

BELTED KINGFISHER

Megaceryle alcyon

non-breeding visitor, vagrant

monotypic

Belted Kingfishers breed commonly in fresh-water habitats throughout S Canada and the U.S. and withdraw southward to winter to the W. Indies and n. S. America (AOU 1998). Vagrants have been recorded in the Britain, the Azore Is, and w. Europe (Cramp and Simmons 1985), and westward casually to much of Alaska, Clipperton I (Howell et al. 1993), and in winter to the Hawaiian Islands (Pratt et al. 1987, AOU 1998). It was considered part of the genus *Ceryle* until split into *Megaceryle* by the AOU (2007). An old report of a Belted Kingfisher specimen from Hawaii sold in Britain in 1819 is not reliable (Medway 1981).

In the *Southeastern Hawaiian Islands* there are reports of 23-27 Belted Kingfishers from five islands. Some of these reports are vague, second-hand, and/or lack descriptions but we include a listing of all records of this distinctive species. The first record comes from the Hamakua coast of **Hawai'i I**, at Hakalau Bay, where a pair was observed in Nov 1901 (Henshaw 1902a). After the male disappeared (possibly shot) the (first-cycle, PP examination) female was collected on 27 Nov 1901 (BPBM 4221; [HRBP 5368-5370](#) of specimen). Subsequently, 9-11 Belted Kingfishers have been reported from Hawai'i I, in 1955-2006 (e.g., *E* 39:18-19, 48:22), with records evenly split from the Kona coast and from the Hilo area. Reports from other islands include four from **Kaua'i** (1973-1993 from Hanalei NWR, Hanapepe, and Wailua), 4-5 from **O'ahu** (1962-1998 from Pearl City, Kailua, Haleiwa, Kuilima, and Nu'upia Ponds, Mokapu Peninsula; e.g., *E* 22:78, [HRBP 0905-0906](#)), two from **Moloka'i** (1974-1975 from various localities), and 4-5 from **Maui** (1974-2009 from Hana, Kealia Pond NWR, Kahului, and Kapalua, [HRBP 5371](#) published *NAB* 63:523). All birds were observed over a single winter period except for one male present in the Hilo area, Hawai'i I, (most frequently observed at Loko Waka pond) during Dec 1994-Mar 1999 and one on Molokai during Nov 1974-Jan 1975; all reports of both of these individuals were from Oct-Apr, indicating the possibility that they migrated back to North America for the summer. The earliest fall report was from 17 Sep (1987, Kona, Hawai'i) and the latest spring report was from 30 Apr (1996, Kealia Pond, Maui).

Henshaw (1902a) identified the specimen (probably uncritically) as the west coast subspecies recognized at the time, *M.a. caurina*, but we consider the specimen undiagnosable (PP examination) and the species monotypic (see Pyle 1997b).

[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/>