# N&MA Classification Committee: Proposals 2011-C

# Change the English names of nine species extralimital to North America

Common names used by the NACC for nine extralimital species clearly diverge from prevailing usage. Most major global taxonomies use different names and in most or all cases these names are the ones in wide usage in the species' core range. The divergent names used by NACC breed confusion.

In all cases, the species is either an extremely rare vagrant (from 1 to 2 confirmed records for the New World), a hypothetical species listed in the appendix, or an introduced species with a very small population not yet considered "established" or "countable" by the ABA Checklist Committee. Thus, none of these names is at all entrenched in the North American ornithological or birdwatching communities. The NACC purchase on the name must be considered very weak and, consequently, should be easy to abandon.

Avibase (http://avibase.bsc-eoc.org/), the excellent website run by Denis Lepage of Ontario, provides an easy way to compare common name usage across dozens of taxonomic authorities and versions. In the species summaries below, I provide the Avibase links and a summary but do not reiterate the information displayed on Avibase.

## (a) change Common Peafowl (*Pavo cristatus*) to Indian Peafowl

**Status in AOU Area:** Native to India and Sri Lanka. Introduced in Hawaii, Bahamas, and elsewhere (AOU 1998:118). Not considered established in the continental USA and Canada by the ABA.

**Avibase link:** http://avibase.bsc-eoc.org/species.jsp?lang=EN&avibaseid=A8C34DC9655204ED

**Summary:** African Bird Club (presumably this species was also introduced in Africa), Birdlife International, Christidis and Boles (2008; presumably introduced in Australia), Clements, eBird, Howard and Moore, IOC, Oriental Bird Club, Rasmussen and Anderton, and Sibley and Monroe all agree on the usage of Indian Peafowl. Morony, Bock, and Farrand stand alone with the NACC in its use of Common Peafowl.

Prevailing usage seems clear and I recommend using Indian Peafowl, which is also much more informative as the native range of this species is restricted to India and Sri Lanka.

## (b) change Solander's Petrel (*Pterodroma solandri*) to Providence Petrel

**Status in AOU Area:** Hypothetical. The Appendix (AOU 1998:686) reports a misidentified specimen from Hawaii and unconfirmed sight records from

Hawaii, California, and Washington. Recently, photos from British Columbia and Alaska have been identified as Providence Petrel and at least the Alaska record is likely to be accepted to the ABA and AOU lists soon.

**Avibase link:** http://avibase.bsc-eoc.org/species.jsp?lang=EN&avibaseid=F654D59E67F122CD

**Summary:** Birdlife International, Christidis and Boles (2008), Clements, eBird, Howard and Moore, IOC, and the Oriental Bird Club all use Providence Petrel. Solander's Petrel appears to be used by Morony, Bock, and Farrand and Sibley and Monroe (1996) only.

In popular seabird field guides, Enticott and Tipling, Onley and Scofield, and Harrison (1987) all use Providence Petrel, whereas Howell (2012) uses Solander’s Petrel.

The history of the name, which relates to its extirpation from Norfolk Island, is also worth preserving in favor of yet another eponym, already recorded in the scientific name. I recommend Providence Petrel.

### (c) change Antarctic Giant-Petrel (*Macronectes giganteus*) to Southern Giant-Petrel

**Status in AOU Area:** Hypothetical. The Appendix (AOU 1998:685) reports a specimen of questionable origin from Oregon and two sight reports from Hawaii.

**Avibase link:** http://avibase.bsc-eoc.org/species.jsp?lang=EN&avibaseid=C1706A8B803AD6EF

**Summary:** Although hyphenation of Giant-Petrel varies, Southern Giant-Petrel is used by all major taxonomies including the latest versions of African Bird Club, Birdlife International, Clements, Christidis and Boles, eBird, Howard and Moore, Morony, Bock and Farrand, and SACC.

In popular seabird field guides Enticott and Tipling, Onley and Scofield, and Harrison (1987) all use Southern Giant-Petrel, as does Shirihai (2008).

The case seems to be overwhelmingly strong to use Southern Giant-Petrel. Although the two AOU committees do not conform in all cases, this would seem to be an easy and non-controversial way to bring the committees more in line.

### (d) change White-vented Storm-Petrel (*Oceanites gracilis*) to Elliot’s Storm-Petrel

**Status in AOU Area:** Hypothetical. Native to the Pacific Coast of South America. The Appendix (AOU 1998:687) reports sight records from 1937 off the coast of Panama.

**Avibase link:** http://avibase.bsc-eoc.org/species.jsp?lang=EN&avibaseid=934FEF660A167CB0

**Summary:** Both White-vented Storm-Petrel and Elliot's Storm-Petrel are widely used, but the NACC's sister committee (SACC) uses Elliot's Storm-Petrel. Current versions of the Clements, eBird and IOC also use Elliot's, as does The Handbook of Birds of the World. Howard and Moore and Birdlife International, along with a few others, use White-vented.

