

## O'AHU NUKUPU'U

## *Hemignathus lucidus*

Other: Nukupu'u (< 2015)

monotypic

### **native resident, extinct**

The nukupu'us collectively consist of three taxa, on Kaua'i, O'ahu, and Maui, that have largely been considered subspecies until 2015 when, following Pratt (2005, 2014), they were split into three species by the AOU (2015). They were never common on any of these three islands, and likely joined many other native Drepanines in going extinct around the turn of the 20th century. At least 79 specimens of nukupu'us were collected on Kaua'i, O'ahu, and Maui (Banko 1979). Subfossil evidence indicates that nukupu'us were present throughout all three of the islands and probably on Moloka'i, whereas a similar but larger species occurred on Hawai'i I (James and Olson 2003; see [Maui Nukupu'u](#)).

The O'ahu Nukupu'u was named by M.H.K. Lichstein (1839) based on specimens collected by Deppe, perhaps in the upper Nu'uau Valley, *O'ahu*, during 11-15 Jan 1837, when many native birds were collected (Townsend 1839; see also Wilson and Evans 1899, Rothschild 1900). During the same year Lafresnaye (1839) named it "*Heterorhynchus olivaceous*" based on specimens also collected on O'ahu, during the voyage of the *Venus* or *Sulphur*. See Olson and James (1995) for an entertaining analysis of naming priorities, favoring *Hemignathus* over *Heterorhynchus*, according to precise dates of publication (see also [Synonymies](#)). Although reported by Deppe to be numerous in 1837, it is possible he was confusing nukupu'us with [O'ahu 'Amakihi](#)s. At least nine specimens were secured by Townsend and Deppe during that year (now found in seven collections; Banko 1984c), and at least two others were collected during the voyage of the *Venus* or *Sulphur* in 1838 and/or during the U.S. Exploring Expedition in 1840-1841; the date and year of the last collected specimen is unknown. By the turn of the century the O'ahu Nukupu'u was already extinct (Wilson 1890a, Rothschild 1900, Bryan 1901a, Perkins 1913); Perkins looked for it extensively at the behest of Newton (*in* Evenhuis 2007) in 1892, without success. According to local inhabitants, nukupu'us may have existed in the lower forests of O'ahu through 1860 (Perkins 1903), while a second-hand report from 1939 (*E* 23:56) is doubtlessly incorrect.

### [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/>