

OSPREY

Pandion haliaetus

non-breeding visitor, occasional winterer

P.h. carolinensis

The Osprey is found worldwide (Dement'ev and Gladkov 1951b, Cramp and Simmons 1980, AOU 1998). Along the Pacific coast of North America it breeds from Alaska to Baja California, with n. populations migrating as far south as n. S America. Migrants have been found throughout the Pacific, including the Galapagos Archipelago, Cocos I., Clipperton I., Kritimati I, and most Micronesian groups (AOU 1998; Pratt et al. 1987, 2010; Wiles 2005). One was recorded on Johnston Atoll in Mar-May 1999 and another landed on a ship half way between California and Hawaii 6 Oct 1957 (Stager 1958). In the Hawaiian Islands it is a nearly annual winter visitor in very low numbers.

Ospreys are relatively infrequently recorded in the *Northwestern Hawaiian Islands*. At **Midway**, one was present in Oct 1991-19 Apr 1992, and what may have been the same individual (first-year Ospreys often over-summer on the winter grounds) was seen 18 Oct-4 Nov 1992. Singles were also reported there 4 Nov 1998 and 31 Aug-14 Sep 2014 ([HRBP](#) 6362). An "eagle-like bird" on Lisianski in Jun 1950 was retrospectively identified six years later as a probable Osprey (*E* 17:42). A first-fall female was photographed at **French Frigate** 3 Oct-25 Nov 1989 ([HRBP](#) 0881-0883).

Records of Osprey exist for all *Southeastern Hawaiian Islands* except for Kaho'olawe. References to an early specimen from Kealakakua Bay, Hawai'i I (e.g., Dole 1869, 1879), result from confusion promoted by Cassin's (1858) reassignment of the type specimen of Hawaiian Hawk to *Pandion* (see Sclater 1871 and [Hawaiian Hawk](#)). It is difficult to calculate how many Ospreys have been observed over the years; practically all reports are of single birds and it is probable that birds regularly fly between islands. Nevertheless, there are relatively few summer records (see below) suggesting regular migrations and, probably, frequent turnover. Among all of the Southeastern Islands at least one record exists for every winter between 1977 and 2008 except for two (2002-2003 and 2008-2009). Examination of dates and locations suggests that 1-4 birds winter in the islands almost annually and that adult birds potentially may return to the same localities for up to 5 or more consecutive winters.

The only record of an Osprey on **Ni'ihau** is of a well-described bird observed along the s. shore "some years ago" by Dole (1879). Subsequently, on **Kaua'i**, at least one bird was recorded during 11 winters between 1968 and 2013 (e.g., *E* 29:103; AOU 1957 also mentions occurrence on Kaua'i but we could locate no information on earlier records); on **O'ahu** during 41 winters 1893-2016 (e.g., Perkins 1903, Munro 1944; *E* 16:31, 17:78-79; [HRBP](#) 5640, 6361, 6363; BPBM 153320 of a first-winter female collected 21 Dec 1922 in Kailua); on **Moloka'i** during 9 winters 1972-2016 (e.g., *E* 33:99; and [HRBP](#) 1010-1011); on **Lana'i** during 3 winters 1939-1981 (e.g., Munro 1944, *E* 41:74); on **Maui** during 22 winters 1961-2012 (e.g. *E* 22:71, 41:74; [HRBP](#) 0979); and on **Hawai'i I** during 20 winters 1951-2008 (e.g., *E* 16:32, 36:139, 45:72-73; [HRBP](#) 0347-0348). Two birds together (e.g., Perkins 1903, *E* 32:65) were recorded 7 times on 4 different islands (a record in the [DOWFAW Waterbird Survey](#) database of 14 on Maui 21 Jan 2004 is undoubtedly an error) and over-summering birds were noted 10 times on 5 islands (e.g., *E* 38:102, 41:74; [HRBP](#) 6361). Ospreys are most often observed over river

mouths, ponds, and aqua farms, and they are frequently noted carrying fish, indicating that they find adequate nourishment to survive Hawaiian winters.

The specimen at BPBM (PP examination) and all photographed birds from Hawaii (including those from Midway and French Frigate) show characters of the North American *P.h. carolinensis*, expected for records in the Southeastern Hawaiian Islands. Nominate *haliaetus* from Eurasia might also be expected on the Northwestern Islands, but confirmation is thus far lacking.

[Acronyms and Abbreviations](#)

[Literature cited](#)

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