

COMMON MERGANSER

Mergus merganser

non-breeding visitor, vagrant

M.m. americanus?

The Common Merganser is a circumpolar species that breeds in subarctic and n. temperate regions of N America and Eurasia and winters S to Japan, the Kuril Is., coastal Alaska S to s. California and across most of the U.S. (Dement'ev and Gladkov 1952, Cramp and Simmons 1977, AOU 1998). What was probably a single female Common Merganser reached the *Southeastern Hawaiian Islands* in 1986-1998, being recorded on three islands. On *Maui*, it was first reported on Kealia Pond NWR 4-14 Feb 1986, and was then seen sporadically there for over 13 years, primarily in fall and early winter but occasionally in spring (e.g., 12-31 Mar 1988) and summer (25 Jun-3 Jul 1991, 19 Jun-15 Jul 1997), until last observed 16 Apr 1998. A photograph taken 4 Oct 1987 ([HRBP 0710](#)) was published in Engilis et al. (2004). During prolonged absences from Kealia Pond, female Common Mergansers were observed at Hanalei NWR, *Kaua'i* 29 Dec 1991 – 22 Feb 1992, and along Waimea Stream, *O'ahu* 21 Feb 1991. It seems safest to conclude that only one long-staying individual is involved in all of these reports. The photographed bird has a relatively small bill, suggesting *M.m. americanus* of North America rather than the nominate Eurasian subspecies, but this designation is unconfirmed.

[Acronyms and Abbreviations](#)

[Literature cited](#)

Citation: Pyle, R.L., and P. Pyle. 2009. The Birds of the Hawaiian Islands: Occurrence, History, Distribution, and Status. B.P. Bishop Museum, Honolulu, HI, U.S.A. Version 1 (31 December 2009) <http://hbs.bishopmuseum.org/birds/rlp-monograph/>