

LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER

Limnodromus scolopaceus

non-breeding visitor, regular winterer

monotypic

The Long-billed Dowitcher is one of several N American species that breed in Siberia, Alaska, and nw. Canada and migrate back to wintering grounds in w. N America and Mexico (Dement'ev and Gladkov 1951c, AOU 1998). There are records for the Mariana Is (Wiles et al. 2004), Wake Atoll (winter 2003-3004; Rauzon et al. 2008), and Johnston Atoll (23 Nov 1995 and 16 Oct 2002), and they are regular winter visitors in small to moderate numbers in the Hawaiian Islands, but there are no other records S of Hawaii in the Pacific (Pratt et al. 1987). Accordingly, the distribution of records shows little evidence of a transient population through the Hawaiian Islands, most birds successfully over-wintering and many individuals apparently returning as adults for consecutive winters. Because over 98% of confirmed dowitchers in the Hawaiian Islands have been Long-billeds (see [Short-billed Dowitcher](#)), we have assumed that many records of "unidentified dowitchers" in the literature (e.g., wintering groups of 5 or more reported in *E* 37:08, 37:65, and 44:99; cf. [HRBP](#) 0412, 0969, 5591-5592) pertain to Long-billed Dowitchers.

A [minimum](#) of 98 Long-billed Dowitchers have been recorded in the *Northwestern Hawaiian Islands*, although this number may be affected by inconsistent coverage, reducing the ability to detect returning birds. These have occurred on *Kure* (7, 1963-2016; e.g., Clapp and Woodward 1968, Woodward 1972; USNM 493854; [HRBP](#) 5481-5483, 5700-5701); *Midway* (21, 1981-2016; e.g., P. Pyle 1984; [HRBP](#) 0177, 0280, 0616, 1163, 1361, 1416-1417, 6526-6529); *Laysan* (60, 1976-2008; e.g., *E* 61:81, 64:65; [HRBP](#) 0093, 0615, 1032-1034, 1418, 5591-5592); and *French Frigate* (6, 1982-2010; e.g., *E* 47:42; [HRBP](#) 0413, 0617, 5553). Surprisingly, the specimen at USNM ([HRBP](#) 5481-5483) appears to be only one of two from the Hawaiian Islands, the other collected on Maui (see below). The records from French Frigate possibly refer to one bird returning for five consecutive winters; others appear to have returned to Midway each winter during 1994-2002 and Laysan during 1999-2005. The high counts were all from Laysan where the species might be considered a regular winter visitor: 18 in 2008-2009, 9 in 1991-1992 ([HRBP](#) 5591), and 6 in 1985-1986; otherwise the high count was of 4 wintering on Midway in 1994-1995 and 4 observed flying S, about 230 km N of Nihoa, 27 Sep 2002 (Rowlett 2002; [HICEAS data](#)). The latest spring departure (21 May 1995) and earliest fall arrival (19 Aug 1996), both at Midway, may have referred to the same returning individual (see above).

Interestingly, there are no historical accounts of dowitchers in the *Southeastern Hawaiian Islands*, the first report being of an unidentified individual (before the two species were split) near Waipahu, O'ahu 15-22 Dec 1944 (*E* 5:53), although several old reports of "snipes" (e.g. Wilson and Evans 1899:xxv) may have pertained to dowitchers. Subsequently, Long-billed Dowitchers have been recorded regularly and in some numbers, on *Kaua'i* (1974-2008, high count 8 at Hanalei NWR 16 Jan 2008); *O'ahu* (1954-2009; [HRBP](#) 0074, 0213, 0411-0412, 5267, 5831-5832; high counts of 24-32 individuals at Waipi'o Peninsula and/or near Kahuku during the winters of 1982-1983, 1985-1986, 1991-1992, and 1993-1994; e.g., [HRBP](#) 0412, 5830); *Moloka'i* (1977-2009; [HRBP](#) 0094, 5688; high count 7 at Kaunakakai in Mar-Apr 1999); *Lana'i* (one record, 18

Oct 1989); *Maui* (1965-2005; [HRBP](#) 0949, 0969, 0973-0974, 0981-0982; BPBM 184977; high count of 38 at Kanaha Pond 25 Jan 2005); and *Hawai'i* (1976-2003, high count of 5 at Aimakapa Pond in Oct 1992). As with other migrant waterbirds, higher numbers appear to occur in Hawaii during ENSO periods. Surprisingly there is only 1-2 records of an over-summering individual, at Ki'i Unit of JCNWR, O'ahu during the summers of 2006 and 2007 (the same individual suspected). Otherwise, the earliest fall arrivals of well-described birds or returning winterers occurred between 15 and 17 Sep of several years, and the latest spring record was for 14 May (1992, Kealia Pond).

[Acronyms and Abbreviations](#)

[Literature cited](#)

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