

O'AHU 'AKEPA

Loxops wolstenholmei

Other: 'Akepeu'ie

monotypic

native resident, endemic, extinct

The 'akepas are a relatively distinct species-group of four taxa among Hawaiian honeycreepers, sharing the genus *Loxops* with the [Hawai'i Creeper](#); see [Hawai'i 'Akepa](#) and [Synonymies](#) for more on the taxonomic history of genus *Loxops* and species within. Andrew Bloxham (1827a, 1827b) collected or was brought by local bird-catchers the first two specimens of O'ahu 'Akepa, presumably from near Honolulu, *O'ahu*, during the voyage of the *Blonde* in 1825 (Olson 1996a); his name for it, *rufa*, although recognized into the mid-20th century ([Synonymies](#)), turned out to be preoccupied (*cf.* Stejneger 1900, Olson 1986) and was superseded by Rothschild's (1893b) *wolstenholmei* (see also Rothschild 1895, 1900; Wilson and Evans 1899, Olson 1996a; Newton *in* Evenhuis 2007:182). Twenty additional specimens have been located in museums (Rothschild 1900; W.E. Banko 1979, 1984b; Lepson and Freed 1997). Townsend (1839) and Deppe found them still fairly commonly in Nu'uauu Valley in 1837 (probably including during 11-15 Jan, when they collected many birds there) but thereafter it was considered rare, not being mentioned by Dole (1879) and not encountered by Wilson during the late 1880s (Wilson and Evans 1899). The last specimen (possibly two, *cf.* Banko 1984b, but probably not) was collected by Palmer's assistant E. Wolstenholme on 24 April 1893 in the mountains of the Wailua District (Rothschild 1900). Both Palmer and Perkins were also present when the specimen was taken (*cf.* Evenhuis 2007:110), and it represented the only encounter of the O'ahu 'Akepa by Palmer (Rothschild 1900). Perkins (1903, *in* Evenhuis 2007:110) later noted only a single pair in the forests of the Wahiawa district, probably in 1900-1901 (Munro 1944, W.E. Banko 1984b). We consider these the last substantiated records of O'ahu 'Akepa. Subsequent unsubstantiated reports include one around 1935, 1937, or 1939 (*E* 5:32, 14:76, and 23:55, respectively) along the Kipapa Trail above Mililani, and in Dec 1976 near the summit of the Schofield-Waikane Trail above Wahiawa (Shallenberger and Vaughn 1978; *AB* 31:376). Based on Poisson analyses of persistence probabilities using confirmed and unconfirmed records, Elphick et al. (2009) estimated that the O'ahu 'Akepa went extinct in 1916, with an upper limit of 1986, and it has been considered extinct by most or all 20th and 21st century taxonomists.

[Acronyms and Abbreviations](#)

[Literature cited](#)

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