

MOTTLED PETREL

Pterodroma inexpectata

non-breeding visitor, regular migrant

monotypic

Mottled Petrels breed on islands S of New Zealand in Dec-May and disperse widely during the non-breeding season, with a portion of the population traveling to the N Pacific (King 1967, Harrison 1983, Marchant and Higgins 1990, Bartle et al. 1993, AOU 1998, CBRC 2007). They migrate through Hawaiian waters regularly, with records concentrated during brief windows in the spring and fall.

At sea, almost all observations of Mottled Petrels from research cruises have been in October and April. During daily surveys of all Hawaiian waters, Rowlett (2002) recorded 302 Mottled Petrels in waters between Gardner Pinnacles and Hawai'i I 27 Sep-2 Nov 2002, plus one late bird SE of Hawai'i I 22 Nov. The highest daily count was of 145 birds NNE of Nihoa 11 Oct 2002. Additional Mottled Petrels were of one recorded between Kure and Midway 14 May 2000, 4 individuals 15 km SW of Midway 11 May 1999, and two flying N near Maro Reef 185 km WNW of Gardner Pinnacles 18 Apr 1995. An unseasonal report of one between Midway and Kure 8 Jul 1997 is unsubstantiated. During monthly surveys E and S of the Southeastern Islands, King (1970) recorded 50 Mottled Petrels flying S in October 1964, 10 flying N in April 1965, and only 5 other individuals (May, Nov, and Dec). Similarly, Spear *et al.* (1999) recorded 55 individuals in October, 3 in April, and none in other months; several of these were photographed 130 km SSE of Hawai'i I. 7 Oct 1987 ([HRBP 628-632](#)). Another 125 birds were observed at sea within 75 km SE of Hawai'i 18 Oct 1985.

In the *Southeastern Hawaiian Islands*, Mottled Petrels have been reported in small numbers during single-day trips during 17 Mar-26 Apr and 9 Oct-25 Nov, 1977-2008, within a few km off *Kaua'i*, *O'ahu*, *Moloka'i* (*E* 38:57), and *Hawai'i I*, e.g., off Kona 25 Nov 2004 ([HRBP 5167-5168, 5614](#)), 26 Apr 2009 ([HRBP 5615-5616](#)), and 30 Oct 2009 ([HRBP 5790-5791](#)). Most observations have been of single birds, although 6 each were reported sw. of O'ahu 11 Apr 1997 and between Kaua'i and Ni'hau 1 Apr 2001. The only record from shore involves several individuals observed during high winds from Laie Point and Kahuku, O'ahu 27 Oct 1985 (*cf. E* 46:89).

[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/>