

## GRAY-SIDED LAUGHINGTHRUSH

*Garrulax caerulatus*

**naturalized (non-native) resident, formerly established, extirpated**      *G.c. latifrons?*

This species of laughingthrush is resident to the Himalayan region from Nepal and Bhutan to s. China and n. Myanmar (Ali and Ripley 1996b, AOU 1998, Clements 2007). Under "Unidentified...Oriental Thrush", Caum (1933) mentions the release and describes the appearance of five individuals of an unknown laughingthrush to *O'ahu* from a Japanese liner in 1928. He did not expect them to be seen again after "an introduction so small", but on 30 May 1947 H.P. Porter (*E* 8:5) observed a flock of 12+ (later revised to 20; *E* 11:66) laughingthrushes along the Poamoho Trail about 1 km above the trailhead that he tentatively identified as [White-throated Laughingthrushes](#) but that better fit Caum's description of the unidentified species. By 1949, however, Porter had obtained better views of the birds and had questioned this identity (*E* 9:59-60). It subsequently became known as the "mystery *Garrulax*", although suspected to be Gray-sided Laughingthrush as early as 1950 (*E* 10:70-71). From 1 to 15 of these laughingthrushes were observed off and on from 1 to 5 km from the Poamoho trailhead, within and up to the head of the Poamoho Valley, during 1949-1960 (Pyle 1954, HAS 1959, Shallenberger and Vaughn 1978; e.g., *E* 9:67, 10:47, 10:64, 11:66, 14:56, 18:83, 21:44) but not again until Taylor and Collins (1979) relocated 2 individuals 16 Feb 1978 and, through the assistance of S.L. Olson at USNM (*E* 39:19), reached a "positive identification" as Gray-sided Laughingthrush (R. Pyle 1979). These appear to be the last substantiated observations of this species (we consider two, heard only, during the Waipi'o [Christmas Bird Count](#) in 1986 [*E* 47:53] as unsubstantiated) and they appear to have become extirpated. However, that they were missed for an 18 year period from 1961-1978, despite frequent coverage of the Poamoho Trail (Shallenberger 1977c, Shallenberger and Vaughn 1978), suggests the possibility that they may still exist in this rugged area.

Despite the lack of a photograph or specimen we consider the documentation of Olson, Taylor, and Collins, along with apparent establishment of a population for at least 30-50 years, to be sufficient to place this species on the main list (*cf.* Pyle 1979-2002). It was relegated to appendices of the AOU (1983, Appendix B), because identity was uncertain, and of the AOU (1998) because it may no longer be established. Without better documentation, however, the subspecies of Gray-sided Laughingthrush introduced to O'ahu cannot be determined. Olson (*in* Taylor and Collins 1979) considered "*G.c. berthemyi*" (synonymized with *G.c. latifrons* by Clements 2007), of the province of Fujian (formerly "Fukien"), se. China, to be the most likely subspecies based on the descriptions and that coastal Fujian was a common source for introduced caged birds to Hawaii.

### [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/>