GREAT EGRET

Ardea alba

non-breeding visitor, vagrant

A.a. egretta

Great Egrets occur in tropical and temperate regions throughout the world, dispersing pole-ward after breeding and retreating toward the tropics during winter (Dement’ev and Gladkov 1951a, Cramp and Simmons 1977, AOU 1998). In the Pacific they have been recorded from Clipperton I (Howell et al. 1993), w. Micronesia (Wiles 2005, VanderWerf et al. 2006a, Pratt et al. 2010) and the Hawaiian Islands, where five individuals have thus far been reported. One was observed at Moanalua Kalihi Flats, O‘ahu 17-21 Dec 1944 (E 5:52-53; these flats have since been filled); another was reported from Ki‘i Unit of JCNWR, O‘ahu, 15-20 Dec 2005; one was seen by many observers at Kealia Pond NWR, Maui 21 Feb-6 Mar 1982; one was observed at Kilauea Point, Kauai 20 Jan 1984; and one commuted between Huleia and Hanalei NWRs, Kaua‘i, 22 Oct 2010-Apr 2011 (HRBP 6349-6352; accepted by the HBRC in Jul 2016). A report of 2 birds at Kealia in Apr 1982 (AB 36:896) is unsubstantiated. Great Egret was placed in the monotypic genus Casmerodius until lumped with Ardea in 1995 (AOU 1995, Pyle 1997). Five subspecies of Great Egret are recognized worldwide; descriptions and photographs of individuals in Hawaii are consistent with A.a. egretta of N Am (Pyle 2008), the most likely subspecies to reach the Southeastern Islands.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

Literature cited