

SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER

Limnodromus griseus

nonbreeding visitor, vagrant

L.g. caurinus

Short-billed Dowitchers breed in nw. Alaska and n. Canada (AOU 1998) and have occurred rarely as vagrants to Eurasia (Dement'ev and Gladkon 1951c, Cramp and Simmons 1983). Although Short-billed Dowitcher is a longer distance migrant than [Long-billed Dowitcher](#), wintering as far S as c. S America, it is the much less common of the two species in the Pacific Basin, having been confirmed only from Johnston Atoll (8 Sep 1969; photo in Amerson and Shelton 1976) and the Hawaiian Islands. Because of the difficulty in distinguishing the two dowitcher species, we follow Pratt et al. (1987) in taking a conservative approach to reports of the former species from the Hawaiian Islands, accepting only those accompanied by specimens, photographs, or extensive written descriptions. Short-billed Dowitcher appears to be a rare fall vagrant, with only three confirmed records of wintering individuals, although the lack of more winter records may reflect the difficulty of identification at this time of year.

There are five confirmed records from the *Northwestern Hawaiian Islands*, from *Kure* (20 Mar-12 Apr in basic plumage, presumably a wintering bird; *E* 41:48, [HRBP](#) 0041-0042, 1455-1457), *Midway* (30 Oct 1963; Clapp and Woodward 1968; USNM 496057, [HRBP](#) 5481-5483), and *Laysan* (5-14 Nov 1984, 8 Nov 1993, and 11 Jan 2003; [HRBP](#) 0613-0614, 5552). Reports from Midway 3 Dec 1971 (2 birds; *E* 32:78), and Laysan 2-12 May 1993 are unsubstantiated.

In the *Southeastern Hawaiian Islands* there are 9 confirmed records. One was well-described and photographed at Hanalei NWR, *Kaua'i* 3-4 Sep 1998 ([HRBP](#) 1253-1254). On *O'ahu*, individuals were at Waipi'o Peninsula 1-9 Sep 1984 ([HRBP](#) 0683-0684) and 28 Aug-3 Nov 1986 (*E* 46:186) and at the Ki'i unit of JCNWR 28 Aug-6 Sep 1985, 21 Aug-12 Oct 1988, 11 Sep-7 Oct 1999, and 24 Aug-12 Oct 2000; the 1999 bird was also observed at the Honouliuli unit of PHNWR. At Kealia Pond NWR, *Maui*, one was well-described and photographed 2 Sep 1992 ([HRBP](#) 0981-0982) and one was present in an over-wintering flock of 15 dowitchers present from at least Oct 2003 to Jan 2004 ([HRBP](#) 5033); reports for more than one Short-billed in this flock are not substantiated. There are at least 12 other unsubstantiated reports of Short-billed Dowitchers from the Southeastern Islands. These include undescribed birds from Kaua'i 27-31 Dec 1986 (*E* 47:67), O'ahu 12 Nov 1972 (*E* 33:100) and 29 Jan 1979 (4 birds; *E* 38:3, and Moloka'i 28 Sep 1995 and Mar-Apr 1999. Up to 9 birds at Waipi'o 9 Oct-20 Nov 1987 were not well described and arrived on dates much more consistent with the later-migrating Long-billed Dowitcher. Other reports of Short-billed Dowitchers first detected at well-visited localities in Oct-Nov are equally unsubstantiated, and two reports on [DOFAW Waterbird Surveys](#) (11 on Maui 18 Jan 1984 and 12 on O'ahu 17 Jan 2007) were of birds known to be [Long-billed Dowitchers](#).

Virtually all records for the Hawaiian Islands have been of first-cycle individuals, including the specimen from Midway, which has also been identified as the expected w. Alaskan subspecies *L.g. caurinus* (Clapp and Woodward 1968, PP examination).

[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/>