

HAWAII STATE WATERBIRD COUNT – PHOTGRAPHIC IDENTIFICATION GUIDE

by Eric A. VanderWerf, June 2005

This guide is intended to help identify waterbirds that may be encountered during the Hawaii State waterbird count, including the four species of endangered waterbirds and some of the more common species of migratory shorebirds, waterfowl, gulls, and terns. If you observe a bird that does not match any of the species shown below, make careful notes on its appearance and behavior, take photographs if possible, then consult field guides for further information. All photos copyrighted, used with permission.

Hawaiian Stilt



Hawaiian Stilt male. Note the black back and bright pink legs. Photo Hugo de Vries.



Hawaiian Stilt juvenile. Note the more brownish back, dull pink legs, and more extensive white on the neck and forehead. Photo Eric VanderWerf.



The **bands** on this juvenile stilt are red over aluminum left, blue over white right, or **RA/BW**. Photo Eric VanderWerf.

Hawaiian Coot



Hawaiian Coot adult (left) and juvenile. Juveniles are grayish and lack the white bill. Photo Eric VanderWerf.



Adult Hawaiian Coots can have **white or red frontal shields** above the white bill. Photo Eric VanderWerf.

Hawaiian Moorhen



Hawaiian Moorhen. Note the long unlobed toes. Photo Eric VanderWerf.



Hawaiian Moorhen with chicks. Note the long unlobed toes. Photo David Desrochers.

Hawaiian Duck or Koloa



Koloa male (left) and female. Hanalei, Kauai. Note the overall dark color, dark bill, mostly brownish back, brownish undertail coverts with black spots, and whitish tail with brown spots. Photos Eric VanderWerf.



Koloa pair. Hanalei, Kauai. Photo Eric VanderWerf.



Koloa pair. Hanalei, Kauai. Photo Eric VanderWerf.



Koloa in flight. Hanalei, Kauai. The speculum can range from blue to emerald green. Photos Eric VanderWerf.



Koloa wing. Photo Brenda Zaun.

Koloa-Mallard Hybrids

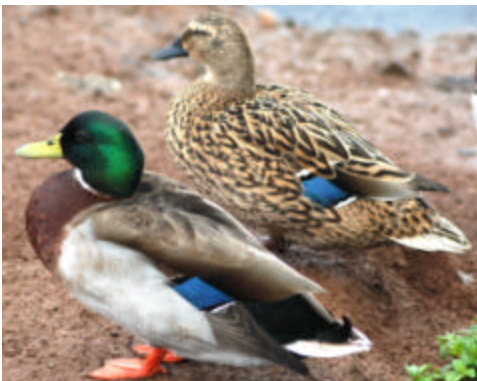


Koloa-Mallard hybrid. Male. Hanalei, Kauai. Photo Eric VanderWerf.

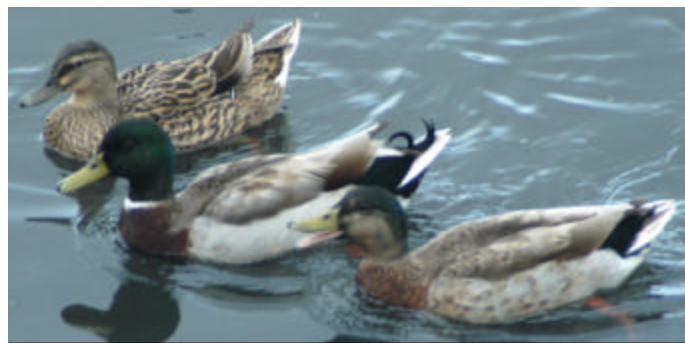


Koloa-Mallard hybrid. Male. Kaelepulu, Oahu. Note the grayish sides and back, black and white tail, and curled black tail coverts. Photo Eric VanderWerf.

Mallard



Mallard. Male (front) and female. Note the “teal” blue speculum, white tail, and curled black tail coverts. This female has a darker, less orange bill than most and may be a domestic hybrid. Photo Eric VanderWerf.



Mallard. Males (front) and female. Note the white tail, curly black tail coverts, and gray back of males. The front male may be molting into breeding plumage or may be a domestic hybrid. Photo Eric VanderWerf.

Migratory Shorebirds



Pacific Golden Plover or Kolea in non-breeding plumage. Photo Eric VanderWerf.



