

## **Black-rumped Waxbill**

*Estrilda troglodytes*

### **hypothetical, naturalized (non-native) population not established**

Other: Red-eared Waxbill (<1983), Common Waxbill (see below)

Black-rumped Waxbills are native to Africa, from Senegal and Ethiopia to n. Zaire and Uganda (AOU 1998). They have been unsuccessfully introduced in Tahiti and Hawai'i I and successfully introduced to Portugal and Puerto Rico (Long 1981, Lever 1987, AOU 1998). Much confusion surrounded the identification and nomenclature of the very similar Black-rumped and [Common](#) waxbills in Hawaii during the 1970s and 1980s, until sorted out by Ord (1982) and Falkenmayer (1988). Black-rumped Waxbills are called "Common Waxbills" by aviculturists, which augmented the confusion.

The first report of Black-rumped Waxbills from Hawai'i I was of 9 individuals at Upolu Pt at the N end of the island on 6 Feb 1975 (*E* 35:139). It is unclear whether or not a population persisted from 1975 until 1987, when 6 were recorded at a country club near Pu'uana'hulu on 17 Aug that year. From 1987 through the mid-2000s they were observed at this latter locale (e.g., [HBRC](#) 6766), with high counts of 16 on 12 Oct 1988, 20 on 9 Oct 1993, and 30 on 19 Jan 1999 and 21 Feb 2006. But thereafter numbers declined sharply, with the last substantiated report being in 2009. Few juveniles were reported, suggesting the possibility that this population may have been maintained by continued releases. Most or all reports from 2010-2016 almost assuredly pertaining to misidentified [Common Waxbills](#), which were increasing on Hawai'i Island and probably contributed, along with prolonged drought conditions during the late 2000s, to the decline of Black-rumped Waxbills. Although considered established by Pyle (1979, 1983, 1988, 1992), the AOU (1998), and Pyle and Pyle (2009), following the species apparent extirpation in the late 2000s or early 2010s, we now no longer consider that this fast-breeding Estrilid finch was ever established enough to be placed on the Hawaii list. At the end of 2016 the [HBRC](#) was also re-considering questions of establishment of this species and [Red-cheeked Cordonbleu](#). The only other reports of Black-rumped Waxbills from Hawai'i I, Kona (two at the Kona Surf Hotel 14 Mar 1994) and Holualoa (two tentatively identified 17 Dec 2004), may have involved separate releases.

On O'ahu, Black-rumped Waxbill populations followed the same trajectory as other finches released on Diamond Head (*cf.* [Red-cheeked Cordonbleu](#)), a dozen being first noted along the Na Laau trail 15-16 Oct 1965 (*E* 26:53-54; referred to as "Common Waxbills") and numbers petering out by 1982, a few years after supplemental food was no longer provided to non-native birds in this area. The high counts were of 29 on the Dec 1968 [Christmas Bird Count](#), when they were reported E to Paiko Lagoon (*E* 29:66, 69) and of 30 on 10 May 1975 (*E* 36:22). The last report was of a single individual on 19 Dec 1982 (*E* 43:73). This population may have been supplemented with additional releases and was unable to sustain itself without targeted feeding (see above), and thus we consider it also not to have become established. The only other report from the Southeastern Islands, which likely pertained to local escapes, was of 6 individuals in Lahaina, Maui 28 Nov 1987.

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

#### [Literature cited](#)

Citation: Pyle, R.L., and P. Pyle. 2017. The Birds of the Hawaiian Islands: Occurrence, History, Distribution, and Status. B.P. Bishop Museum, Honolulu, HI, U.S.A. Version 2 (1 January 2017) <http://hbs.bishopmuseum.org/birds/rlp-monograph/>