

## COMMON PEAFOWL

*Pavo cristatus*

Other: Indian Peafowl (<1983)

monotypic

### **naturalized (non-native) resident, long established**

The Common Peafowl is native to India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka with small and/or semi-domestic populations occurring in various places around the world (Long 1981, Marchant and Higgins 1993, AOU 1998, Kannan and James 1998). It has been introduced rather unsuccessfully to California and Florida, and with more success to Hawaii, where small populations were introduced at least as early as 1860 and possibly earlier (Lever 1987), on all *Southeastern Hawaiian Islands* except Kaho'olawe, and became established on 3-4 of these islands through the 2000s (Long 1981, Lever 1987). Unlike other upland game birds that were specifically propagated and released by government agencies for hunting, Common Peafowls were introduced in Hawaii primarily for aesthetic reasons by private individuals, and their history of introduction is thus harder to trace. Current populations are localized to a few areas of appropriate dry habitat on leeward slopes with banana poka (*Passeflora mollissima*) fruit. Schwartz and Schwartz (1949) estimated 530 birds for the Southeastern Islands (excluding Ni'ihau) in 1946-1947.

Initial introductions of Common Peafowl likely included *Ni'ihau* (Swedberg 1967a), where they were reported as fairly common by Caum (1933), abundant by Schwartz and Schwartz (1949), and widespread throughout the lowlands by Fisher (1951). They were still present on Ni'ihau during a one-day trip in March 2002. Introductions on *Kaua'i* were initiated at least as early as 1860 (Locey 1937, Munro 1944) and scattered small populations continued to persist through the 2000s, primarily along the drier s. and sw. slopes of the island but also along the Kipu Kai coast S of Lihue, Koke'e SP, and Hanalei NWR (Denny 1999). Introductions to *O'ahu* also occurred at least as early as the 1860s, when King Kamehameha V gave a flock to a rancher in Makaha Valley as a gift. Semi-domesticated birds have been sporadically observed throughout O'ahu (*E* 42:100, 69:55-57) but the only established wild populations have occurred in the vicinity of Mt. Kaala, in particular "Peacock Flats" in Makaha Valley (e.g., *E* 16:11) but also to Kaena Point, Haleiwa, and the slopes above Kunia and Nanakuli, and, during the 1980-2000s, a small flock persisting in Koko Crater. In 2003 the USDA, responding to complaints of excessive noise and droppings, planned to cull the Makaha Valley population (estimated at 60-70 birds at the time) but this decision was shelved following an outcry from the public (*E* 69:55-57). Peafowls were reported to persist in small numbers on *Moloka'i* by Caum (1933) and Schwartz and Schwartz (1949), but there were few reports of wild populations after the 1950s. Likewise, populations introduced to *Lana'i* in the late 1800s thrived for a number of years but were apparently extirpated with the building of Lana'i City in the 1930s (Munro 1944, 2007). On *Maui*, Rothschild singled out the island as having "large numbers" in the late 1800s; but by the 2000s only small populations persisted on the remote sw. slopes of Mt Haleakala (Scott *et al.* 1986). Common Peafowl were first introduced to *Hawai'i I* at Pu'uwa'awa'a Ranch in 1909 and quickly became established there in forests at 600-1250 m elevation (*E* 19:4; 21:13, 67; Lewin 1971). By the 1970s this population had spread N

to Hualalai and S along the slopes of Mauna Kea as far as Ka'u (Scott *et al.* 1986). Other observations of peafowl near the Kohala Mts. and along Saddle Road during the 1970-2000s may have involved semi-domesticated individuals.

#### [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/>