and female, and counter-singing with other males to defend his large territory.

Parrotbill typically mate for life and will not switch partners unless their mate dies. We found out last year during the summer, that the supermale was now with a different female, one who had previously been observed breeding with three other males (all of whom have disappeared). This was an astonishing find, especially since both birds are pretty old compared to the rest of the pairs in our study site. This female was first banded in 2004 and has actually been caught twice since then. The last time she was recaptured was in 2009. She was at least 6 years old then and was missing a toe, which could mean she had an avian pox infection at some point. She is at least 8 years old now and has also been quite a productive Parrotbill, being seen with juveniles from her previous mates. Why these two older individuals would pair together instead of choosing new younger partners we do not know. Perhaps each of their proven fitness plays a role.

In January 2011, we recaptured the supermale. This had been a goal of ours since we did not have any genetic material from him and he had fathered so many other birds around our study site. With the current genetic analyses that MFBRP is doing, he may be the key in understanding the diversity structure in that part of the population.



The “supermale” feeding his female, who sits on their nest.



This new (but old) pair successfully reproduced last year. Their juvenile was last seen during the summer, foraging on his own. This year, we’ve already found their first attempt at nesting- on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. As of today, the nest is still active and hopefully they will be a successful pair again this year.

Date Banded	Time Banded	Age	Bill (mm)	Weight (g)	Wing (mm)	Tarsus (mm)	Tail (mm)	Fat	Body Molt	Notes
10/22/2003	11:20	AHY	21.1	26	74	23.7	45	2	0	
1/9/2011	12:00	ASY	21.2	27	75	23.8	45	3	0	Caught Passively.

While banding birds, we collect data on both measurements and condition of the individual. It’s interesting to see differences or similarities in sizes when birds are recaptured. Above is the an excerpt of the data for the “supermale” when he was first banded and when he was recently recaptured. He was a little bit heavier and a little bit fatter.

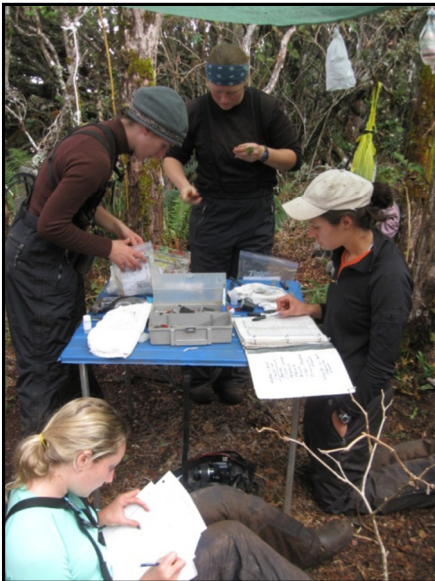
## Whole Foods “Recycle Your Change” Fundraiser



Beginning **April 10th** and lasting for a month, *Whole Foods* is Recycling Your Change for Maui Forest Bird Recovery Project. The program allows guests of Whole Foods to give their change to a certain non-profit each month. At every cash register, there will be a container for you to put your change. The money will go to fund research on the endangered Kiwikiu. Participate in **Whole Foods Recycle Your Change** month starting April 10th to help save Maui's rare forest birds.

Also, attend their *Malama Aina Festival* on Saturday, April 16<sup>th</sup> from 11am-3pm to celebrate Earth Day. MFBRP and other conservation groups will be there. **Whole Foods is located in the Maui Mall in Kahului.**

### ***Banding Research Assistants Needed:***



MFBRP is seeking 2 banding RESEARCH ASSISTANTS for an 11 week position helping to organize and conduct banding trips. Position will begin August 22<sup>nd</sup> and last until November 4<sup>th</sup>.

Primary field duties will include aiding staff members oversee volunteer banding trips, supervising banding station (up to 4 people), mist-netting and banding of Maui Parrotbill, Maui Alauahio, and other forest birds. Field duties are physically challenging, working at 5,000-7,000 feet in elevations, with rainfall up to 400 in/year and steep muddy conditions.

Desirable Qualifications: (1) Mist-netting and banding experience (1000+ birds), (2) NABC bander certification, (3) past field crew leader experience, (4) backcountry camping and hiking experience. Compensation includes housing, limited transportation and \$1300/month.

Applications are due May 1<sup>st</sup>. To apply, please email cover letter, resume and reference to [employment@mauiforestbirds.org](mailto:employment@mauiforestbirds.org). You may email Hanna Mounce, [mounce@hawaii.edu](mailto:mounce@hawaii.edu), for more information.

### ***Banding Volunteers Needed:***

4 RESEARCH VOLUNTEERS will be needed both September and October 2011 for banding efforts of Kiwikiu.

Primary field duties will include aiding staff with mist-netting and banding of Kiwikiu, Maui Alauahio and other forest birds. Field duties are physically challenging, working at 5,000-7,000 feet elevation, in extremely wet (annual rainfall up to 400 inches/year), cold, muddy and steep rainforest conditions.

Desirable Qualifications: (1) Mist-netting and banding experience with passerines, primarily set-up and handling of mist nets and extracting birds and (2) hiking in steep backcountry terrain.

Work schedule will include training and 2 field trips with a break in between for your own free time to explore Maui. September volunteers will be needed August 26<sup>th</sup> until September 23<sup>rd</sup>. October volunteers will be needed September 30<sup>th</sup> until October 30<sup>th</sup>. Volunteers will be provided with all field gear, accommodation and limited transportation by MFBRP but will provide their own food during their stay. The Maui Forest Bird Recovery Project is asking for a \$500 donation to help off-set ever increasing research costs. Visit our website for more information about current and past trips. To apply please send a cover letter outlining your ornithological experience and expertise with special attention to mist netting experience to Hanna Mounce - [mounce@hawaii.edu](mailto:mounce@hawaii.edu).