

COMMON SNIPE

Gallinago gallinago

non-breeding visitor, vagrant

C.g. gallinago

The Common Snipe breeds across the n. Palearctic and perhaps in w. Alaska, and winters in c. Eurasia from the Mediterranean region to the Philippine Is (Dement'ev and Gladkov 1951c; Cramp and Simmons 1983; AOU 1998, 2002). It is the Eurasian counterpart of the [Wilson Snipe](#), which was split into a separate species by the AOU (2002). Separation of these two taxa can be problematic (*E* 39:8). Confirmed Common Snipes have been recorded in w. Micronesia, Kwajalein Atoll (VanderWerf 2006), and on Wake, where a specimen was taken 6 Jan 1965 (Johnston and MacFarlane 1967; USNM 494111); a snipe photographed on Wake in Oct 2007 and identified as a Common Snipe (Rauzon et al. 2008) appears to be a Wilson Snipe.

There are records of two Common Snipes in the Hawaiian Islands confirmed by specimen or photograph, and we marginally consider two other sight records as pertaining to this species. In the *Northwestern Hawaiian Islands*, a snipe collected at **Kure** 25 Sep 1966 (USNM 496778) was reported to be a [Wilson Snipe](#) (Clapp and Woodward 1968) but has been re-identified (PP examination) as a Common Snipe ([HRBP](#) 5389-5391). It shows characters consistent with the expected nominate subspecies (*G.g. gallinago*). Nine other sight records of snipes from the Northwestern Islands are not identifiable based on archived documentation but could most likely pertain to Common Snipes: Midway (18 Dec 1991-Apr 1992, 31 Dec 1996-22 Feb 1997, 15-17 Apr 2000, 30 Oct 2000-28 Mar 2001, and 13 Nov 2001-11 Jan 2002), Pearl and Hermes (13 Mar 1964; Amerson et al. 1974), Laysan (28 Oct-20 Nov 1990 and 4 Apr 2009), and French Frigate (7 Nov 1990); some of these were not described adequately to eliminate [Pin-tailed](#) or other Asian snipes, which are also possibilities in the Northwestern Islands.

In the *Southeastern Hawaiian Islands* a Common Snipe was carefully identified and photographed at Honouliuli Unit of PHNWR, **O'ahu** 10 Oct-11 Nov 2008 ([HRBP](#) 5394-5395, 5400, 5817-5820, published *NAB* 63:177); a snipe there 6-30 Oct 2009 was thought possibly to be the returning individual but this was not confirmed. After this documented occurrence we re-considered two birds at Hanalei NWR, **Kaua'i** 6-10 Dec 1978 (*E* 40:15; cf. Pyle 2002) and 1 at Kanaha Pond, **Maui** 4 Feb 2005 as marginally substantiated. These three individuals were described in detail by observers experienced with both Common and [Wilson](#) snipes.

[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/>