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that favor parental backcrossing” (p. 62), may spell further trouble for the Spotted Owl, as “one taxon ultimately is expected to replace the other two” (p. 63).

A similar mistake aside—the Wrentit, which ranges north to the Columbia River on the Washington/Oregon border, is not “mostly restricted to California” (p. 97)—the phylogeographic analysis by Burns, Alexander, Barhoum, and Sgariglia doubtless would have made Johnson proud. It is a fine addition to recent analyses (Calsbeek et al. 2003, *Mol. Ecol.* 12:1201–113; Lapointe and Rissler 2005, *Am. Nat.* 166:290–299) of the evolutionary history of diversification across the California Floristic Province. In all three species they examined, the timing of diversification was similar and, in agreement with the earlier studies, they found a strong phylogenetic break at the Transverse Ranges. This broad congruence was discovered even though “evolutionary history of each species was complex and characterized by a diversity of processes” (p. 102).

This monograph is generally well produced and thought provoking, even provocative. Rather than a criticism, this last trait is a strong point. Who wants to read commentaries, essays, or short review papers that cater only to one’s own pet views? It may be consoling, even flattering, to have one’s opinions “validated” in this manner, but scientific progress is made only when we are forced to confront and accommodate uncomfortable disagreements.

Michael A. Patten

Barefoot on Lava: The Journals and Correspondence of Naturalist R. C. L. Perkins in Hawai‘i, 1892–1901, edited by Neal L. Evenhuis. 2007. Bishop Museum Press, Honolulu. 412 pages, 49 figures including black-and-white photographs, maps, and reprints of newspaper clippings and correspondence. Cloth. \$29.95. ISBN 978-1-58178-061-1.

What do Alfred R. Wallace, Rollo Beck, A. J. van Rossem, Ed Ricketts, and Larry Spear have in common? They were all what we might call “scroungers,” biologists who would much prefer to be in the trenches, bitten by sand fleas, at sea in a rowboat, parched and dusty in Mexican deserts, soaked and covered with seaweed, or hauling rotten whales down an interstate, respectively, rather than fraternizing with fellow biologists at conferences or meetings. In short, these are my heroes. Now I can add a sixth name to this list, Robert Cyril Layton (R. C. L.) Perkins.

The birds of Hawaii, and in particular the endemic landbird family Drepanididae, were largely “discovered” and classified during a flurry of collecting from 1887 to 1895. Two highly competitive British museums were vying for the right to discover and name the most new Hawaiian birds. The British Museum of Natural History (BMNH) and its respected but somewhat pompous ornithologist Alfred Newton sent Scott B. Wilson out to the islands to collect birds in 1887 and 1888. Wilson did a fair job, describing 14 new species and compiling (with Arthur H. Evans) the first of four classic publications on Hawaii’s avifauna within four years, *Aves Hawaiienses*, completed in 1899.

But Wilson was often moody and disinterested (later, back in Britain, he committed suicide), and the BMNH lacked the funding to keep him in the field. Newton asked his former student, the well-funded but taxonomically challenged Lord Walter Rothschild, to collaborate on continued collecting, but Rothschild decided that he would prefer to fund an independent effort for his Natural History Museum in Tring, and he sent an Australian ruffian, Henry C. Palmer, to the islands from 1890 to 1893. Palmer wound up collecting 10 new bird species before he returned to Australia and was murdered while panning for gold. Rothschild summarized Palmer’s discoveries in the second classic of the time, the curiously named *The Avifauna of Laysan and*

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the Neighbouring Islands; with a Complete History to Date of the Birds of the Hawaiian Possessions, completed in 1900. Meanwhile, Newton and other distinguished British biologists and geologists formed the Sandwich Islands Committee and scraped together enough funds to send a single multi-talented collector to Hawaii from 1893 to 1897.

As much, if not more, an entomologist than an ornithologist, R. C. L. Perkins was able to combine insight gained from both insects and birds (e.g. dissecting the stomachs of his collected birds to see what they were eating) to form ecological perspectives on the Hawaiian fauna that the former collectors lacked. He was also the first to classify most drepanidids correctly and (despite Newton's skepticism) the first to suggest that they were all of one origin. Perkins ultimately published the fourth (Henry W. Henshaw produced yet another summary in 1902) and most comprehensive work on Hawaiian birds and ecology, *Fauna Hawaiiensis*, completed in 1903. Sadly, ecological disaster in the form of habitat destruction and introduced rodents, ants, and diseases destroyed much of Hawaii's fauna during and shortly after Perkins' time, so his observations are all that we have on the diet and habits of many species of birds, insects, and land snails, now extinct. Perkins saw what was happening and was also the first naturalist to press for conservation measures to try to avert the destruction of Hawaii's forest ecosystems.

Barefoot on Lava is a collection of journal entries and letters composed during Perkins' fieldwork in the Hawaiian Islands. Neil Evenhuis, an entomologist at the Bernice P. Bishop Museum, Honolulu, spent almost 10 years scrounging around in the archives of various museums to piece together a tapestry of Perkins and his colorful acquaintances during a colorful period in the colorful place that was Hawaii in the late 1800s. Through the book we obtain a complete snapshot of the triumphs, challenges, and travails that faced the pioneering collectors during this great era of biological discovery, along with the politics and funding issues facing their sponsors back in Europe.

