Our Spring Hawaii tour pursues a vibrant birding adventure throughout three Hawaiian Islands. During a full week of birding we explored glistening blue waters, vast grasslands, ancient forests, cliffs and canyons, outstandingly birdy residential areas, and even an active volcano. Every day was filled with some unique birds, a variety of them being island-specific endemics.

On our first day we headed out to the nearby Kapiolani Park just before daybreak in search of White Terns. Within moments we had amazing views of these tree-nesting terns of all-white plumage. Spotted Doves and Zebra Doves scurried across the mowed grasses while Rose-ringed Parakeets and Red-vented Bulbuls kept watch higher in the trees. A hearty breakfast, complemented by locally-grown pineapple and Kona coffee, fueled our day ahead. Following our breakfast we headed to Wiliwilinui Trail. Intact native habitat offered great views of the endemic Oahu Amakihi, as well as the charismatic White-rumped Shama. A midday drive to the northern tier of Oahu took our breath away as we traveled through immense canyons of green and vast turquoise shorelines. After a lunch of locally-caught shrimp, we enjoyed the presence of several Bristle-thighed Curlews. While savoring these birds, we had not one but two Laysan Albatross glide low over our heads. It was an experience like no other!

Early the next morning we flew to the stunning island of Kauai. After this brief flight, we headed to Kilauea Point where seabirds left us in awe. Entire hillsides of nesting Red-footed Boobies wowed us. Red-tailed Tropicbirds sheared by at eye level while Laysan Albatross took their sweet time soaring both near and far. Several Great Frigatebirds were seen, showing off their incredible deeply-forked tails and two-toned plumages. With a little persistence we located several White-tailed Tropicbirds. All of this exciting birding commotion was followed with a hearty lunch topped with from-scratch POG (passionfruit juice, orange juice, guava juice). Afterwards we visited Hanalei National Wildlife Refuge, where we found many Nene, also known as the Hawaiian Goose. This goose species is the state bird of Hawaii. Alongside the wetlands were Hawaiian Black-necked Stilts, Hawaiian Coots, Hawaiian Ducks, and a little farther from the water, flurries of Common Waxbills.
We departed early the next morning, well before sunrise, to enjoy a hearty breakfast at a local bakery. Our travels led us to Waimea Canyon State Park, one of the many highlight views of the tour. Steep wooded canyons of brown and red substrate were complemented by a waterfall of impressive magnitude. Several Anianiau were found near the peak of Waimea Canyon. This dapper yellow honeycreeper is found only in select patches of high-elevation habitat on Kauai. Several squeaky Kauai Elepaio were seen and heard from along the road. A distant Pueo (Hawaiian Short-eared Owl) was seen soaring over the tree tops. The woodland birds kept adding up within this striking landscape. Our afternoon birding was done through much lower elevation as we checked Kawai’ele Waterbird Sanctuary for waterfowl and more. The variety of birds we saw and heard on Kauai was simply wonderful.

After saying our Kauai goodbyes, we headed to the Big Island of Hawaii. New birds and new scenery awaited us. While heading from our recent arrival at the Kona airport to our lunch location, we got on a dark morph Io, the Hawaiian Hawk. This beautiful raptor is found only on the Big Island of Hawaii—nowhere else in the entire world! While enjoying lunch, a nearby and very colorful Gold Dust Day Gecko enjoyed a small dollop of grape jelly for its lunch. Following lunch, we locked our binoculars on a pair of stunning male and female Kalij Pheasants. A brief gas station break in the afternoon offered amazingly close views of another soaring Hawaiian Hawk.

The following day was one of our longer traveling days, where we ventured into the beautiful old growth forest of Hakalau National Wildlife Refuge. Jack Jeffrey, a local guide, friend, and naturalist extraordinaire, spent the day with us as we explored the refuge. Massive Koa trees and ancient Ohia trees towered above us. The Ohia Lehua (tree flowers of the Ohia) attracted many native bird species. Nonstop views of Apapane and liwi ensued. The black-winged and crimson-bodied Apapanes’ soft calls filled the air as they fed from the blooming lehua. The larger liwi showed off their neon-red plumages and sharply decurved bills, gleaning nectar not far from us. The endemic Hawaii Amakihi and Hawaii Elepaio put on quite a show. There’s something about being in these native woods with some of the trees exceeding a thousand years old. The only birds we came across here were native species.
Eurasian Skylarks and Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse delighted us early the next morning. A refreshingly cool and dry breeze was welcomed after the previous day’s rain. Volcanoes National Park was coming up next. After a scenic drive of windswept prairies, we arrived at the densely-wooded entrance to this beautiful preserve. The afternoon was spent among ancient lava fields, savoring the unique landscape of various lava movements. Delicate sprigs of lime-green ferns were seen growing through the rolling cracks of long-cooled lava. Nesting Black Noddies were seen along the ocean-exposed cliffs. This orange-footed form of the Black Noddy is unique to the Big Island of Hawaii.

