

ESC America's Top 10

General Information		Please Use this Column to Provide the Requested Information
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Report Questions		
Do you have photos that can be used in the report?	Yes	
Will you want printed reports?	No	
If your species is selected, will you use the opportunity to organize around the species and/or publicize its plight?	Yes	
The Species & Its Status Questions		
Common name, genus & species	Millerbird <i>Acrocephalus familiaris</i>	
Conservation Status	Endangered	
Current population size	Nihoa (2012): 401 ± 163; Laysan (2013) 100 NOTE that population estimates on Nihoa fluctuate widely between years; the 2011 estimate for Nihoa was 775±298 and we doubt that the Nihoa population actually decreased by several hundred birds netweem 2011 & 2012.	
Has the species been delisted? If yes, when? Was the recovery on time? (Skip questions 17+18.)	No	
If no, does the species have a recovery plan?	Yes	
If it does have a recovery plan, what is the projected downlisting and/or delisting date?	N/A - recovery plan (1984) does not include this projection.	
Background Questions (for the report profile)		
Geographic range	Nihoa and Laysan Islands, Hawaiian Islands National Wildlife Refuge, part of the Papahanaumokuakea Marine National Monument, Hawaii	

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Habitat

Scrub and bunchgrass

Primary diet (if applicable)

The Millerbird is a generalist insectivore, which gleans both native and non-native insects from shrubs and other plants.

Public Engagement Questions (Please explain why the species is interesting, why it matters, why decision-makers + the public should care.)

Interesting facts about the species

The Millerbird is the only known Old World warbler to colonize the Hawaiian Archipelago. Two subspecies once existed, one endemic to Laysan Island (*A. f. familiaris*; extinct) and one endemic to Nihoa (*A. f. kingi*). The Millerbird is listed as endangered by the State of Hawai'i and United States, and is considered critically endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) because of its very small range and significant fluctuation in population size. The subspecies on Laysan went extinct in the early 20th Century as a result of the island's devegetation by introduced livestock and rabbits.

Additional background information to complete the species profile in the report.

The Millerbird is a critically endangered passerine that until 2011 was found only on the small island of Nihoa in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands. This species is at a high risk of extinction from biological and catastrophic factors. Translocation of this species to another of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands has been recommended for over 30 years to reduce the risks of extinction. The Millerbird, which weighs less than an ounce, is a lively gray and brown bird that forages for insects among low shrubs and bunchgrasses. On Laysan, it joins the endangered Laysan Finch, Laysan Duck, and Hawaiian monk seal, several endangered plant species, and millions of nesting seabirds.

What are the most important messages that should be communicated about this success story?

Highly successful, very long-distance and logically complex translocation (3 days by sea from Nihoa to Laysan); 2 years later the original founding population of 50 birds has doubled to 100. Laysan has been under intensive restoration by USFWS for more than 20 years; reintroduction of the Millerbird, which was lost from Laysan almost 100 years ago, is a milestone in the restoration process.

Outline and describe the **existing threats** that might impede its recovery, e.g., new threats to its habitat, etc. Include any potential political threats, e.g., a Congressional delisting before its time. Cite any

Single, small population on Nihoa (incipient second population on Laysan) & vulnerability to catastrophes such as hurricanes, fires, introduction of predators or pathogens

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Criteria-Specific Questions

Detail the ecological and scientific importance of the species. Note if it is a keystone species. Describe its role in the biodiversity of its environment. Cite any substantiating scientific studies.

Provide information on any additional benefits the species provides, such as economic, medicinal, or ecosystem services.

Judge's score for importance of species.

What recovery actions have been taken for the species?

Why were those recovery actions successful?

If there are or have been multi-agency and/or public/private collaboration to protect the species, please describe.

The millerbird is one of only three extant native passerines (all endangered) endemic to the remote northwestern islands of the Hawaiian Archipelago, and of these is the only obligate insectivore. The biotic communities of these very small, isolated, and dry islands are depauperate, thus the ecological niche of any individual species tends to be relatively broad. The Millerbird is the only Old-World warbler (Sylviidae) in Hawaii, and the most remote point in the distribution of the genus *Acrocephalus* in Oceania.

This species does not co-occur with humans

Strict biosecurity regulations for the Hawaiian Islands National Wildlife Refuge (and Marine National Monument); translocation to establish a second population (also a reintroduction of this species to Laysan Island).

Biosecurity is successful because access to the islands is strictly controlled and enforced. The translocations (2011 & 2012) were successful owing to nearly five years of background studies and monitoring, field trials to develop captive care and transport methods, a carefully developed and peer-reviewed translocation plan, and a committed team of biologists.

The Millerbird translocation project has been a multi-lateral effort since 2006 and has succeeded in large part owing to the professionalism and dedication of the core team. The project has been led by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and co-led since 2009 by USFWS and American Bird Conservancy. Other team members have come from USGS, University of Hawaii, University of New Brunswick, and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs. Funding for the project has come from USFWS, ABC, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Atherton Foundation, Cooke Foundation, Change Happens Foundation, M.L.E. Foundation, and the NY Community Trust

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Please detail the species' recovery. What increases have there been in the size of the population and in the number of populations?

If there is political support for the conservation of the species, please explain.

Are there actions that need to be taken by government officials and/or NGOs to continue the recovery?

Are there additional actions that individuals can take to continue the species' recovery?

Since 2011 and the first translocation from Nihoa to Laysan, the number of populations has increased from 1 to 2, and the total abundance of the species has increased by at least 50.

Yes. Senator Hirono and the other members of the Hawaii Congressional delegation have supported funding for this project.

Investments that have already been made need to be maintained by our government officials even during these very challenging fiscal times that our country faces.

Because this species occurs on remote uninhabited islands, the best action that the public can take is to express support for the conservation and recovery of Hawaiian birds, and for dedicated funding to the Fish and Wildlife Service for these activities, to their congressional representatives.

Judge's score for recovery.

Final Judge's Score

0