

O'AHU 'AMAKIHI

Chlorodrepanis flavus

Other names: Amakihi, Common Amakihi

monotypic

native resident, endemic

The O'ahu 'Amakihi was split from other 'amakihis by the AOU (1995) and is endemic to the island of *O'ahu*. It was originally thought to be most closely related to the [Kaua'i 'Amakihi](#) (Tarr and Fleisher 1993) but genetic reanalysis placed it closer to [Hawai'i 'Amakihi](#) (Fleisher et al. 1998); see [Hawai'i 'Amakihi](#) and [Synonymies](#) for more on the taxonomy of this species as related to other 'amakihis. The 'Oahu 'Amakihi was first collected in 1825 and named "*Nectarina flava*" by Bloxham (1827a) but this name was squelched in favor of "*chlorus*" (Cabanis 1851, Wilson 1889a), until Olson (1996a) set the record straight over 170 years after Bloxham collected his type specimen (see [Synonymies](#)). Bloxham's (1827a) "*Fringilla sandwichensis*" also refers apparently to O'ahu 'Amakihi but Olson (1996a) prioritized *flava* (now *flavus* due to gender change). 'Amakihi's are known from the fossil and subfossil record of O'ahu, dating back at least 200,000 yrs (Olson and James 1982b; James 1987).

Townsend (1839) and the ornithologists of the late 1800s all found O'ahu 'Amakihis to be common in forested regions throughout O'ahu (summarized by Banko 1979, 1984a), in particular the Wai'ane Mts and Nu'uuanu Valley. Observations during the 1900s (e.g., Seale 1900, Bryan 1905b, Munro 1944) suggest that 'amakihis remained common on O'ahu through the 1940s. Banko (1984a) analyzed casual counts along Poamoho and Pe'ahinai'a trails in the nw. Ko'olau range and found that populations appeared to remain stable during 1947-1952 but declined sharply during 1953-1977 (see also *E* 27:96). Although Banko (1984a) concluded that trends in the sw. portion of the range, above Honolulu, seemed more stable, [Christmas Bird Count](#) data suggest a steady decline in this population as well (Williams 1987; [Graph](#)). Otherwise, populations seemed to stabilize during the 1970s-2000s in upper-elevation forests, uncommonly in the Wai'anae Range but fairly commonly in the s. Ko'olau Range where they also can be found as low as 30 m elevation in winter ([Graph](#); Shallenberger 1977b, Shallenberger and Vaughn 1978, Jacobi and Atkinson 1995, Lindsey et al. 1998, Pratt 2005; *E* 47:42, 53:79-80). Island-wide populations were estimated at 20-60,000 in 1991 (Ellis et al. 1992) and 52,000 (49,500 in the Ko'olau Range and 2,300 in the Waianae Range) in 2008 (Camp et al. *in* Gorresen et al. 2009). In upper Manoa Valley (130-150 m elevation), O'ahu 'Amakihis have adapted to non-native vegetation (e.g., *E* 44:115-116, 57:125-126) and by the 1990-2000s were being detected at lower elevations (*HFW* 6:2, *E* 57:125-126), had show signs of developing resistances to avian diseases (Shehata et al. 2001).

[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/>