

GLAUCOUS-WINGED GULL

Larus glaucescens

non-breeding visitor, occasional winterer

monotypic

Glaucous-winged Gulls breed in the Commander Is off Siberia and along the Pacific N American coast S to nw. Oregon (Dement'ev and Gladkov 1951c, AOU 1998, Howell and Dunn 2007). In winter this species disperses S to Japan and Baja California. In the Hawaiian Islands it is an annual winter visitor in small numbers, being the most frequently reported large gull species. Elsewhere in the central Pacific, it has been recorded only from Johnston Atoll (3 records; Amerson and Sheldon 1976; [HRBP](#) 1039-1040) and provisionally at Wake Atoll (Rauzon et al. 2008), indicating little if any passage through the Hawaiian Islands toward the S Pacific. The majority of records pertain to first-year birds (but see [HRBP](#) 5823-5824) and there is no evidence that older birds return to Hawaii for consecutive winters. Thirty-eight photographs of Glaucous-winged Gull in the Hawaiian Islands have been accessioned in the [HRBP](#) files (at least two published, *E* 41:84), and another photograph, apparently taken on Midway in 1939-1940, was published by Blackman (1944, Plate 17).

Glaucous-winged Gulls appear to be more common in the *Northwestern Hawaiian Islands* than the Southeastern Islands, to be expected given their N Pacific distribution. At least 36 specimens have been collected (USNM, BPBM, MVZ, Bremen Museum, Auckland Museum), many of which were summarized by Clapp and Woodward (1968) and Sibley and MacFarlane (1968). Including these there have been reports of over 70 individuals, from *Kure* (22, 1923-2012; e.g., [HRBP](#) 1460-1461); *Midway* (25, 1940-2009; e.g., [HRBP](#) 0121-0122, 0124, 0178, 1193, 1243); *Pearl and Hermes* (4, 1923-1965); *Lisianski* (3, 1965-1982; see also [HRBP](#) 1027); *Laysan* (6, 1896/7 to 2009; e.g., *E* 70:27); Gardener Pinnacles (1 probable, 15 Mar 1967; Clapp 1972); *French Frigate* (10, 1954-1999; e.g., [HRBP](#) 1012-1016); and *Necker* (18 Jun 1923; USNM 489329). High counts have included 7 at Kure 1-15 Jan 1965 (Sibley and McFarlane 1968) and 5 on Midway 19 Feb 1996. The earliest fall arrival was for 10 Oct (1992, French Frigate) and the latest spring departure was for 27 Apr (1923, Pearl and Hermes; USNM 489330). There are also three records of late-spring/early-summer visitors, possibly over-summering birds, from Kure (15 May-20 Jun 1995), French Frigate (5-11 Jun 1968; USNM 544979), and Necker (see above).

Rothschild's (1900) and Henshaw's (1900a, 1903) reports of 7-8 Glaucous-winged Gulls (some of which were originally identified as Glaucous Gulls, which see) from Hilo in 1892-1902 are the first records from the *Southeastern Hawaiian Islands*. Subsequently, a [minimum](#) of 105 individuals have been reported, from *Ni'ihau* (1, 19-21 Feb 2002, Lehua Islet); *Kaua'i* (22, 1968-2015; e.g., [HRBP](#) 1224, 1259, 1324, 5019, 5823-5824, published *NAB* 62:323); *O'ahu* (51, 1941-2016; e.g., [HRBP](#) 0076-0080, 1301-1303, 1327-1328, 5765, 6336), *Moloka'i* (3, 2009-2016); *Lana'i* (8, 1919-1988; e.g., BPBM 7064-7065, 157356, 179787, 179951; [HRBP](#) 0769-0772; see also Glaucous Gull); *Maui* (5, 1965-2002); and *Hawai'i* (15, 1968-2016; e.g., *E* 45:74, [HRBP](#) 1228-1229, 1325, 5157, 5408-5409). The relative paucity of records from Moloka'i and Maui perhaps reflect the lack of large harbors hosting ship-bound traffic from N America (see Henshaw 1900a). High counts included 6-7 at Barking Sands, Kaua'i, 2 Dec 2002 and 4-5 near Kahuku, O'ahu, 27 Jan 1989 and 15 Feb 2002. The earliest fall arrival to the Southeastern

Islands was 28 Oct (1993, Ki'i unit of JCNWR, O'ahu) and the latest spring record was from 29 May (2009, Kilauea Point NWR, Kaua'i).

Glaucous-winged Gull frequently hybridizes with [Herring](#), [Slaty-backed](#), [Western](#), and [Glaucous](#) gulls (AOU 1998), and it is possible that many of the reported Glaucous-winged Gulls from Hawaii have not been pure. A specimen from Midway in 1957 identified as a hybrid Glaucous-winged X Glaucous gull appears to be a Glaucous-winged X Herring gull (see [Herring Gull](#)). Other hybrids between Glaucous and Glaucous-winged gull include well-described birds at Barking Sands, Kaua'i 2 Dec 2002 and Ki'i, O'ahu, 15 Feb 2002, and one photographed on Kure 14-25 Jan 2014 ([HRBP](#) 6634-6635). A bird photographed on Midway 18 Dec 2010 may have been a Glaucous-winged X Slaty-backed Gull ([HRBP](#) 6631-6633). There is as yet no reports of Glaucous-winged X Western gulls; it is possible that this common hybrid does not typically migrate far enough from colonies along the Washington coast to reach Hawaii.

[Acronyms and Abbreviations](#)

[Literature cited](#)

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