Perkins' passion for his work pours through his journals. During a collecting trip to Moloka'i 11 May–29 June 1893 he spent almost every day slogging through mud, heavy rain, and near-impenetrable dwarf cloud forests from dawn to (at times) well after dark, often not eating for a day or two at a time, and camping in a leaky tent and shack. Yet he understated the difficulties and reported with satisfaction the discovery of every new insect or the collection of a fine bird specimen. His shining ornithological moment came during this trip, when he discovered the Black Mamo (*Drepanis funerea*) on 18 June. Newton and the other taxonomists were ecstatic about the discovery of this unique Hawaiian honeycreeper, but Perkins described the collocation of the first two specimens rather more matter-of-factly, dutifully finishing his daily journal with "I saw at once that I had no oo but a *Hemignathus* [Akialoa/Nukupu'u]-like creature with shorter lower mandible and excessively strong smell characteristic of the Drepanidae and of the Hawaiian finches. All of the feathers on the top of the skull of each were covered with a white sticky substance, apparently pollen of some flower, and they are, no doubt, honey-sucking birds. The cry is not of the loud character of the oo but is startlingly clear and could be heard at a considerable distance for this reason. I kept on some way but saw no other bird of note, just managing to reach the house by dark, probably a little after 7 p.m. Very tired. I got a few Carabidae under moss in the highest forest and some more large *Brachypeplus* under bark of the same tree as on the 15th. I shot several *Loxops* [Moloka'i 'Alauahio]." Perkins also gained an island-wide perspective during his many collecting trips, writing to his colleague Edward Poulton in 1897, "For these reasons (i) the birds of the islands are extremely specialized, so much so that many of them depend on almost a single species of insect or fruit for food. (ii) The only bird likely to eat the [insects] in question is [the 'Elepaio]. (iii) on one of the islands where no ['Elepaio] exist or even are likely to have existed [Maui] the insects tend to form a uniformity of colonizing

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peculiar to that island." *Barefoot on Lava* is packed with Perkins' perceptive observations such as this, published for the first time, which will be essential to ornithologists and historical ecologists in understanding what Hawaii's forests were like before and during the initial stages of decline.

Those with a wider interest in taxonomy of the period will enjoy reading the letters of Newton and David Sharp (preeminent entomologist at the BMNH) back to Perkins, which reflect, in the delightfully succinct yet compendious writing style of the era, the respect that these two scientists had for the collector. Perhaps reflecting his personality, Sharp tended to be conservative in his communications, focusing on logistical matters and insect taxonomy, whereas Newton was much more loquacious, sharing his views on all sorts of subjects and gossiping about prominent ornithologists and other personalities working in Europe at the time. None of the seminal taxonomists of the era was spared an opinion: Darwin, Gray, Sharpe, Finsch, Sclater, Stejneger, Ridgway, Cassin, Peale. But Newton saved his wryest comments for Rothschild, whom he called "the Golden Walter," and referred derisively to the genus *Palmeria* as "*Poacheria*." [After Wilson first described the Crested Honeycreeper (as *Himatione dolei*), Rothschild redescribed it as *Palmeria mirabilis*, and the generic name remains as the first applied to this distinctive species.] Newton hated the practice of naming birds after people, several times indicating to Perkins that it was "abused" and an "insult," but we also gain more insight into his artful thinking on this subject when he proposed to Perkins, "what a fine joke it would be to send to the Hawaiian journal a note making a new genus *Rothschildia* for *D. funerea*. Its validity would never be admitted by anyone else, and the name as a generic term would be preoccupied for all future time!!!" Among many other gems from Newton are opinions about the scandalous affair of BMNH taxidermist William Ferrand, his views that giving degrees to women "does not much concern me as I am not likely to marry one because she is a B.A.ess," and his lamenting about BMNH's losing of type specimens with "the boasting of all concerned with that establishment is beyond belief." But we also see an endearing side to Newton, who supported Perkins fully by publishing his journals, giving him full reign of his time and schedule, advising him on how to avoid a serious cholera outbreak in 1895, and ever laboring to secure more funding to keep him in the field.

My only minor disappointment with *Barefoot on Lava* regards the appended material. A 16-page glossary is helpful but could have stood some proofreading, at least for the entries on birds, in which I found several typographical errors (the only ones I noticed in the book), errors of fact, and superfluous entries (e.g., for "pewee," hardly a Hawaiian bird!). This glossary is followed by a very brief bibliography, which, perplexingly, does not include any of Perkins' own published works. Perkins published at least five very perceptive papers on Hawaii's birds between 1893 and 1919, the last describing the Lana'i Hookbill (*Dysmorodrepanis munroi*) based on the single enigmatic specimen collected by his friend and colleague George Munro. He doubtlessly published much on entomology as well. Evenhuis should have completed the chapter on Perkins by including a bibliography and brief summary of each of his scientific contributions and at least mentioning the hookbill. These minor thoughts aside, I highly recommend Evenhuis' compilation to those interested not only in Hawaiian natural history but in the history of avian science and ornithological taxonomy during the turn of the 20th century.

Peter Pyle