

Pacific Golden-Plovers *Pluvialis fulva* in American Samoa: Spring migration, fall return of marked birds, and other observations

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In spring 2007, we radio-tagged and uniquely color-banded 30 Pacific Golden-Plovers *Pluvialis fulva* on wintering grounds at Tutuila Island, American Samoa (AS), and ten others on Oahu, Hawaiian Islands. All of these birds were territorial on short-grass (lawn) habitat. Spring migration from AS began during the second week of April well ahead of departure from Oahu which occurred in late April. The average at-capture body mass in both the AS and Oahu sample groups was statistically identical. Two of the birds were detected during subsequent monitoring surveys in Alaska. An AS plover was found on 25 April near the village of Egegik on the Alaska Peninsula, and a plover from Oahu was located on 23 May near Bethel in western Alaska. The route of the AS plover to Alaska is unknown, but from the great circle perspective a mid-Pacific flight traversing the Hawaiian Archipelago seems probable. A large percentage of the birds in both groups returned in the fall (AS 83%, Oahu 80%) and reoccupied previous territories. We estimated that the wintering population of Pacific Golden-Plovers on Tutuila Island was at least 500 birds. This was substantially greater than previous estimates.