The next morning we dined at the legendary Ken’s House of Pancakes. A delicious breakfast and strong coffee set our bearings straight. We ventured up the Pu’u La’au trail in search of the endangered Palila. One after another, numerous Hawaii Amakihi made themselves known. After a brief hike within the official Palila Trail area, we were treated to not one, not two, but EIGHT Palila (including three at one time)! It was a mesmerizing experience to have so many endangered individuals in our presence. Their soft Pine Grosbeak-like calls and beautiful lemon-yellow and gray plumages were a solid highlight to the day.

On our last day together, we visited many of the unique highlights of Volcanoes National Park. From the eerily stunning Thurston Lava Tubes and incredible wealth of volcano information in the Jaggar Museum, to the lovely art at the nearby art museum, our visit here was very special. After birding throughout city parks and ponds in the afternoon, we had one final dinner together. A grand finale for the tour was experiencing Volcanoes National Park one more time, after dark. The hot-orange aura of lava cast well into the sky as a full moon was positioned delicately overhead. VENT’s Hawaii tours are always a thrill, and I’m already looking forward to next year’s Spring Hawaii tour.
KEY:

E = endemic
I = introduced

OKW  Oahu - First hotel, Kapiolani Park, Wiliwilinui Trail and nearby shoreline
OKG  Oahu - Kahuku Golf Course & nearby ponds
KKL  Kauai - Kilauea Lighthouse
KH  Kauai - Hanalei NWR and outlying area
KWC  Kauai - Waimea Canyon area
KWS  Kauai - Kawai’ele Waterbird Sanctuary
HC  Hawaii - Captain Cook area
HH  Hawaii - Hakalau National Wildlife Refuge & nearby road
HS  Hawaii - Saddle Road area
HW  Hawaii - Waikoloa Skate Park
HP  Hawaii - Pu’u La’au Palila Trail
HV  Hawaii Volcanoes National Park
HC  Hilo City Ponds

Waterfowl

Canada Goose  Branta canadensis  HC
Hawaiian Goose (Nene) (E)  Branta sandvicensis  KKL, KH, KW, HC
Hawaiian Duck (Koloa) (E)  Anas wyvilliana  KH, KWS
Ring-necked Duck  Aythya collaris  HC
Lesser Scaup  Aythya affinis  HC
Muscovy (I)  Cairina moschata  HC

New World Quail

California Quail (I)  Callipepla californica  HH, HS
Pheasants, Grouse and Allies

Chukar (I)  Alectoris chukar  HP

Gray Francolin (I)  Francolinus pondicerianus  HW
Black Francolin (I)  Francolinus francolinus  KWC, HW, HP
Erckel’s Francolin (I)  Francolinus erckelii  HS, HW
Red Junglefowl (I)  Gallus gallus  Seen every day
Kalij Pheasant (I)  
Ring-necked Pheasant (I)  
Wild Turkey (I)  

