Tufted Ducks breed across the n. Palearctic and winter S to n. Africa, India, and the Philippine Is (Dement'ev and Gladkov 1952, Cramp and Simmons 1977). They are regular vagrants to N America (AOU 1998, CBRC 2007) and rare winter visitors to the Hawaiian Islands, with records rather equally distributed between the Northwestern and Southeastern Islands. Records also occur from throughout Micronesia E to the Marshall Is (Clapp 1990), and possibly Wake Atoll (Rauzon et al. 2008). In contrast to the two scaup species and Ring-necked Duck, there is little evidence that individual Tufted Ducks return to Hawaii for consecutive winters, although two adults at Kuilima STP, O'ahu in 2010-2011 could have been among the 5 there in 2009-2010.

Most records of Tufted Ducks from the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands are from Midway, where 10 specimens were collected between 1959 and 1980 (USNM; Fisher 1960, Clapp and Woodward 1968, Engilis et al. 2004) and 8 additional birds were observed in 1963-2002 (e.g., Fisher 1965; HRBP 0345, 1262-1264). At least 7 present during the winter of 1963 (Clapp and Woodward 1968) represents the high count. Other records from the Northwest Islands are from Kure (5, 1963-2011; e.g., USNM 493448, 497908; HRBP 6703-6704) and French Frigate (1, 17-19 Nov 1984; HRBP 0572-0574, 0792). The earliest fall arrival was recorded 25 Oct (1965, Midway) and of several that wintered on Midway in 1995-2002, the latest individual remained until early Apr (2000).

There are records for 45 individual Tufted Ducks from the Southeastern Hawaiian Islands, from Kaua‘i (4, 1988-1998), O'ahu (26, 1975-2016; e.g., HRBP 0521-0525, 6012-6014), Moloka‘i (1 record reported by Engilis et al. 2004), Maui (4, 1978-1995; e.g., E 40:15), and Hawai‘i I (10, 1977-2011; e.g., E 38:7, HRBP 5048, 5503, published NAB 62:322). Most individuals have been with other Aythya ducks, particularly at Waipio, the Punamano Unit of JCNWR, and Kuilima STP, O'ahu; Kealia Pond NWR, Maui; and Aimakapa and Loko Waka ponds, Hawai‘i. Five at Punamano 15 Feb 2010 is the high count for the Southeastern Islands; other multiples include three at Waipio 5-18 Dec 1982 (HRBP 0524) and three at Ka‘elepuu Wetlands, O'ahu 23 Nov 2014-10 Jan 2015 (HRBP 6012). The earliest fall arrival occurred 23 Oct (1994, Kailua, O'ahu) and the latest spring record was for 11 Apr (2011, Kuilima). There are no records of over-summering birds in the Hawaiian Islands.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

Literature cited