

RED-MASKED PARAKEET

Aratinga erythrogenys

Other: Red-Masked Conure

monotypic

naturalized (non-native) resident, recently established

Red-masked Parakeets are confined to the dry coastal zone of w. Ecuador and nw. Peru (Forshaw 1989) and are not known to have been introduced or escaped to the wild (Long 1981, Lever 1987), until recently in s. California (Garrett 1997) and in the *Southeastern Hawaiian Islands*, where a colony has become established on O'ahu and possibly Hawai'i I. Confusion and possible hybridization between Red-masked, [Mitred](#), and [Scarlet-fronted](#) parakeets has prevented a clear assessment of population development and trends of these species in both California and Hawaii. But they appear to have established an increasing population for well over 15 years on O'ahu and possibly Hawai'i I, affording inclusion in our primary list, although not yet listed by the AOU (1998). The species is listed as Near Threatened by BirdLife International (BLI 2009).

On *O'ahu*, the first reports of Red-masked Parakeet were of one that escaped from a theme park in upper Manoa Valley sometime in 1987 and of one at Blaisdell Park on E Loch of Pearl Harbor 2 Jan 1988 (*E* 48:40). In Dec 1988 five Red-masked Parakeets were documented in Kapiolani Park and this group had expanded to 18 birds by Dec 1994 (Ord 1995). By the 2000s Red-masked Parakeets (often accompanied by 1-2 [Blue-crowned Parakeets](#) or hybrids) were observed roosting in a wooded area on Black Point (1 km E of Diamond Head) and departing daily at sunrise in a largely cohesive flock over Wailupe and Kahala (e.g., [HRBP](#) 5869-5872) and into the upper Aina Haina Valley to forage; a few would also head toward Honolulu. Between 2001 and 2005 [UPDATE] maximum flock sizes at both localities indicated an increasing population: 21 in 2001, 30 in 2002, 62 in 2004, and 54-55 in 2005-2008. During 2004-2006 a female Red-masked Parakeet nested with a male [Blue-crowned Parakeet](#) and produced 7 wild hybrids during these three years.

On *Hawai'i I* a flock 30-40 *Aratinga* parakeets observed in 1988-2003 around Kailua-Kona have been identified as consisting of [Mitred](#), Red-masked, and/or [Scarlet-fronted](#) parakeets (see above). In Dec 1999, a small flock of 5-6 parakeets observed several times in downtown Kailua-Kona were identified as Red-masked Parakeets to the exclusion of Mitred Parakeets. Red-masked Parakeets continued to be specifically identified on the slopes of Mt Hualalai above Kailua-Kona on several occasions during the 2000s, both in small species-specific groups and intermingled with Mitred Parakeets; however, one or more of these same birds have occasionally been identified as Scarlet-fronted Parakeets. Twenty-five observed at Kaloka Mauka in Oct-Nov 1993 were identified as Scarlet-fronted whereas eight pairs erupting from the wooded floor of a large crater high on the N slope of Hualalai mountain 6 Jan 2003 were identified as probable Red-maskeds, and one photographed at Kealakekua 6 Jun 2008 ([HRBP](#) 5873-5874) is a Red-masked. Until the identification and status of *Aratinga* parakeets on Hawai'i I can be confirmed, we do not consider any of these species established on the island. Occasional reports of Red-masked Parakeets from Maui (e.g., *E* 68:1) likely pertain to misidentified [Mitred Parakeets](#).

[Acronyms and Abbreviations](#)

[Literature cited](#)