**Sandgrouse**  
Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse (I)  

**Pigeons and Doves**  
Rock Pigeon (I)  
Spotted Dove (I)  
Zebra Dove (I)  
Mourning Dove (I) (rare)  

**Rails, Gallinules and Coots**  
Common Gallinule  
Hawaiian Coot (E)  

**Stilts and Avocets**  
Black-necked Stilt  

**Plovers and Lapwings**  
Pacific Golden-Plover  

**Sandpipers and Allies**  
Bristle-thighed Curlew  
Ruddy Turnstone  
Sanderling  
Least Sandpiper  
Wandering Tattler  

**Gulls, Terns and Skimmers**  
Black Noddy  
White Tern  

**Tropicbirds**  
White-tailed Tropicbird  
Red-tailed Tropicbird  

**Albatrosses**  
Laysan Albatross  

**Shearwaters and Petrels**  
Wedge-tailed Shearwater  
Sooty Shearwater  

**Frigatebirds**  
Great Frigatebird  

**Boobies and Gannets**  
Brown Booby  
Red-footed Booby  

**Species and Locations**

- **Kalij Pheasant (I)**: Lophura leucolophus  
  - Location: HC, HH, HS
- **Ring-necked Pheasant (I)**: Phasianus colchicus  
  - Location: OKW, HS
- **Wild Turkey (I)**: Meleagris gallopavo  
  - Location: HS
- **Sandgrouse**: Pterocles exustus  
  - Location: HW
- **Pigeons and Doves**:  
  - Rock Pigeon (I): Columba livia  
    - Location: OKG, KH, KWC
  - Spotted Dove (I): Streptopelia chinensis  
    - Location: OKG, KH, HS, VNP
  - Zebra Dove (I): Geopelia striata  
    - Location: OKG, KH, KWC
  - Mourning Dove (I): Zenaida macroura  
    - Location: OKG, KH, KWC
- **Wild Turkey (I)**: Meleagris gallopavo  
  - Location: HS
- **Sandgrouse**: Pterocles exustus  
  - Location: HW
- **Pigeons and Doves**:  
  - Rock Pigeon (I): Columba livia  
    - Location: OKG, KH, KWC
  - Spotted Dove (I): Streptopelia chinensis  
    - Location: OKG, KH, HS, VNP
  - Zebra Dove (I): Geopelia striata  
    - Location: OKG, KH, KWC
  - Mourning Dove (I): Zenaida macroura  
    - Location: OKG, KH, KWC
- **Rails, Gallinules and Coots**:  
  - Common Gallinule: Gallinula galeata  
    - Location: OKG, KH, KWC
  - Hawaiian Coot (E): Fulica alai  
    - Location: OKG, KH, KWC
- **Stilts and Avocets**:  
  - Black-necked Stilt: Himantopus mexicanus  
    - Location: OKG, KH, KWC
- **Plovers and Lapwings**:  
  - Pacific Golden-Plover: Pluvialis fulva  
    - Location: Seen every day. Exceptional views right in front of our Oahu hotel!
- **Sandpipers and Allies**:  
  - Bristle-thighed Curlew: Numenius tahitiensis  
    - Location: OKG
  - Ruddy Turnstone: Arenaria interpres  
    - Location: OKG, KH, KWC, HC
  - Sanderling: Calidris alba  
    - Location: KWS
  - Least Sandpiper: Calidris minutilla  
    - Location: Near our hotel in Hilo
  - Wandering Tattler: Tringa incana  
    - Location: OKG, VNP, near our hotel in Hilo
- **Gulls, Terns and Skimmers**:  
  - Black Noddy: Anous minutus  
    - Location: HV (outstanding views of their unique orange legs and feet)
  - White Tern: Gygis alba  
    - Location: OKG
- **Tropicbirds**:  
  - White-tailed Tropicbird: Phaethon lepturus  
    - Location: KKL, HWC, VNP
  - Red-tailed Tropicbird: Phaethon rubricauda  
    - Location: KKL
- **Albatrosses**:  
  - Laysan Albatross: Phoebastria immutabilis  
    - Location: KKL
- **Shearwaters and Petrels**:  
  - Wedge-tailed Shearwater: Ardenna pacifica  
    - Location: KKL
  - Sooty Shearwater: Ardenna grisea  
    - Location: KKL
- **Frigatebirds**:  
  - Great Frigatebird: Fregata minor  
    - Location: OKG, KKL
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Locations</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Heron, Egrets and Bitterns</strong></td>
<td><strong>Cattle Egret</strong></td>
<td><em>Bubulcus ibis</em> Seen every day except the unique forest of Hakalau NWR</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Black-crowned Night-Heron</strong></td>
<td><em>Nycticorax nycticorax</em> Seen every day except Hakalau NWR and at the Pu'u La'au Palila Trail</td>
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<td><strong>Hawks, Eagles and Kites</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Hawaiian Hawk</strong> (Io) (E)</td>
<td><em>Butea solitarius</em> HC, HS</td>
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<td>Owls</td>
<td><strong>Short-eared Owl</strong> (Pueo)</td>
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<td><strong>African &amp; New World Parrots</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Red-masked Parakeet</strong> (I)</td>
<td><em>Psittacula krameri</em> KW</td>
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<td><strong>Lories, Lovebirds, and Allies</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Rose-ringed Parakeet</strong> (I)</td>
<td><em>Psittacula krameri</em> OKW, HW</td>
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<td><strong>Rosy-faced Lovebird</strong> (I)</td>
<td><em>Agapornis roseicollis</em> HW, in front of bakery</td>
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<td><strong>Monarch Flycatchers</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Kauai Elepaio</strong> (E)</td>
<td><em>Chasiempis sclateri</em> KWC</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Hawaii Elepaio</strong> (E)</td>
<td><em>Chasiempis sandwichensis</em> HH, VNP</td>
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<td><strong>Larks</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Eurasian Skylark</strong> (I)</td>
<td><em>Alauda arvensis</em> HS, Mauna Kea Recreation area</td>
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<td><strong>Bulbuls</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Red-vented Bulbul</strong> (I)</td>
<td><em>Pycnonotus cafer</em> OKW, OKG</td>
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<td><strong>Bush-Warblers and Allies</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Japanese Bush-Warbler</strong> (I)</td>
<td><em>Cettia diphone</em> KW, HH, HV, HP</td>
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<td><strong>White-eyes</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Japanese White-eye</strong> (I)</td>
<td><em>Zosterops japonicus</em> Seen every day</td>
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<td><strong>Babblers</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Hwamei</strong> (I)</td>
<td><em>Garrulax canorus</em> KWC</td>
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<td><strong>Red-billed Leiothrix</strong> (I)</td>
<td><em>Leiothrix lutea</em> OKW, HH, HP</td>
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<td><strong>Old World Flycatchers</strong></td>
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<td><strong>White-rumped Shama</strong> (I)</td>
<td><em>Copsychus malabaricus</em> OKW, KH, KWC</td>
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<td><strong>Thrushes and Allies</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Omao</strong> (Hawaiian Thrush) (E)</td>
<td><em>Myadestes obscurus</em> HH</td>
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<td><strong>Mockingbirds and Thrashers</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Northern Mockingbird</strong> (I)</td>
<td><em>Mimus polyglottos</em> KH, KWS, HW, HP</td>
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<td><strong>Starlings</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Common Myna</strong> (I)</td>
<td><em>Acridotheres tristis</em> Seen every day</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Waxbills and Allies</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Common Waxbill</strong> (I)</td>
<td><em>Estrilda astrid</em> OKW, HC</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>African Silverbill</strong> (I)</td>
<td><em>Euodice cantans</em> KH, KWC, HS</td>
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<td><strong>Java Sparrow</strong> (I)</td>
<td><em>Lonchura oryzivora</em> OKW, Kona Airport, HS</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Scaly-breasted Munia</strong> (I)</td>
<td><em>Lonchura punctulata</em> KH, Kona Airport, HS</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Chestnut Munia</strong> (I)</td>
<td><em>Lonchura atricapilla</em> Seen throughout Oahu, KH, KWS, HS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Old World Sparrows

