

PARAKEET AUKLET

Aethia psittacula

non-breeding visitor, vagrant

monotypic

Parakeet Auklets nest along rocky seacoasts of far e. Russia E to Prince William Sound, Alaska, and winter southward well offshore, rarely to Japan and California (Dement'ev and Gladkov 1951a, AOU 1998, Gaston and Jones 1998, CBRC 2007); a vagrant was collected in Sweden in 1860 (Cramp and Simmons 1985). Dried remains have been found on beaches of the westernmost *Northwest Hawaiian Islands* in winter and spring. At least 25 specimens have been salvaged (16 at BPBM, 8 at USNM, 1 at LACM) and there are records for an additional 26 individuals that were not saved. Clapp (1986) lists most specimen numbers and reviews other records through 1985. One specimen found “moribund” (Clapp 1986) on Eastern I., Midway 30 Jan 1963 is the only record of a live Parakeet Auklet in the Hawaiian Islands, although several birds found freshly dead almost certainly had been alive offshore in Hawaiian waters.

Dead remains have been recorded on beaches at *Kure* (24 individuals; e.g., [HRBP](#) 1411, 5453), *Midway* (27; e.g., [HRBP](#) 5453), and *Pearl and Hermes* (1). Records occur for 1963 (6 individuals; see also [Horned Puffin](#)), 1980 (5), 1981 (1), 1983 (12), 1985 (18), 1987 (1), 1992 (2), 1994 (5), 1995 (1), and 2003 (1). Freshly dead auklets have washed ashore in late Jan-early Mar, whereas dried remains can be found weeks or months after deposition (Schreiber 1987). Many carcasses have probably gone undetected, depending on personnel being present on a given island. For example, 17 fresh carcasses washed in at Kure during 11-13 Mar 1985 (Clapp 1986; the largest wreck noted) but it is unknown how many may have washed up on Midway, where no observers were present during this period. Parakeet Auklets appear to wreck in larger numbers in certain years, indicating widespread food-depletion episodes (Grant & Petit 1981), although these do not appear to be related to cyclic events such as El Niño. A few scattered remains reported in other years suggest that Parakeet Auklets may regularly winter to subtropical latitudes in varying numbers (Grant 1982a), with numbers that starve and/or are deposited on Hawaiian Island beaches related to food availability, ocean current circulations, and wind conditions.

Parakeet Auklet was afforded its own genus (*Cyclorrhynchus*) until lumped into *Aethia* with three other auklets in 1997 (AOU 1997, Pyle 1997).

[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/>