

EXTINCT BIRDS OF THE WORLD

#30 'ULA-'AI-HAWANE



Illustration: F.W. Frohawk circa 1890

The 'Ula-'ai-Hawane, *Ciridops anna*, was a small Hawaiian honeycreeper, that became extinct in the late 1800s. 'Ula-'ai-Hawane is an Hawai'ian phrase that may be translated as "red [bird] that eats *hawane*". Its stronghold was the mountains of the Kohala, Hilo and Kona districts on the island of Hawai'i. However, fossil remains reveal that it (and at least one closely related species, *Ciridops tenax*) also once existed on other Hawai'ian islands.

The species was around 11cm (4.3") in length. The overall body colouring of the adult was red, while the head, throat, and upper back were a silvery grey. The crown, wings, breast, shoulder, and tail were black. The legs and bill were yellowish. Immatures were of an overall brownish hue, with a bluish-grey breast, black wings and tail, and a greenish-brown back.

'Ula-'ai-Hawane are thought to have fed on the seeds and flowers of the *lo'ulu* palms, *Pritchardia affinis*, *P. beccariana*, *P. lanigera* and *P. schattaueri*. The bird's name suggests it liked the unripe fruits (*hawane*) in particular, it was the decline of these palms that may have sealed the fate of the bird. As the species was only ever seen near *lo'ulu* palms, it is assumed they were highly dependent on them for survival.

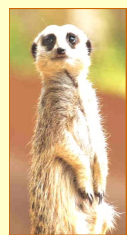


Pritchardia affinis

Photo: "Forest & Kim Starr (USGS)"

The last confirmed sighting of a 'Ula-'ai-Hawane was at the headwaters of the Awini River in the Kohala Mountains in 1892. However, George C. Munro may have glimpsed a single bird of the species along the Kahua ditch trail in 1937, but the sighting was too brief for the bird to be unequivocally identified.

R.V.C. with help from Wikipedia



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