‘AKOHEKOHE *Palmeria dolei*

Other: Crested Honeycreeper, Crested Honeyeater, *Hoe* monotypic

native resident, endemic, endangered

The 'Akohehohe is found in the higher elevation forests of Maui and was encountered in historic times on Moloka'i, indicating that it may have inhabited all of Maui Nui before the island separated; the fossil record indicates that it was at one time widespread in e. Maui (James and Olson 1991). Wilson (1891c) collected the first specimen above Olinda, Maui 8 Jul 1888. It was a juvenile and he called it "*Himatione dolei*" as it was in the company of an 'Apapane. Two years later, Rothschild (1892c, 1893g) described it again, based on a series of adults collected by Palmer (see Banko 1987d), as a new species of Meliphagidae, "*Palmeria mirabilis*". Rothschild (1894a) cleared up some of the confusion after borrowing Wilson's type (see also Wilson and Evans 1899), remarking that no one could possibly have matched adult specimens with Wilson's description of the juvenile. However, he continued to maintain it was a Meliphagid until finally agreeing with Perkins (*in* Evenhuis 2007:175) and Gadow and Wilson (in Wilson and Evans 1899) that it was a Drepanine (Rothschild 1894b). Despite a close relationship with 'Apapane (Fleischer et al. 2001), Rothschild's generic diagnosis has stood (Synonymies), resulting in a scientific name honoring both Henry Palmer and Sanford B. Dole. Newton (*in* Evenhuis 2007:289) was not pleased with this generic designation, referring to it as "*Poacheria*". Wilson (Wilson and Evans 1899) had meant to name it "*dolii*" (see also Newton 1892, Synonymies) but Rothschild (1894a) and others have favored the published spelling, which honors Dole as opposed to a "wine jar" (W.A. Bryan 1901a), even though burgundy is arguably part of the 'Akohekohe's plumage. Its English (Hawaiian) name is onomonopoetic for one of its vocalizations, which "appears to be forced out with difficulty and lacks all beauty" (Perkins 1903); see Pratt (2005) for additional interpretations.

On ***Moloka'i***, Palmer and Wolstenholme (cf. Evenhuis 2007:132) initially, and Perkins shortly thereafter, first noted 'Akohekohes, collecting 29 specimens in 1893 (Banko 1979, 1987d). Both collectors indicated that it was found fairly commonly in wet forests of higher elevations (Perkins 1895, 1903; Rothschild 1900), Perkins terming it "locally abundant". By 1902 Perkins found them "still common" and "at lower elevations than I ever saw it in 1893" (*E* 5:24), although he also noted (1895, 1903) that its ranges on both Moloka'i and Maui had become far restricted, perhaps due to the influences of cattle. Local taxidermist T. Meyer collected at least one prior to an 1896 visit by Schauinsland (1906; see *E* 57:77, 79), donating it to the latter for the Bremen Museum. W.A. Bryan (1908) was the last to report 'Akohekohe on Moloka'i, noting groups of five and three near the head of Pelekunu Valley in June 1907. Munro failed to find it during extensive searches earlier in 1907 and in 1936 (W.A. Bryan 1908, Munro 1944; *E* 24:29-30), and it is presumed extirpated there (unless one should happen to migrate from Maui).

On ***Maui***, the population range of 'Akohekohe has become restricted to the higher-elevation forests along the n. and e. slopes of Mt. Haleakala, having not been seen above Olinda since the days of the early collectors (*cf.* Henshaw 1902a, Perkins 1903, Munro 1944 and *in* Gregory 1929); Scott et al. (1986) estimated, based on HFBS data,

that its current range is restricted to only 5% of the original range. Despite observations during the late 1940s and 1950s (Richards and Baldwin 1953; W.E Banko 1971, 1987d), Greenway (1958) thought them "perhaps extinct". However, once relocated on high-elevation slopes of Mt. Haleakala, populations were noted as being fairly common to common through the latter half of the 20th century (Richards and Baldwin 1953; Warner 1967; Berger 1972, 1981; Casey and Jacobi 1974; Scott and Sincock 1977; Conant 1981; Banko 1987d; *E* 35:20).

In 1980 a population of 3800 individuals was estimated during the HFBS, at 1300-2300 m elevation (Scott et al. 1986). Observations as low as 1100 m elevation in Kipahulu Valley (Conant 1981) probably represented seasonal and altitudinal dispersal following flowering phenology, a behavior exhibited by this species, 'I'iwi, and 'Apapane (Conant and Stemmermann 1980, Conant 1981, Scott et al. 1986, Berlin et al. 2001, VanGelder and Smith 2001), perhaps especially including first-cycle individuals in late summer (Scott et al. 1986); otherwise, susceptibility to malaria appears to keep breeding populations out of lower elevations (Scott et al. 1985). Densities appeared to increase during the 1980s-2000s, but the range has contracted somewhat upslope due to habitat destruction above Kula and Makawao (*E* 50:70; Berlin and VanGelder 1999, Berlin et al. 2001, Simon et al. 2002, USFWS 2006, BLI 2009, Camp et al. *in* Gorresen et al. 2009). The 'Akohekohe was listed as endangered at the federal level in 1967 and by the State of Hawaii in 1982 (USFWS 1984b, 2006), and is listed as critically endangered by BLI (2009). Beginning with an abandoned chick in 1993, 'Akohekohes have been brought into captivity for propagation (Liebberman and Kuehler 2009; *HWF* 8[1]:1, 10-11), but limited success in propagating captive individuals may necessitate translocation efforts to other areas on Maui or to Moloka'i (USFWS 2006, Pratt et al. 2009a).

Acronyms and Abbreviations

Literature cited

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