LETTERS

Hawaii's Upland Forests

Hawaii is a veritable evolutionary showcase. The Hawaiian finches (formerly Hawaiian honeycreepers) offer a striking example of adaptive radiation that far exceeds that of the Galápagos finches which provided Darwin with much of his inspiration. *Drosophila* flies, land snails, and many groups of plants and insects in Hawaii offer comparable, if not more spectacular, examples.

The semitropical forests of Hawaii, like tropical forests everywhere, are threatened with destruction. These forests provide habitat for thousands of species. Twenty-eight species of birds are now endangered in Hawaii, and as many as 900 plants have been proposed as either endangered or threatened. More important, entire communities may be eliminated.

Increasing human population, with its attendant urban sprawl, clearing of land for crops, cattle pasture, and other uses, as well as the presence and continued influx of exotic plants and animals, are the biggest threats to Hawaii's native plants and animals.

The Hawaii chapter of The Nature Conservancy (TNC) recently initiated a Hawaii Forest Bird Project. They have used the most up-to-date information to identify the most valuable habitat for endangered forest birds and are now seeking to preserve these lands in as close to their natural state as possible.

The undersigned* have all worked in Hawaii and feel that TNC's effort may be the last hope for saving these upland forests from uses that are inconsistent with the long-term survival of Hawaii's forest communities. TNC presently has a commitment to acquire a conservation easement in perpetuity on 5230 acres on Maui. The cost of this easement is $60 per acre. Because of our interest in Hawaii's native flora and fauna and our belief that TNC's conservation efforts will provide a real opportunity to make a difference and are based on solid scientific information, we have each pledged to protect at least 1 acre of this land.

We are writing in the hope that others will pledge a similar amount. Protection of these upland forests (home of the Maui parrotbill, crested honeycreeper, Maui nukupuu, and Maui akepa) will protect hundreds of other species and the integrity of several communities. With these communities intact, man will keep open a window on evolutionary processes that might otherwise be closed forever.

We ask persons interested in contributing to the acquisition of the Waikamoi Reserve on Maui to send their tax-deductible contributions to The Nature Conservancy of Hawaii, 1024 Nuuanu Avenue, Suite 201, Honolulu, Hawaii 96817. Please state that your contribution is for the Waikamoi Reserve.

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Urey's Scientific Lineage

Stephen G. Brush includes in his article "Nickel for your thoughts: Urey and the origin of the moon" (3 Sept. 1982, p. 891) a brief biographical sketch of Harold C. Urey. I wish to correct two factual errors in that biography. Every graduate student in chemistry at Berkeley in the period from 1912 to 1946 came under the influence of Gilbert N. Lewis. Few carried out their research and received their degrees with Lewis. Urey received his degree with Axel R. Olson (*1*).

Urey was a major figure in the initiation of the atomic bomb project. He directed the very successful Columbia isotope-separation projects, which resulted in the successful production of heavy water, boron-10, and uranium-235. In 1945 he turned his efforts toward establishing a world order free of nuclear weapons. His scientific interests moved from chemical physics to geochemistry and then to geophysics and cosmology. Urey chose these areas of research because of their intellectual challenge, the new approaches he could bring to these fields and, incidentally, the consideration that he could divorce himself from weapons programs and classified research. While he served as a technical consultant for a number of the Atomic Energy Commission laboratories until the mid-1950's, Urey was never a member of the Atomic Energy Commission or its General Advisory Committee. He did not resign "from the Atomic Energy Commission in 1950," as Brush reports.

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Notes

1. I thank G. T. Seaborg for assistance in reviewing the official records of the University of California, Berkeley.

I thank Bigeleisen for correcting the error about Urey's degree, which is found in standard biographical sources. The statement that Urey "resigned from the Atomic Energy Commission [AEC] in 1950" was taken from the *New York Times*, as indicated in my reference 15. It is clearly wrong, or at least misleading, insofar as it implies that Urey was a commissioner or was directly employed by the AEC. I have not been able to find out just what relationship, if any, Urey did have with the AEC up to 1950.

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Materials Funding

We would like to reinforce Rustum Roy's carefully worded protest (Letters, 8 Apr., p. 142) about the misnaming of the National Center for Advanced Materials (NCAM). A local sample (within 200 miles, plus a few outlying points) of colleagues' opinions brings forth the colloquial response, "that's a pretty presumptious label."

Like Roy, we are concerned that such a label has been given without satisfactory oversight. In this particular case the result may, in the future, be detrimental to the materials research community as a whole. This is likely because the NCAM funding skews the distribution of funds *apparently* to the advantage of materials. However, the actual effort devoted to "advanced materials" is only a fraction of the facility's operations. That raises the question of whether such circumstances could preclude establishment of other facilities that might have a more legitimate claim to the NCAM label.

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