

EMPEROR GOOSE

Chen canagica

non-breeding visitor, vagrant

monotypic

Emperor Geese breed on the Bering Sea coasts of Siberia and central Alaska (Dement'ev and Gladkov 1952, AOU 1998); they usually migrate only short distances to winter along coasts of Kamchatka, the Aleutians, and southern Alaska, occurring irregularly S along the Pacific coast to California (CBRC 2007) and casually to the Hawaiian Islands. A [minimum](#) of 26 individuals have been recorded as vagrants in the Hawaiian Islands, many arriving in weakened condition and dying after reaching the islands, although several have remained into the spring-migration period.

All except one of 11 Emperor Geese recorded in the *Northwestern Hawaiian Islands* were found during the winter of 1968-1969 (Clapp et al. 1969). One found sitting on the beach at *Kure* 15 Dec 1968 (*E* 30:51, Woodward 1972) was caught by hand, apparently exhausted, and collected (USNM 544274, first-cycle female). At least 8 were observed on Sand and Eastern Is., *Midway* 15-20 Dec 1968, of which one was collected (alcoholic specimen to Kansas State University), one was found dead (skeletal specimen to Southern Illinois University), and five that remained through 10 April 1969. One was also observed on *Laysan* 27-29 Mar 1969 (*E* 30:51, Ely and Clapp 1973). The only record for the Northwestern Islands apart from this "invasion" was of one found freshly dead on Midway 17 Dec 2008 ([HRBP](#) 6150).

In the *Southeastern Hawaiian Islands* a bird tentatively identified as an Emperor Goose was noted at Makaweli, *Kaua'i*, in 1940 (Munro 1944), and a pair was recorded at Wailua Beach 13 Dec 1967 (*E* 28:71-72), the male of which died and the female of which was captured and introduced to a flock of domestic waterfowl in Poipu, where it persisted "contentedly" until released 26 Dec. On *Oahu*, a first-cycle male was collected at Punaluu in Jan 1956 (BPBM 153367) and two were seen on Kailua 3 Dec 1960, one of which died on 7 Dec and the other of which was captured 10 Dec and exhibited publicly at Honolulu Zoo 11 Dec (*E* 21:59). During the same winter four were found east of Kaunakakai, *Moloka'i* 11 Jan 1961, three of which were photographed in local newspaper (*E* 21:60) and one of which remained for about two months. Two birds first found on Honuaula Beach, *Lana'i*, 20 Dec 1977, were observed flying toward Lahaina, *Maui*, where two were observed 25 Dec and one remained 31 Dec 1977 (photograph in local newspaper; *E* 39:15-16). On *Hawai'i I*, the first record for the Hawaiian Islands was of four birds reportedly collected (disposition of specimens unknown) at Kalapana near Puna, 12 Dec 1902 (Henshaw 1903). Two observed and photographed ([HRBP](#) 0025-0026) on Anaehoomalu Beach, 16-20 Apr 1978 (*E* 39:9 with photo), may have been the same pair observed on Maui in Dec 1977 (Engilis *et al.* 2004), although the absence of one of the Maui birds before departure suggests that at least three birds may have been involved. Finally, a female was present daily 7 Dec 1996-17 May 1997 on the beach at the Kona Village Resort, North Kona ([HRBP](#) 1114, 5133); on 5 Apr 1997 it was captured, measured, banded, and sexed as a female (Baker 1997).

[Acronyms and Abbreviations](#)

[Literature cited](#)

Citation: Pyle, R.L., and P. Pyle. 2017. The Birds of the Hawaiian Islands: Occurrence, History, Distribution, and Status. B.P. Bishop Museum, Honolulu, HI, U.S.A. Version 2 (1 January 2017) <http://hbs.bishopmuseum.org/birds/rlp-monograph/>