

## LEAST SANDPIPER

*Calidris minutilla*

**non-breeding visitor, occasional winterer**

monotypic

The Least Sandpiper is an American species which breeds across the Holarctic and winters S to c. S America (AOU 1998). In the Pacific Basin, they have been recorded on Clipperton I (Howell et al. 1993), New Zealand (unconfirmed; Higgins and Davies 1996), and the Hawaiian Islands, where they occur primarily as an occasional to semi-regular winter visitor. The lack of other reports from the tropical Pacific (Pratt et al. 1987) may relate to the difficulty in separating Least Sandpiper from other small species of *Calidris* (Pyle et al. 1988; see [Semipalmated Sandpiper](#)), although the paucity of substantiated reports for the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands and Kaua'i indicate that they are rare in (or unable to withstand migration to) the w. Pacific Basin.

There are unsubstantiated reports for three Least Sandpipers from the *Northwestern Hawaiian Islands* that could be correct but which fail to eliminate other small *Calidris* sandpipers (e.g., [Long-toed Stint](#)): 30 Nov 1996 and 14 Oct 2000-23 Mar 2001 at Midway, and 7 Mar 1992 at Laysan (see [Long-toed Stint](#); [HRBP](#) 5593-5592). In the *Southeastern Hawaiian Islands* there are documented reports for a [minimum](#) of 47 individuals, 10 observed only in fall, 36 wintering birds, and 1 possible spring transient. These have occurred on **Kaua'i** (1 Sep 2006; [HRBP](#) 5316) **O'ahu** (23 individuals in 1967-2007; e.g., Clapp and Pyle 1968, Pyle *et al.* 1988; USNM 543064; [HRBP](#) 0361, 0658, 0675-0682, 5231, published *E* 48:74), **Moloka'i** (2, 11 Oct-8 Nov 2009; [HRBP](#) 5687-5689), **Maui** (16, 1963-2009; e.g., USNM 582893; Pyle et al. 1988; [HRBP](#) 5427 published *NAB* 63:523), and **Hawai'i** (6, 1981-2004; e.g., Pyle et al. 1988). There are many additional records of unsubstantiated Least Sandpipers from these islands (e.g., *E* 24:38; 31:103; 37:65; 38:7, 103; 40:16), most or all of which are likely correct. These include a high count of 5 birds at Waipi'o, O'ahu, 27 Nov 1976 (*E* 38:3). The single record and no unsubstantiated reports from Kaua'i is surprising, and points to the largely southeastern pattern of occurrence for this species in Hawaii. Several birds have apparently returned for consecutive winters; e.g., 2 at Waipi'o in 1983-1987 and 2-4 at Kealia Pond NWR, Maui 1987-1993 and 2004-2009. The earliest fall arrival was for 8 Aug (1990, Ki'i unit of JCNWR, O'ahu), the only possible spring transient occurred 14 Apr 1987 at Kealia Pond, and the latest spring record was for 3 individuals 25 Apr (1977 at Waipi'o; *E* 38:58). There are no records for over-summering birds.

### [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/>