

BLACK-RUMPED WAXBILL

Estrilda troglodytes

Other: Red-eared Waxbill (<1983), Common Waxbill (see below)

monotypic

naturalized (non-native) resident, recently established

Black-rumped Waxbills are native to Africa, from Senegal and Ethiopia to n. Zaire and Uganda (AOU 1998). They have been unsuccessfully introduced in Tahiti and successfully introduced to Portugal, Puerto Rico, and Hawai'i I in the *Southeastern Hawaiian Islands* (Long 1981, Lever 1987, AOU 1998). Populations have persisted on Hawai'i probably since the mid 1960s, whereas a population on O'ahu in 1965-1982 apparently never became established. Much confusion surrounded the identification and nomenclature of the very similar Black-rumped and [Common](#) waxbills during the 1970s and 1980s, until sorted out by Ord (1982) and Falkenmayer (1988). Black-rumped Waxbills are called "Common Waxbills" by aviculturists, which augmented the confusion.

On *Hawai'i I*, the first report of Black-rumped Waxbills was of 9 individuals at Upolu Pt at the N end of the island on 6 Feb 1975 (*E* 35:139). Given large areas of uncovered terrain and the at-times inconspicuous and nomadic nature of this species, it is quite possible that these birds originated from releases at Pu'u Wa'a Wa'a Ranch in the mid 1960s (see also [Yellow-fronted Canary](#) and [Lavender Waxbill](#)), and it is also not surprising that further observations were not made until 1987, when 6 were recorded at Pu'uana'hulu on 17 Aug. From this year through the 2000s they were regularly observed at this latter locale, with high counts of 16 on 12 Oct 1988, 20 on 9 Oct 1993, and 30 on 19 Jan 1999 and 21 Feb 2006. The only other locations on Hawai'i where they have been observed is Kona, where two were recorded at the Kona Surf Hotel 14 Mar 1994, and Holualoa, where 2 were tentatively identified 17 Dec 2004.

On O'ahu, Black-rumped Waxbill populations followed the same trajectory as other finches released on Diamond Head (*cf.* [Red-cheeked Cordonbleu](#)), a dozen being first noted along the Na Laau trail 15-16 Oct 1965 (*E* 26:53-54; referred to as "Common Waxbills"), and numbers petering out by 1982, a few years after supplemental food was no longer provided to non-native birds in this area. The high counts were of 29 on the Dec 1968 [Christmas Bird Count](#), when they were recorded E to Paiko Lagoon (*E* 29:66, 69) and of 30 on 10 May 1975 (*E* 36:22). The last report was of a single individual on 19 Dec 1982 (*E* 43:73). Although they were doubtlessly established and breeding for a period during the 1960s-mid 1970s, the population may have been supplanted with additional releases and was unable to sustain itself without targeted feeding, and thus we consider it not to have become established. The only other report from the Southeastern Islands, which likely pertained to local escapes, was of 6 individuals in Lahaina, Maui 28 Nov 1987.

[Acronyms and Abbreviations](#)

[Literature cited](#)

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