In South American field guides, Jaramillo (Birds of Chile) uses Elliot's while Schulenberg et al. (Birds of Peru) prefer White-vented. Popular seabird field guides, including Enticott and Tipling, and Onley and Scofield, Harrison (1987) all use Elliot's Storm-Petrel.

Although the two AOU committees do not conform in all cases, this would seem to be an easy and non-controversial way to bring the committees more in line. On the other hand, White-vented does convey useful information about appearance that another eponym does not.

## (e) change Gray Frog-Hawk (*Accipiter soloensis*) to Chinese Goshawk

**Status in AOU Area:** Native to China, Taiwan, and Korea. One specimen record of a bird found alive on Kure Atoll 27 Sep 1991 (AOU 1998:93).

**Avibase link:** http://avibase.bsc-eoc.org/species.jsp?lang=EN&avibaseid=D188E45CC088BAC0

**Summary:** Gray Frog-Hawk has been used since the 41st supplement, which uses the name without any comment (http://elibrary.unm.edu/sora/Auk/v114n03/p0542-p0552.pdf). Most other major taxonomies use Chinese Goshawk, including Birdlife International, Clements, eBird, Howard and Moore, and Morony, Bock and Farrand. In addition, Chinese Goshawk is used by some major field guides such as Kennedy et al. (2000. Birds of the Philippines)

A fair case can be made for the use of Chinese Sparrowhawk, which is used by the Oriental Bird Club and by the IOC, as well as by field guides such as Ferguson-Lees and Christie (2005. Raptors of the World), Rasmussen and Anderton (2005. Birds of South Asia), Robson (2005. Birds of Southeast Asia), and Lee et al. (2000. A Field Guide to the Birds of Korea). Worldwide, the use of Sparrowhawk and Goshawk appears almost interchangeable, although goshawks tend generally to be larger. *Accipiter soloensis* is a decidedly small *Accipiter*, comparable to Sharp-shinned Hawk.

In the absence of strong arguments in favor of using Sparrowhawk, I would recommend using Chinese Goshawk for consistency with other major world lists. However, either would be an improvement over Gray Frog-Hawk, especially since the species does not particularly prey on frogs (it hunts birds, like most or all *Accipiters*). Furthermore, the hyphenated form Frog-Hawk suggests a uniqueness that does not exist (this is an *Accipiter*), whereas

Goshawk (or Sparrowhawk) would clearly indicate an *Accipiter*.

I recommend the use of Chinese Goshawk.

[***Comment from Chair:*** Please submit two votes on this proposal, as follows:

2011-A-1e (i): change Gray Frog-Hawk (*Accipiter soloensis*) to Chinese Goshawk

2011-A-1e (ii): change Gray Frog-Hawk (*Accipiter soloensis*) to Chinese Sparrowhawk

**(f) change Trudeau's Tern (*Sterna trudeaui*) to Snowy-crowned Tern**

**Status in AOU Area:** Hypothetical. Native to South America. The Appendix (AOU 1998:693) reports that the type was reportedly taken in New Jersey, but that the accuracy of the locality is in question.

**Avibase link:** http://avibase.bsc-eoc.org/species.jsp?lang=EN&avibaseid=98FBF9CAD70AE915

**Summary:** Despite the use of Trudeau's Tern for the 1st through 5th edition of the AOU Check-list (and in the Appendix thereafter), all other major taxonomies use Snowy-crowned Tern. Notably, these include the SACC, the NACC's sister committee. Other taxonomies using Snowy-crowned Tern include Birdlife International, Clements, eBird, IOC, and Sibley and Monroe. Howard and Moore stands alone with the NACC in its use of Trudeau's Tern.

Although the two AOU committees do not conform in all cases, this would seem to be an easy and non-controversial way to bring the committees more in line. Furthermore, the name Snowy-crowned Tern is informative (as the species is white-crowned in all plumages) and helpful for identification.

**(g) change Magpie Robin (*Copsychus saularis*) to Oriental Magpie-Robin**

**Status in AOU Area:** Hypothetical. Native to South Asia. The Appendix (1998:969) states that several attempted introductions in the 1960s were not successful.

**Avibase link:** http://avibase.bsc-eoc.org/species.jsp?lang=EN&avibaseid=0B1C145C64A5F620

**Summary:** Regardless of whether *Copsychus saularis* (Oriental Magpie-Robin) and *C. mindanensis* (Philippine Magpie-Robin) are split (as followed by Clements, eBird and IOC), the prevailing name for *C*. *saularis* (*sensu stricto* or *sensu lato*) is Oriental Magpie-Robin. All major authorities (Clements, eBird, IOC, Howard and Moore, Oriental Bird Club, and Rasmussen and Anderton) use Oriental Magpie-Robin and only Morony, Bock, and Farrand uses Magpie Robin.

