

SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER

Calidris acuminata

nonbreeding visitor, regular migrant

monotypic

Sharp-tailed Sandpipers breed in northern Russia (rarely Alaska), winter primarily in se. Asia, Australia, and New Zealand, and occur as vagrants throughout the world (Dement'ev and Gladkov 1951c, Cramp and Simmons 1983, Higgins and Davies 1996, AOU 1998, CBRC 2007). First-year birds undergo a unique "dog-leg" migration, from Asia to staging grounds in w. Alaska (R. Gill, pers. comm.), and subsequently through the Aleutian Is and the w. and c. Pacific (e.g., Clapp and Sibley 1967, Clapp 1968a), including Wake and Johnston atolls (Amerson and Shelton 1976, Rauzon et al. 2008), Micronesia (Wiles 2005), and the Hawaiian Islands (Pratt et al. 1987), enroute to Australia and New Zealand. As with [Pectoral Sandpiper](#), they are irregularly uncommon to common fall migrants and rare in winter residents and spring transients in Hawaii, but with proportionally more records than Pectoral in the Northwestern Islands. Eleven specimens have been collected (Bartsch 1922, Clapp and Woodward 1968), the earliest being two from Maui 6 Oct 1892 (Rothschild 1900; BPBM, see below) and one from Laysan in 1896, by Shaunisland (1899; Bremen Museum).

There have been reports of >400 Sharp-tailed Sandpipers from the *Northwestern Hawaiian Islands*, from **Kure** (e.g., [HRBP](#) 1411), **Midway** (e.g., [HRBP](#) 0227, 0346, 0559, 1408, 1412, 1417; WFVZ 29962), **Pearl and Hermes**, **Lisianski**, **Laysan** (e.g., [HRBP](#) 0337-0338, 0609, 1413, 5567), and **French Frigate** (photograph, NAB 61:164). All but 14 of these reports have been of fall transients, with high counts of >100 on Laysan 6 Oct 1990, 20-30 on Midway in Nov 1963 (Fisher 1965), and 21 there in mid-Oct 1983 (Pyle 1984). Over-wintering birds have been recorded only on Midway, during the winters of 1991-1992 (2-3 birds), 1998-1999 (1), 1999-2000 (2), 2000-2001 (2), and 2003-2004 (4); it is likely that some of those recorded in 1998-2001 represent returning adults (see below). One recorded from Midway 29 Mar 1996 (in alternate plumage), two reported from Lisianski 16-17 May 1980, and three observed on Laysan 4-6 Apr 2007 ([HRBP](#) 5567) may have been spring transients. The earliest fall arrival was recorded on Laysan 5 Sep (1990). An interesting individual on Midway 10 Oct 1983 ([HRBP](#) 0278-0279, 0606-0607, 1432) may have been a hybrid between [Pectoral](#) and Sharp-tailed sandpipers, or it may have been a variant Sharp-tailed.

In the *Southeastern Hawaiian Islands* >700 individuals have been recorded. Over 650 of these have been from **O'ahu** (see also [HRBP](#) 0060, 0066), and **Maui** ([HRBP](#) 0945-0949), where early specimens were collected (Rothschild 1900, Bryan 1901b, Henshaw 1902a; BPBM 120, 152363) and high concentrations of > 25 have occurred at Waipi'o Peninsula and Kealia Pond NWR, respectively, during falls of "irruption years" (including 1969, 1977, 1978, 1988, 1990, 1991, and 2007; *E* 26:88, 30:87, 38:103). The highest numbers by far occurred during Sep-Oct 1991 at Kealia, where a peak count of 110 was recorded 13 Oct (*AB* 46:154-155; [HRBP](#) 0947-0948). The high count on O'ahu was of 34 at Waipi'o 15 Oct 1977. Sharp-tailed Sandpipers have also been recorded on **Kaua'i** (17, 1966-2008; e.g., [HRBP](#) 5846), **Moloka'i** (12, 1902-2008; e.g., BPBM 4553, 6158, 156983), **Lana'i** (1, 21 Oct 1989), and **Hawai'i I** (22, 1960-2008). The earliest fall arrival was for 28 Jul (1993, Lowe Aquafarm near Kahuku) and the latest spring record was for 7 May (2001, Ki'i Unit of JCNWR, O'ahu). Up to five individuals wintered at

Waipi'o for consecutive years during 1977-1981 and one wintered on Moloka'i from 2005 to 2007, indicating successful migration to breeding grounds and return of adults. There are 16 other records of wintering birds, from Kaua'i (2; e.g., [HRBP 5946](#)), O'ahu (8), Moloka'i (1), Maui (3), and Hawai'i I (2). The only apparent spring transients involved up to 6 birds at the Ki'i Unit of JCNWR 20 Apr-3 May 1989 (after only 2 had over-wintered there). An individual with a broken leg, first observed at Ki'i 12 Sep 2002, remained there through 31 Jul 2003, providing the only record of an over-summering individual for the Hawaiian Islands.

[Acronyms and Abbreviations](#)

[Literature cited](#)

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