

## GRAY FRANCOLIN

## *Francolinus pondicerianus*

Other: Gray Partridge

*F. p. interpositus*  
*F.p. pondicerianus?*

### **naturalized (non-native) resident, recently established**

Gray Francolins are native to the Middle East and India (Ali and Ripley 1980, AOU 1998). They were introduced to several islands in the Indian Ocean, Guam, and Hawaii (Long 1981, Lever 1987), and have now become common within the drier lowlands of most *Southeastern Hawaiian Islands*. Unsuccessful introductions were made in the sw. United States in 1954-1975 (*cf.* Bump & Bump 1964a, Bohl & Bump 1970, Banks 1981, Long 1981, Lever 1987). See Islam (1999) for information on the natural history and biology of Gray Francolin in Hawaii.

Based on the dramatic success of Chukar propagation on Hawai'i I. in the early 1950s (see [Chukar](#) Account), DoFAW initiated a program to introduce other gamebirds of xeric habitats throughout the state (Walker 1967), an effort that was undertaken primarily in 1958-1962. During this period and perhaps sporadically prior to this (Bryan 1958), >375 Gray Francolins were released on Kaua'i, >160 on Moloka'i, and >450 on each of Lana'i, Maui, and Hawai'i (Bump & Bump 1964, Bohl & Bump 1970, Swedberg 1967a). There are no records of introductions to the other three Southeastern Hawaiian Islands, although at some point (perhaps as late as the 1980s) they were released on O'ahu. Gray Francolins have subsequently become established on all six of these islands, with no reports from Ni'ihau or Kaho'olawe. Hunting of Gray Francolins continued at a low rate through the mid-2010s, primarily on Lana'i, Maui, and Hawai'i; 7 specimens from these islands, collected in 1974-1989, are housed at BPBM.

On *Kaua'i*, populations of Gray Francolins have remained relatively small (Denny 1999) and restricted to isolated areas in the w. part of the island including Waimea Canyon, and around Poipu, where occasional singles and small numbers were reported through the early 2010s. On *O'ahu* they were first noted in 1980, when they began to be seen and heard in the Diamond Head area, after which small numbers were observed there and around the se. coast to Mokapu Peninsula through the early 2010s, followed by a large increase in 2013 ([Graph](#)). During the 2000s, Gray Francolins were noted in increasing numbers at the Honouliuli Unit of PHNWR, near Kunia in the dry, wc. sections of the island, and along the w. coast to Kaena Point, where they had become well established by the early 2010s. After introductions in the central part of the island during the late 1950s and early 1960s, Gray Francolins spread rapidly on *Moloka'i* (Pekelo 1964, Bohl & Bump 1970; *E* 35:4), reaching the e. end by 1964, and the w. end by 1981 or probably well before this. Through the early 2010s they remained common along the entire S coast of Moloka'i, and they have also become abundant throughout *Lana'i* (e.g., Emlen 1986). On *Maui*, populations expanded from initial introductions throughout the dry cw. portions of the island (Bohl & Bump 1970), becoming widespread by 1976. Through the early 2010s they occurred commonly from S of Kihei to Pa'ia, upslope to 2000 m elevation on the sw. and nw. slopes of Haleakala Mt. (breeding first recorded at Hosmer Grove in 1990), E along the S coast to Hana, and W to Lahaina and Honolulu Bay (Conant and Stemmermann 1979, Scott et al. 1986). On *Hawai'i I.*, introductions at Pohakuloa, Puu Waawaa Ranch, and along the w. slopes of Mauna Kea

resulted in the rapid spread of numbers and distribution (Lewin 1971). By 1987 they had become established from Hawi S to Honaunau and E to Honoka'a, and E along the Saddle Road to Pohakuloa, where they remained abundant through the mid-2010s.

Berger (1981) and Islam (1999) attribute introductions of Gray Francolin to N America and Hawaii solely to the subspecies *F. p. interpositus* of NW India and Pakistan (see also Bump & Bump 1964); however, Swedberg (1967a) indicates that small numbers (61 total) of "*hyderabadi*" (now synonymized with nominate *pondicerianus*), from s. India, were released among larger numbers of *interpositus* to Maui and Hawai'i I (see Bump and Bump 1964 and Ali and Ripley 1980 for diagnoses). Specimen examination (PP, USNM and BPBM) indicated that Hawaii birds showed characters consistent with either of these subspecies or intergrades.

#### [Acronyms and Abbreviations](#)

#### [Literature cited](#)

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