

MAUI-NUI 'AKIALOA

Akialoa lanaiensis

Other: 'Akialoa (<1983), Hawaiian Akialoa (1983-1997),
Greater 'Akialoa (1997-2015), *Iwi* (juvenile)

monotypic

native resident, endemic, extinct

The 'akialoas collectively consist of four taxa, found historically on Kaua'i, O'ahu, Lana'i, and Hawai'i, that have variously been considered one, two, three, or four species (see [Lesser 'Akialoa](#) and [Synonymies](#)). Many authors in the 20th century considered them four subspecies of one or two species within genus *Hemignathus*, often with the Kaua'i population split and the other three (on O'ahu, Maui-nui, and Hawai'i) lumped. But the AOU (1997) then split the Hawai'i population and lumped the other three populations, into Lesser 'Akialoa and Greater 'Akialoa, respectively. Based on additional evidence (Olson and James 1995; Pratt and Pratt 2001; James and Olson 2003; Pratt 2005, 2014), and some uncertainty, the AOU (2015) then split all four populations into separate species and into genus *Akialoa*, retaining the name [Lesser 'Akialoa](#) for the Hawai'i population while recognizing the Maui-nui Akialoa, [Kaua'i 'Akialoa](#), and [O'ahu 'Akialoa](#) as species.

On *Lana'i*, three specimens of 'akialoas were collected, apparently by E.B. Wolstenholme (not Palmer as often supposed), all in "either one day or in one bush, I forget which" (Perkins 1903 and *in* Evenhuis 2007:132), above Ko'ele 15-22 Nov 1892. Based on these specimens a new species was named *Hemignathus lanaiensis* by Rothschild (1893f). Palmer did observe additional individuals in this area and near Mt. Lana'ihale 15-26 Nov 1892 (Rothschild 1900, Hartert 1919, Banko 1984c). Perkins (1903, *in* Evenhuis 2007:191) was probably the last to see the Lana'i 'Akialoa, a single male along a ridge near the type location above Ko'ele 9 Jan 1894. He had a chance to collect it but, perhaps remembering his O'ahu experience a year earlier (see [O'ahu 'Akialoa](#)), remarked that "it would necessarily have fallen in the brush far below, or have lodged in the shrubbery on the side of the cliff, being without dog I forbore to shoot, and when after some minutes it flew off, it was seen no more". Munro (1927, 1944, 2007) subsequently searched for the Lana'i 'Akialoa for 20 years and may have seen Perkins' male but was not certain. He believed that the clearing of a Euphorbia forest (*E. lorifolia*) for pineapple fields in the 1920s may have caused the demise of this species and the [Lana'i Hookbill](#). Subfossil records, probably of this taxon, exist for Moloka'i and Lana'i (Olson and James 1995), suggesting that they formerly were found throughout Maui Nui, and thus leading to the revised common name, despite no evidence of it thus far recorded from Maui.

[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/>