Taxonomic issues aside, it seems worth changing this name to Oriental Magpie-Robin for consistency.

### (h) change Common Canary (*Serinus canaria*) to Island Canary

**Status in AOU Area:** Native to the Azores, Madeira, and the western Canary Islands. Introduced and established in Hawaii and Bermuda, escapees seen elsewhere in North America (AOU 1998:669).

**Avibase link:** http://avibase.bsc-eoc.org/species.jsp?lang=EN&avibaseid=C090741A455BEE7A&sec=summary&ssver=1

**Summary:** Island Canary is used by the African Bird Club, Birdlife International, Clements, eBird, Howard and Moore, and Sibley and Monroe. The IOC uses Atlantic Canary, perhaps because "Island" does not confer much biogeographical information, although "Atlantic" is only slightly better!

The prevailing usage in the case is clear and a name change to Island Canary will minimize confusion.

### (i) change African Fire-Finch (*Lagonosticta rubricata*) to African Firefinch

**Status in AOU Area:** Non-established escapee in Appendix (AOU 1998:698). Escapees bred in the wild in 1965 and 1966 in California; introduced in Hawaii in 1960s but was not established.

**Avibase link:** http://avibase.bsc-eoc.org/species.jsp?lang=EN&avibaseid=8153E1B03AEF7224&sec=summary&ssver=1

**Summary:** Ignoring the taxonomic question of whether *Lagonosticta rubricata* or *L. landanae* would be involved in North American records and if the NACC would recognize that split (which most authors recognize), all other taxonomies use the unhyphenated form “firefinch” for *Lagonosticta*. This is not a great source of confusion.

Other authorities that use “firefinch” include the African Bird Club, Birdlife International, Clements, eBird, Howard and Moore, IOC, and Sibley and Monroe (i.e., all taxonomies on Avibase except Morony, Bock, and Farrand).

African field guides (including Sinclair and Ryan, Stevenson and Fanshawe, and Zimmerman) all use “firefinch”.

This seems like an easy way to conform to prevailing usage in Africa and in the major global taxonomies.

**Submitted by:**
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**Proposal date:** 14 Feb 2012

## Reclassify the Cuban Parrot (*Amazona leucocephala*) complex

### Description of the problem:

The Cuban Parrot (*Amazona leucocephala*) complex is composed of six extant populations (Cuba, Isla del la Juventud, Cayman Brac, Grand Cayman, Great Abaco, and Great Inagua) (Figure 1) with similar morphological features, including red throat and foreneck, white forehead and forecrown, red abdominal patch and pale bill (Forshaw 2006). The classification of the complex as species or subspecies has historically depended on qualitative plumage characteristics and geographic boundaries. However, now significant morphological, behavioral and genetic differences between 3 of the six populations have been identified, and therefore, based on this new information, I recommend that the Cuban parrot complex should be reclassified. In this proposal, I will outline the history of the classification of the Cuban parrot complex, describe the genetic, morphological, vocal and behavioral differences among populations, and conclude with my taxonomic recommendations.

### History:

The Cuban Parrot complex has had a long history of name changes (Peters 1928). As early as 1731, Catesby documented the parrots in Cuba as *Psittacus paradisi*. In 1886, Cory documented *Chrysotis caymanensis* on a trip to Grand Cayman as a parrot distinct from the parrot population in Cuba. The parrot populations in the Bahamas were classified with the Cuban population as *Psittacus collarus* but recognized as a distinct variety, *bahamensis* (Bryant 1867). Around the turn of the century, several records referred to the Bahama population as a distinct species either by the name *Chrysotis bahamensis* or *Amazona bahamensis* (Alan 1905, Bonhote 1903).

Peters (1928) examined the various populations of the Cuban parrot complex and suggested a formal classification for the parrots in Cuba, the Cayman Islands and the Bahamas based on specimens in the Museum of Comparative Zoology (number of specimens unknown). He recognized four subspecies within a single species. This classification included *Amazona leucocephala leucocephala*, composed of all Cuban populations, *A. l. hesterna* on Cayman Brac and Little Cayman, *A. l. caymanensis* on Grand Cayman and *A. l. bahamensis* in the Bahamas. The island from which the specimens used for the Bahamas were collected was not indicated, and Peters excluded the Abaco population from the final description (Peters 1928).

