

The Winter Season 2000–2001

Robert L. Pyle

1314 Kalakaua Avenue, #1010
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96826
(rpyle@hawaii.rr.com)

Peter Donaldson

2375 Ahakapu Street
Pearl City, Hawai'i 96782
(PDonaldson@hawaii.rr.com)

After a wet November, weather turned dry over the main Hawaiian Islands. Rainfall was below normal at most locations in December and January. In January, record low amounts were recorded at several gages. Rainfall increased enough in February to bring totals near normal for the year over the windward (northeast) sides of Kaua'i and the Big Island of Hawai'i, but most areas remained below normal. Some areas of O'ahu and Maui had less than 50 percent of normal rainfall for the year.

Abbreviations: H. (Hawai'i I.); Hanalei (Hanalei N.W.R., Kaua'i I.); Honouliuli (Honouliuli Unit of Pearl Harbor N.W.R., O'ahu I.); K. (Kaua'i Island); Kealia (Kealia Pond N.W.R., Maui Island); Kii (Ki'i Unit of Jas. Campbell N.W.R., O'ahu I.); K.P. (Kilauea Point N.W.R., Kaua'i I.); M. (Maui I.); O.

SA This season we were able to follow two interesting examples of inter-island bird movements. A **Black-tailed Godwit**, first seen in late Oct on the n. shore of Maui, moved 6 miles to the s. shore in late Dec. After 22 Dec, the bird traveled 100 miles to O'ahu, where it was spotted 6 Jan. The godwit remained there through the end of the season. A Caspian Tern, which had been on Kaua'i 26 Nov, was then seen 100 mi to the southeast, on O'ahu, 11 Dec. The tern remained on O'ahu till at least 1 Feb. The bird was then found 100 miles farther southeast on Maui 7 Feb. The rarity of these two species in Hawai'i and the lack of any overlapping dates makes it rather certain that only one individual of each species was observed.

(O'ahu I.); Waiawa (Waiawa Unit of Pearl Harbor N.W.R., O'ahu Island).

Grebes Through Frigatebirds

A Pied-billed Grebe was found in Mokuleia, O. 17 Jan (EV). A small population of this species had colonized the Kona coast, H. around 1985, but those birds died out over a year ago (RD), so the bird on O'ahu is probably a vagrant.

A 3rd Short-tailed Albatross joined two others on Midway 9 Jan (GS, NH et al.). These

rare albatross are seen regularly in very small numbers on Midway. Five Black-footed Albatross off the north shore of Kaua'i 22 Jan (CM) were an unusually large number for any of the main islands.

Red-tailed Tropicbirds returned to Kilauea 27 Feb (CM). The Red-billed Tropicbird that spent the previous two summers at Kilauea did not appear this Feb.

Ducks Through Falcons

Numbers of migrant waterfowl increased from very low fall numbers but remained lower than normal. The highest counts of any species were 210 Northern Pintails and 185 Northern Shovelers at Kealia 4 Jan (MN). Highest counts of bay ducks were 12-14 Lesser Scaup and 2 Ring-necked Ducks at Waiakea Pond, H. (TP), 15 Lesser Scaup at Aimakapa, H. (CM, RD) and 20 Ring-necked Ducks at the Kona STP, H. 8 Feb (CM, RD). Bay ducks were very scarce on O'ahu—only single Lesser Scaup and Ring-necked Duck were reported (MSi, PD, v.ob.)

A Brant was seen at Kealia 4 Jan–20 Feb (MN). Four Green-winged Teal on Midway all season included one Eurasian/Aleutian male (DS, KL, et al.). A single Garganey was found at Hanalei 4 Dec (CM). One Eurasian Wigeon remained at Midway all season (DS, KL et al.), and 2 were at Hanalei 19 Jan–25 Feb. A pair of Canvasbacks was seen at Kealia 17 Jan (MN), and single females were observed in Kona at the Kona S.T.P., H. 14 Jan (RD, SD) and Aimakapa Pond, H. 20 Feb (DK). These species are all uncommon in Hawai'i.



Two views of Hawai'i's first Black-tailed Godwit, which island-hopped from Kauai to Maui. Photographs by Marshall J. Riff.

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Single Ospreys, rare but regular in Hawai'i, were seen at Kealia 22 Dec (MN), at Kaloko Pond, H. 15 Jan (RD), at Kanaha Pond, M. 25 Feb (DK), and at Hanalei, K. 22 Jan–27 Feb (CM). The dates and locations of these reports suggest that there were at least 2 individuals.

Peregrine Falcons were reported on four of the main islands. A dark brown, heavily streaked bird was at Kii 9 Dec (PD, v. ob.). A paler, grayer bird was reported in the Kilauea area, K. 22 Jan–27 Feb (CM). Peregrines were also spotted in Kona, H. 15 Dec (GK), in Waihe'e Valley, M. 16 Dec (MC, TG), and at Schofield Barracks, O. 23 Feb (RM). Peregrine Falcons are rare but regular in Hawai'i from fall through spring.