House Sparrow (I)

Siskins, Crossbills and Allies

Passer domesticus

Seen every day

Palila (E)

Apapane (E)

Liwi (E)

Anianalu (E)

Hawaii Amakihi (E)

Oahu Amakihi (E)

Kauai Amakihi (E)

House Finch (I)

Yellow-fronted Canary (I)

Siskins, Crossbills and Allies

Loxioides bailleui

Himatione sanguinea

Drepanis coccinea

Magumma parva

Chlorodrepanis virens

Chlorodrepanis flavus

Chlorodrepanis stejnergi

Hesperornis mexicanus

Crithagra mozambica

Sturnella neglecta

Cardinalis cardinalis

Paroaria coronata

Paroaria capitata

Sicalis flaveola

Palila (E)

Apapane (E)

Kauai Amakihi (E)

House Finch (I)

Yellow-fronted Canary (I)

Saffron Finch (I)

EIGHT individuals at HP!!

KW, HH, HV, Pu'u O'o Trail

HH, Pu'u O'o Trail, HV

KWC

HH, HP, HV

OKW

KWC

Seen every day

Seen every day except while atop KWC

Troupials and Allies

Western Meadowlark (I)

Cardinals and Allies

Northern Cardinal (I)

Tanagers and Allies

Red-crested Cardinal (I)

Yellow-billed Cardinal (I)

MAMMALS

Mongooses

Herpestes javanicus

HC, HW, HP, HV

Pigs

Sus Scrofa

Driving around eastern Hawaii, often seen en-route

Bison, Sheep & Goats

Ovis orientalis

Ovis aries

Capra aegagrus hircus

HH, HS

HH, HS

Kauai rural roads, Hawaii rural roads

Rorqual Whales

Megaptera novaeangliae

KKL

INSECTS

Butterflies

Udara blackburni

HC, HH

OKW, KKL, KWC

Pieris rapae

OKW, KKL, HC, HH, HP

Agraulis vanillae

KKL

Phoebis agartehe

KKL

Eurema nicippe

KKL
<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Dragonflies</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Pinao (Giant Hawaiian Darner) (E)</td>
<td><em>Anax strenuus</em></td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Moths</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Black Witch Moth</td>
<td><em>Ascalapha odorata</em></td>
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<th><strong>REPTILES</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Gold Dust Day Gecko</td>
<td><em>Phelsuma laticauda</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Brown Anole</td>
<td><em>Anolis sagrei</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Carolina Anole</td>
<td><em>Carolina anole</em></td>
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