

Van Riper Heads Newest CPSU In Western Region

Able to leap huge oceans in a single bound – at the same time swinging from the oldest to the newest CPSU in the Western Region – Charles van Riper III has made the transition from the Cooperative Park Studies Unit at the University of Hawaii, the first established, to the brand new unit at the University of California, Davis, this time as Unit Leader.

Van Riper, who assumed his new duties in October 1979, is a native of upstate New York. He holds B.S. and M.Ed. degrees from Colorado State University, and in 1978 received a Ph.D. in zoology from the University of Hawaii, with a dissertation on the breeding ecology of the Amakihi and the endangered Palila, two endemic birds found on Mauna Kea. He has taught at high schools in New York and Hawaii and has worked as a wildlife biologist for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Hawaii. Most recently he was an assistant researcher with the University of Hawaii.

With more than 50 published articles, technical reports and papers to his credit, Van Riper has centered his research around avian ecology and ecological parasitology, with emphasis on endangered species.

His most recent research, dealing with the impact of introduced diseases (principally malaria) on the native birds of Hawaii, was done mostly within Hawaii Volcanoes NP. The park offers the only continuous corridor of natural flora and fauna that reaches from sea level to the mountains. Elsewhere the land is checkered with plantations. The continuous monitoring program conducted as part of



this research resulted in major maintenance changes in the park, and a future issue of *Pacific Park Science* will deal with the management aspects of this research. Meanwhile, Van Riper is working with a computer matrix of 4 million data points as he nears the March 31 deadline for his written report on the project.

Van Riper recently completed a survey of endangered raptorial birds in Lassen Volcanic NP and is planning future research projects at Yosemite and Channel Islands NPs. As an adjunct assistant professor in the UCal-Davis zoology department, Van Riper will teach, direct graduate students, and conduct research at the University.

In addition to the Unit Leader, the CPSU staff currently is composed of a Unit coordinator, Dr. L.D. Whittig, and a secretary, Janet Tilson.