

GRAY-TAILED TATTLER

Tringa brevipes

Other: Polynesian Tattler (<1983), Siberian Tattler

monotypic

non-breeding visitor, vagrant

The Gray-tailed Tattler breeds in Siberia and winters in SE Asia, Australia, and the w. Pacific, including Micronesia as far E as the Marshall Is (Stickney 1943, Dement'ev and Gladkov 1951c, Schipper 1985, Pratt et al. 1987, Higgins and Davies 1996, AOU 1998, Wiles 2005). It and [Wandering Tattler](#) were placed in the genus *Heteroscelus* until the AOU (2006) merged this genus with *Tringa*. It is a regular spring migrant in the Aleutian Is and has been recorded as a vagrant to Washington, California (CBRC 2007), Wake Atoll (Jones 1995, Rauzon et al. 2008), the Cook Is, Fiji, and Tuvalu (Pratt et al. 1987). It is a rare transient and winterer in the Hawaiian Islands, although confusion with the similar [Wandering Tattler](#) has probably caused some individuals to be overlooked (*cf. E* 39:8). Because of this similarity, the following records of Gray-tailed Tattlers are of birds confirmed to species by specimen, photograph, or description including both vocalization and plumage characters. More than 20 additional reports of unsubstantiated or tentatively identified Gray-tailed Tattlers exist (including individuals on Laysan, Kaua'i, Moloka'i, and Maui), many of which could be valid.

There are 7 confirmed records likely involving 5 individuals. In the *Northwestern Hawaiian Islands*, a first-fall male was collected on **Midway** 30 Oct 1964 (Clapp and Woodward 1968; USNM 494300, [HRBP](#) 5514 of specimen), one over-wintered at Midway 12 Dec 1991-19 Apr 1992, and individuals were photographed there 4-5 Jun 1999 ([HRBP](#) 1238-1239 published *NAB* 53:435) and in Feb-Mar 2009 ([HRBP](#) 5411-5412). A first-fall bird photographed on Kure 28 Oct 1983 (P. Pyle 1984; [HRBP](#) 0264-0265, 1407, published *AB* 38:250) had plumage features and gave vocalizations indicating Gray-tailed Tattler but appeared to have an abnormally large bill and may not be a pure Gray-tailed Tattler.

In the *Southeastern Hawaiian Islands*, a first-spring bird at the Ki'i Unit of JCNWR, **O'ahu** 13-19 Apr 1988 (*E* 48:77; [HRBP](#) 0773-0775, published *AB* 42:373) was likely the same individual that wintered in the same location the following year (7 Aug 1988-25 Apr 1989), suggesting that it wintered undetected during 1987-1988 as well. One observed along the beach near Aimakapa Pond, **Hawai'i I**, 7 Aug-18 Nov 1988 and 7 Aug-21 Oct 1989 also likely involved a single individual (unsubstantiated reports there from 30 Aug 1991 and Aug 1992 may also have involved this individual). A tattler heard giving a two-note call at Kanaha Pond, Maui 23 Mar 1995 could have been a Gray-tailed Tattler but this call note is known now not to be diagnostic.

[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/>