

## CANADA GOOSE

## *Branta canadensis*

non-breeding visitor, occasional winterer

*B.c. parvipes* (visitor)

*B.c. occidentalis* (vagrant)

*B.c. moffitti* (non-established escape)

The Canada Goose, recently split from the [Cackling Goose](#) by the AOU (2004), breeds across N America at subarctic to temperate latitudes. Many populations are resident whereas some are migratory but usually for shorter distances than Cackling Geese (Paxinos et al. 2002, AOU 2004). The most migratory subspecies of Canada Goose, *B.c. parvipes*, breeds primarily from ne. Alaska to s. Nunavut and winters primarily in Texas, although a small population also breeds around Anchorage and winters primarily in Oregon (Mlodinow et al. 2008). It has occurred in the *Southeastern Hawaiian Islands* as an occasional winter visitor, with at least 4-5 records identified as of this subspecies. However, this subspecies can be difficult to separate from the [Cackling Goose](#) subspecies *B.h. taverneri* (Engilis et al. 2004, Mlodinow et al. 2008; see [Cackling Goose](#)), and there are 7-10 other sight records that could pertain to either *parvipes* or *taverneri*. There are also 1-2 records in Hawaii of *B.c. occidentalis*, that breeds in se. Alaska and British Columbia and winters S to Oregon.

A flying goose shot with a rifle by a cowboy on the Pala'au Flats, *Moloka'i*, in Dec 1902 (Munro 1944; BPBM 7079; [HRBP](#) 5644-5646 of specimen), although considered at first a Black [Brant](#), then a "[Cackling Goose](#)" by Munro, has since been confirmed by measurements as a Canada Goose, either *parvipes* (J Aldrich, R.B. Clapp in litt.; Engilis et al. 2004) or possibly *occidentalis* (PP examination). Another specimen (BPBM 158930) identified as *parvipes* by Engilis et al. (2004) from O'ahu has been reidentified as a [Cackling Goose](#) (see that account). A goose photographed at Mokapu Peninsula, *O'ahu* Nov 1981 ([HRBP](#) 392-393) and (presumably the same individual) at the Honouliuli unit of JCNWR 6 Dec 1981- Feb 1982 ([HRBP](#) 0394, 0690-0691, 0695, accompanying [Cackling](#) Geese for direct comparison) shows the characters of *parvipes* (Engilis et al. 2004). Another Canada Goose photographed with a [Cackling Goose](#) in Hawaii Kai 17 Jan 2005 ([HRBP](#) 5190) shows characters of *parvipes* as well. The only other records of Canada Geese in Hawaii were of individuals at the Ki'i unit of JCNWR, O'ahu 30 Nov 1988-4 Apr 1989, which has been identified based on photographs as *B.c. occidentalis* (Engilis et al. 2004), and one with a [Cackling Goose](#) at Honouliuli Unit of PHNWR 2 Nov 2005 that may also have been of *occidentalis*. Bryan (1958) mentions a record from Maui in 1942 but we have no other documentation.

A growing flock of Canada Geese have been observed intermittently at Waiakea Pond, Hilo, Hawai'i, beginning with two in 1998 and peaking at 11-15 in 2003-2006 ([HRBP](#) 5017, 5291, 5815). These birds are medium large in size and could refer to the widespread subspecies *B.c. moffitti*, which is often domesticated and/or naturalized outside of it's original range in w. North America (*cf.* Marchant and Higgins 1990, Pyle 2008). New individuals are usually first seen in the summer, suggesting local breeding. A similar group of 10-15 birds present at Hanalei NWR, Kaua'i, early Aug-late Oct 1979 were reported as possible escapees from a domesticated flock. A specimen received from the Honolulu Zoo 17 Mar 1969 ([BPBM](#) 145482) was identified as *moffitti* (J. Aldrich in litt., PP examination), but the origin of this specimen is unknown.

[Acronyms and Abbreviations](#)

[Literature cited](#)