

Forest Birds

Oloma'ō or Moloka'i Thrush

Myadestes lanaiensis



Picture: Rothschild Collection

SPECIES STATUS:

Federally listed as Endangered

State listed as Endangered

State recognized as Endemic

NatureServe Heritage Rank GH

– Known only from historical occurrences

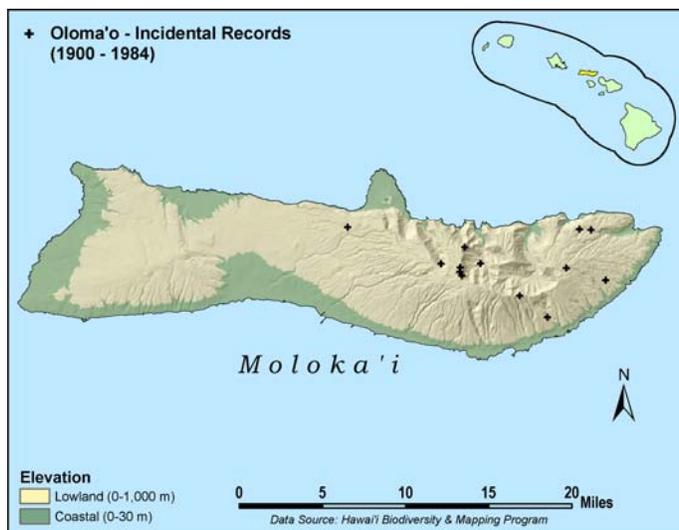
IUCN Red List Ranking – Critically Endangered

Draft Revised Recovery Plans for Hawaiian Forest Birds – USFWS 2003

SPECIES INFORMATION: The oloma'ō, or Moloka'i thrush, is one of five species of Hawaiian solitaires (family: Turdidae). All adult Hawaiian solitaires have olive-brown and gray plumage. Oloma'ō are prolific singers often singing into the night, and the species engages in song flights. Their song, like that of many thrushes, is melodious. Similar to other Hawaiian solitaires, the species often trembles their wings when perched. Oloma'ō are very philopatric, seldom leaving their small home range. The species feeds on a variety of small fruits and insects. Little is known about their breeding biology, but it is presumed to be similar to the 'ōma'ō (*M. obscurus*).

DISTRIBUTION: Unknown. Possibly extinct. The historic range of the oloma'ō included the native forests of eastern Moloka'i and Lāna'i. Historically the species also may have occurred on O'ahu and Maui, where subfossils of Hawaiian solitaires are abundant.

ABUNDANCE: Possibly extinct. Since 1907, oloma'ō have been observed on a dozen occasions, most recently in 1988. The Hawaiian Forest Bird Surveys (1979-1980) estimated the population at 19 ± 38 (SE) individuals. However, oloma'ō were not detected during surveys in the late 1980s and 1990s. There is little information on historical abundance.



LOCATION AND CONDITION OF KEY HABITAT: Unknown. Historically, the oloma'ō occupied closed, wet and mesic 'ōhi'a (*Metrosideros polymorpha*) forests across a broad elevation range. The areas where the species was last observed are managed by the State of Hawai'i as a Natural Area Reserve or by private conservation entities (e.g., The Nature Conservancy).

THREATS: Unknown. However, oloma'ō likely were susceptible to the same factors that threaten other native Hawaiian forest birds including: loss and degradation of habitat, predation by introduced mammals, and disease. For oloma'ō populations, the following was likely of particular concern:

- Disease. This species' rapid decline and the fact that no habitat above 1,250 meters (4,100 feet) occurs on Moloka'i or Lāna'i suggests disease may have played an important role in the species decline.

CONSERVATION ACTIONS: If the species persists, it likely benefits from management activities designed to conserve other endangered forest birds on eastern Moloka'i, including the establishment and management of protected areas, regular surveys of forest bird populations, monitoring of habitat conditions, and studies of disease and disease vectors. Should this species be rediscovered, the Rare Bird Recovery Protocol outlined in the USFWS Draft Revised Recovery Plan for Hawaiian Forest Birds would be implemented, management in anticipation of that possibility should include:

- Continue protection and management of wildlife sanctuaries and refuges.

MONITORING: Continue forest bird surveys and habitat monitoring. This information is needed to assess the efficacy of habitat management efforts.

RESEARCH PRIORITIES: Research priorities for most Hawaiian forest birds include developing improved methods for controlling rats (*Rattus* spp.) and feral cats (*Felis silvestris*) in native forests, determining the ecological requirements of *Culex* mosquitoes at mid- and high-elevation forests, and developing methods to control mosquito populations. Given that this species is possibly extinct there are no research priorities specific to oloma'ō.

References:

Scott JM, Mountainspring S, Ramsey FL, Kepler CB. 1986. Forest bird communities of the Hawaiian islands: their dynamics, ecology and conservation. Lawrence, (KS): Cooper Ornithological Society.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2003. Draft revised Recovery plan for Hawaiian forest birds. Portland, (OR): U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 428 pp.

Wakelee KM, Fancy SG. 1999. 'Oma'ō (*Myadestes obscurus*), kama'ō (*Myadestes myadestinus*), oloma'ō (*Myadestes lanaiensis*), and 'amaui (*Myadestes woahensis*). In *The Birds of North America*, No. 460 (Poole A, Gill F, editors.). Philadelphia, (PA): The Academy of Natural Sciences; and Washington DC: The American Ornithologists' Union.