Black-bellied Plover in non-breeding plumage. Note the grayer plumage and larger bill than Kolea. Photo Jaan Lepson.



Semipalmated Plover. Note the single dark breast band. Photo Eric VanderWerf



Ruddy Turnstone. Note the orange legs, black breast band, short bill, and mottled brown back. Photo Eric VanderWerf.



Wandering Tattler. Note the gray plumage, yellow legs, and white supercilium. Photo Eric VanderWerf.



Sanderling. Note the very white breast, black legs, and black bill. Photo Eric VanderWerf.



Pectoral Sandpiper. Note the sharp lower border to streaking on the breast. Photo Eric VanderWerf.



Sharp-tailed Sandpiper juvenile. Note the chestnut cap, white supercilium, and indistinct lower border to breast streaks. Photo Eric VanderWerf.



Sharp-tailed Sandpiper adult. Note the indistinct lower border to breast streaks and more streaked crown. Photo Eric VanderWerf.



Long-billed Dowitcher. Note the long bill, chunky body, and yellow legs. Photo Eric VanderWerf.

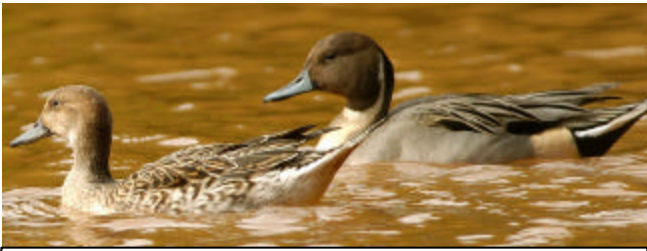


Lesser Yellowlegs. Note the long yellow legs, thin bill, and slim body. Photo Jim Denny.



Bristle-thighed Curlew. Note the large size, long curved bill, and head stripes. Photo Eric VanderWerf.

Migratory Waterfowl



Northern Pintail. Male (right) and female. Note the long neck, and long pointed tail. Photo Jim Denny.



American Wigeon. Male (back) and female. Note the short bluish bill and steep forehead. Photo Jaan Lepson.



Green-winged Teal. Male (left) and female. In female note shorter bill and more distinct eye-line. Photo Arleone Dibben-Young.



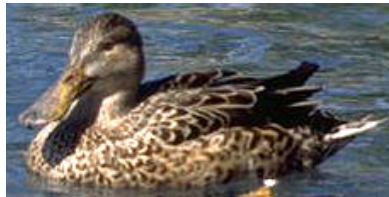
Blue-winged Teal. Male. Photo Susan Hengeveld.



Cinnamon Teal. Male (left) and female. In female note longer bill and plainer face than other teal. Photo Arleone Dibben-Young.



Northern Shoveler. Male (left) and female. Note the long flat bill. Photos Arleone Dibben-Young.



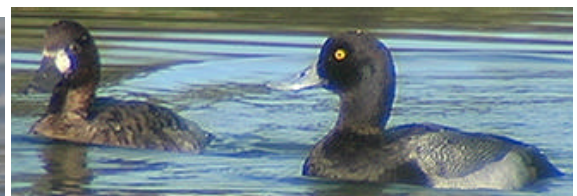
Ring-necked Duck. Female (front) and 2 males. Photo Eric VanderWerf.



Lesser Scaup. Male. Note peaked head. Photo Jaan Lepson.



Lesser Scaup. Female. Note peaked head. Photo Eric VanderWerf.



Greater Scaup. Male (right) and female. Note rounder head, larger bill. Photo Jim Denny.



Cackling Goose. Note short neck and bill. Photo Eric VanderWerf.



Cackling (left) and Canada Geese. Note differences in size, neck and bill length, and breast color. Photo Eric VanderWerf.



White-fronted Goose. Photo Eric VanderWerf.

Gulls and Terns



Laughing Gull. Adult in breeding plumage. Photo David Price.



Laughing Gull. 1st year. Photo Susan Hengeveld.



Laughing Gull. 1st year. Note black tail band and brownish primaries. Photo Jim Denny.



Ring-billed Gull. 1st year. Photo Eric VanderWerf.



Glaucous-winged Gull. 2nd-year. Photo Eric VanderWerf.



Glaucous-winged Gull. 1st-year. Photo Eric VanderWerf.



Caspian Tern. Note the large red bill. Photo Eric VanderWerf.



Common Tern. Winter plumage. Photo Dayna Harris.