Shorebirds Through Terns

Single Black-bellied Plovers were observed at Kealia 20 & 28 Jan (MN) and 15 Feb at Hanalei (CM). One to 3 small plovers were seen regularly on Midway throughout the season (DS, KL, RD, v. ob.). One bird appeared to be a Semipalmated Plover (DS, RD). Observers could not tell if the other 2 were Semipalmated or Common Ringed Plovers (RD). One Killdeer was seen in a small pond in Waipahu, O. 1 Feb (PD, CM). By 18 Feb, the pond had dried up and the bird was gone (PD). A Lesser Yellowlegs was seen at Hanalei, K. 14 Dec–25 Jan (CM). A Curlew Sandpiper was seen briefly at the Kona S.T.P. 14 Jan (†RD, SD) but could not be relocated. A brown-backed Whimbrel of the North American race was at Kii throughout the period (MSi, PD, v. ob.). This is probably the same individual that has appeared at Kii each fall since 1997. A pale-backed Old World Whimbrel stayed on Midway through the period (DS, KL, †RD, v. ob.). The **Black-tailed Godwit** (the first state record) discovered at Kanaha Pond, M., last fall turned up at Kii 4 Jan (MO). Two Sharp-tailed Sandpipers remained at Kii all season (MSi, PD, v. ob.). Sharp-tailed Sandpipers are regular fall migrants in Hawai'i but rarely overwinter. Dunlins were unusually widespread this winter. One bird was on Midway all season (DS, KL). At Kii one to 3 were reported 21 Dec+ (MSi, MO, PD, KP et al.). One Dunlin was seen at Kealia 2 Feb (MN). At least 3 birds, and possibly as many as 7, were found in the Kona area, H. 15 Jan (RD, SD). Single phalaropes, possibly Red-necked, were seen at sea off w. Maui 17–19 Feb (AL, RB).

An ad. Slaty-back Gull lingered on Midway 1–17 Jan (vt RD, DS, KL, v. ob.). A Black-legged Kittiwake that arrived on Midway 10 Jan (DS, KL) was found dead the next day. Both species are very rare in Hawai'i. One to 3 first-winter Herring Gulls frequented Midway from late

Oct through the season (DS, KL, et al.)

A first-year Common Tern was observed at the Kona S.T.P. 9 Jan (KP), 14 Jan (RD, SD), and 8 Feb (RD, CM). A Caspian Tern was seen at Kaua'i Lagoons, K. 26 Nov (CM). Both species are rare in Hawai'i.

Doves Through Passerines

Single Mourning Doves were seen in flight on Maui 24 Dec and 28 Jan (LT). On 22 Jan, 12 Rose-ringed Parakeets flew across the H1 freeway in Honolulu, O. (PD). About 15 of the parakeets were seen in O'ahu Cemetery, O. 17 Feb (KP, PD). A Common Redpoll was studied closely on Midway 15 Dec by an observer who bands redpolls in Alaska (KL). He identified the bird as an after-second-year male. There is one prior record of a redpoll on Midway.

We usually receive few reports on forest birds, but this season was better than most. Six Greater Necklaced Laughing-Thrushes were seen on a Kaua'i mountain known as the Sleeping Giant (CM). These introduced babblers have been established on Kaua'i for years but are seldom reported. One 'Akohehohe was seen in Waikamoi Preserve, M. 3 Dec, plus 50 Maui 'Alauahio, 30 'I'iwi, and 120 'Apapane (LT, CM, et al.). On a hike into the Alakai Swamp area, K. 6 Dec, 40 Kaua'i 'Elepaio, 5 Puaiohi, 50 Kaua'i 'Amakihi, 25 'Anianiau, 1 'Akikiki, 7 'Akeke'e, 20 'I'iwi, and 100 'Apapane were seen (CM). Ten Hawai'i 'Elepaio, 5 Palila, and 20 Hawai'i 'Amakihi were found at Pu'u La'au, H. 9 Feb (CM, RD). Observers found O'ahu 'Amakihi and 'Apapane to be unusually scarce on some O'ahu forest trails (DB, MW). The introduced Yellow-faced Grassquit has also been scarce, especially in lower elevations. Only 3 were found along Manana Trail, O. 1 Feb (PD, CM). Perhaps the long drought is having an effect.

Contributors: David Adams, Robin Baird, David Bremer, Chad Castle, Mark Collins, Reg David, Susan David, Jim Denny, Arleone Dibben, Peter Donaldson, George Fisher, Troy Gequerra, Glenn Klingler, David Kuhn, Keith Larson, Allen Ligon, Dan Lindsay, Richard May, Matt Medeiros, Christian Melgar, Michele Morris, Mike Nishimoto, Mike Ord, Rob Pacheco, Kurt Pohlman, Thane Pratt, Peter Pyle, Robert Pyle, William Rathman, Mark Rauzon, Eric Rosenfeld, Mike Silbernagle, Dan Small, Margo Stahl, Lance Tanino, Tom Telfer, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Michael Walther, Eric VanderWerf, Michael Walther, Abby Brown-Watson, David Watson.

