

European Starling

Sturnus vulgaris

hypothetical, unassisted occurrence questionable

The European Starling breeds throughout Eurasia, and withdraws S to Africa, India, and n. Thailand for winter (Cramp and Simmons 1994a, AOU 1998). It was introduced to New York City in 1890 underwent rapid expansion throughout N America that culminated in the 1970-1980s (Long 1981, Lever 1987, Cabe 1993). During the expansion period individuals were observed as far as 3000 km off California in the Pacific, several of which resided aboard ships for extended periods (Kincaid 1962; *E* 28:80). They are also known to cross the Atlantic aboard ships (Scott 1950). There are numerous substantiated records of European Starling from O'ahu but we consider the species unsubstantiated in the state as a natural vagrant due to the localities of occurrence and probability of ship-assistance in arrival to the islands (Donaldson 1984; Pratt 2002a; see also [Great-tailed Grackle](#)). Pyle (1983-2002) and the AOU (1983, 1998) listed European Starling as a vagrant to Hawaii.

All substantively identified records of starlings have occurred near ports of entry for large ships or military transport cargo planes in and near Honolulu. One observed and photographed on Sand Island 21 Dec 1980-14 January 1981 (Donaldson 1984; [HRBP](#) 434-435, 439) was removed by HDFW officials on the last date (*E* 41:109; BPBM 157486; [HRBP](#) 5920 of specimen). Another individual occurred at virtually the same location 22 Dec 1985 (*E* 46:97) and a flock of up to 11 birds was observed there 11 Jan-20 Feb 1995. One was reported 12 Dec 1990 at Hickam Airforce Base, Pearl Harbor, and 1-2 (including the same bird?) were found there in Sep to 23 Nov 1991, until shot at (but apparently missed) by HDFW officials on the last date. Additional individuals were observed flying around a large cargo ship near the Aloha Tower 22 Dec 1992, on a lawn at the BPBM 3 Nov 1993 (first-cycle bird), and at Wheeler Airforce Base, Wahiawa, 3 Jun 2006 (removed; BPBM 185005; [HRBP](#) 5920 of specimen).

All other reports from Hawaii are undocumented and/or likely refer to casual misidentifications of [Common Mynas](#). These include rumors of several near Kahuku, O'ahu 21 Jan 1967 (*E* 28:80); two in Lahaina, Maui 31 Oct 1993; two tentatively identified in Kapalua, Maui 25 Jul 1999; and two reported at South Point, Hawai'i I 1 Jul 1979 (*E* 40:100-101), the identification of which was later retracted as probable [Common Mynas](#) by one of the observers.

[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/>