

ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK

Buteo lagopus

non-breeding visitor, vagrant

B.l. kamtschatkensis?

Rough-legged Hawks breed throughout arctic regions of the N Hemisphere and withdraw southward in the winter, as far as s. California, n. Mexico, and Japan (Dement'ev and Gladkov 1951b, Cramp and Simmons 1980, AOU 1998). Vagrants have been recorded in the w. Aleutian Is., Iceland, Bermuda, and the Faeroe Is. Three documented and 2 unsubstantiated records exist for the Hawaiian Islands, all light morph individuals.

In the *Northwestern Hawaiian Islands*, the first record for the state involved a bird reported as a first-year male on *Laysan*, 2 Mar-18 May 1988 (*E* 48:66; [HRBP](#) 0762-0765, published *AB* 42:373). It was first observed by arriving National Marine Fisheries Service personnel on 2 Mar and likely had been present for the entire winter. The photographs show a pale bird, more characteristic of the e. Russian subspecies *B.l. kamtschatkensis* (Pyle 2008), but subspecies are weakly defined in this species and should remain unconfirmed in Hawaii without specimen. A well-described Rough-legged Hawk reported to be an adult female was seen by many observers 24 Nov 2001-17 Mar 2002 on both Eastern and Sand Is, *Midway*. It did not remain after mid-March, but one observed 3 Sep 2002 on Sand I may have been the same bird returning (*NAB* 57:134-135). In the *Southeastern Hawaiian Islands* there is one well-documented sight record for *Kaho'olawe*, 20 Nov 2001-20 Mar 2002, reported as first-cycle bird. Unsubstantiated reports occur for Koloa, Kaua'i, ~25 Jan-8 Feb 1993 (a raptor thought possibly to be this species) and of one observed twice on Haleakala Mt, Maui 16 Feb-3 Mar 2003 by a single observer (undescribed and reportedly photographed, but images not examined by us).

[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/>