

Pacific Reef-Heron

Egretta sacra

hypothetical, unsubstantiated

Pacific Reef-Herons range from India E to New Zealand, Fiji, Samoa, the Tuamotu Is, and throughout Micronesia (Pratt 1987, Wiles 2005), as close to Hawaii as the Marshall Is (Clapp 1990). W. Anderson (*in* Cook and King 1894:228) first made mention of this species for the Hawaiian Islands, referring to it by its Tahitian name "*otoo*" (Medway 1981). Perhaps based on this, Gray (1859) and Finsch and Hartlaub (1867) listed this species for the islands and Dole (1869, 1879) reported a heron "common all over Hawaii" as being *Ardea sacra*, mistakenly applying this name to [Black-crowned Night-Heron](#) (Wilson & Evans 1890-1899, W.A. Bryan 1901, Henshaw 1902). Finsch (1880) followed Dole in reporting herons with "manners very much of our *Nycticorax*" as "apparently *Ardea sacra*". Dole's statement that juveniles were white and Finsch's (1880) noting of an individual of the "white form" in Kahalui are problematical (Bryan & Greenway 1944, Bryan 1958), and may refer to leucistic night-herons or other species. Based on these unsubstantiated reports "Reef Heron" was included for Hawaii by Peterson (1961, Appendix II). Reports of white herons at Hilo, Hawai'i (Henshaw 1902) and Pearl Harbor, O'ahu 14 Feb 1965 (*E* 25:82), and of dark herons at Pearl Harbor in Jan 1967 during a [DOFAW Waterbird Survey](#) (see [Little Blue Heron](#)) and at Aimakapa Pond, Hawai'i in Mar 2002, were suggested as being Pacific Reef-Herons but all of these could easily pertain to other egrets or herons (see [Snowy Egret](#)).

[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/>