

GRAY HERON

Ardea cinerea

non-breeding visitor, vagrant

A.c. cinerea

The Gray Heron breeds across central Eurasia as well as parts of s. Africa, India, and SE Asia, and disperses following breeding to other areas of the Old World (Cramp and Simmons 1977). Vagrants have been recorded in Alaska, Newfoundland, Bermuda, the Caribbean Is, and S Am, as well as w. islands groups of Micronesia (Wiles 2005, VanderWerf et al. 2006a, Pratt et al. 2010). Gray Heron and the similar [Great Blue Heron](#) of the Americas have both been recorded in the Hawaiian Islands and documentation for some records of each species may not fully eliminate the other species (see [Great Blue Heron](#)).

The first and only substantiated record of Gray Heron in the Hawaiian Islands is of two birds observed on *Kure*, *Northwestern Hawaiian Islands*, 14-30 Apr 2011 ([HRBP](#) 6347-6348; Parish 2012). A reported Great Blue Heron on Lehua Islet off Ni'ihau 1 Jun-8 Sep 2000 ([HRBP](#) 1311-1313; VanderWerf et al. 2007) also shows several features of Gray Heron, and may be this species, but we consider it unidentified as either species. Another reported Great Blue Heron at Tern Island, French Frigate 20-22 Sep 1988 could also have been of either species, although it seems Gray Heron may more likely reach Hawaii during spring migration whereas most arrivals of [Great Blue Heron](#) to Hawaii have been during fall. The Kure bird appears dark, matching the expected nominate subspecies *A.c. cinerea* (which breeds across Eurasia) as opposed to the paler *A.c. jouey* of Japan and SE Asia, though intermediates between these subspecies occur (Cramp and Simmons 1977).

[Acronyms and Abbreviations](#)

[Literature cited](#)

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