The distribution of the Cuban Parrot complex has remained constant, and ranges from the Cayman Islands (Grand Cayman and Cayman Brac) to Cuba (Mainland Cuba and Isla de la Juventud) and the Bahamas (Great Abaco and Great Inagua

Islands). However, individual populations were extirpated by the mid 1900's from Little Cayman and Acklins Island in the Bahamas. The American Ornithologists' Union currently recognizes six extant populations as *Amazona leucocephala* (AOU 1998). Five subspecies are currently described for *A. leucocephala*, which include Cuba (*A. l. leucocephala*), Isla de la Juventud (*A. l. palmarum*), Great Abaco and Great Inagua (*A. l. bahamensis*), Cayman Brac (*A. l. hesterna*), and Grand Cayman (*A. l. caymanensis*) (Forshaw 2006).

New information about these parrot populations has been obtained with more sophisticated methods than were available to Peters; thus, I suggest that it is time to revisit the classification of the *Amazona leucocephala* complex.

## New information:

### Morphology

Peters based his 1928 classification of the Cuban parrot complex on morphological and plumage color traits. Reynolds and Hayes (2009) conducted a quantitative reassessment of morphological and color differences among the six extant populations of the Cuban Parrot complex and the extinct Acklins population using museum specimens. There were significant differences in all traits measured between islands including culmen, wing chord, tail, and foot, in addition to the amount and extent of white on head, amount of red on throat and belly, and color on inner and outer eye (Table 1). No single characteristic could distinguish one population from another. However, when Reynolds and Hayes (2009) used two or more characteristics in a discriminant function analysis, individuals were assigned to correct populations an average of 81% of the time, with a 95% correct assignment of Cayman populations and an 89% correct assignment of Abaco populations when compared to all other populations. The authors concluded that the three Bahama populations were as distinguishable as, if not more so than, other current populations in the Cuban Parrot complex. Comparison of neighboring populations showed that the Abaco/Inagua populations can be differentiated 100% of the time. The population with the lowest degree of differentiation was the Cayman Brac population with 67% differentiation from the Cuba population.

### Behavior

#### Vocalizations

In parrots, vocalizations can be horizontally or vertically transmitted (Berg et al 2011); thus, specific calls and vocalizations are learned from other individuals in the population. The vocalizations can become population specific when learned in isolation from other populations. While vocalizations can't necessarily be used as a single indicator of species differences, they may be indicators of the cultural structure of a population (Wright and Dorin 2001). Vocalizations in addition to variation in other characteristics (morphological, plumage, genetics) can create a clearer picture of social organization and differentiation.

A quantitative assessment of the flight calls of the six extant populations of the Cuban Parrot complex supported divergence of the individual island populations with reduced differentiation between the two populations on Cuba (Reynolds et al. 2010). Abaco parrots were distinguishable from all other populations in the complex by their paired flight calls, which had a low fundamental frequency and few notes. Inagua parrot flight calls were also unique due to their high fundamental frequency and a frequency jump bifurcation. The Cayman Brac population was differentiated from other populations by long syllable duration and syllable interval length. The Cayman population was differentiated by having short syllables. The two Cuban populations were unique in their sharing of subharmonic features. However, sample sizes were small for these populations. Reynolds et al. (2010) did find distinct dialects among the Cuban populations.

### *Habitat use*

The island habitats of each Cuban parrot population are very different. These differences may increase adaptation for those habitats and underlie some of the genetic variation (see next section).

*Abaco* – The Abaco population is the only *Amazona* parrot to successfully nest in underground limestone solution cavities in pine forests (Snyder 1982). This population is the latest nesting *Amazona* parrot population. The nesting season begins the end of May and ends mid-September (Gnam 1991). During the non-breeding season, this population migrates into the hardwood forests on the island (Stahala 2008).

*Inagua* – The Great Inagua population uses a vast area of the dry and wet hardwood hammocks. The Inagua parrot is only known to nest successfully in tree cavities although ground cavities are available and are explored by Inagua parrots. Nesting occurs March through July (Stahala 2007).

*Cuba* – The Cuban populations inhabit areas with mature trees and snags including remote woodlands in mountains and lowlands. Palm groves are also used by parrots in savannas and wetland areas. Nesting occurs March through July as in the Inagua parrot (Wiley et al 2004).

*Cayman Islands* – Parrots use beach ridge scrubland, dry hardwood forests, black mangrove habitats and urban areas. Nesting occurs March through June (Wiley et al 2004).

### *Genetics*

An in-depth genetic assessment of the Cuban Parrot complex shows divergence of the extant and one extinct *A. leucocephala* population, with uncertainty remaining in the two Cuban and Cayman Brac populations (Russello et al 2010). Russello et al sampled the six extant populations and the recently extirpated Acklins Island parrot population using DNA collected from field and museum specimens. The Bayesian haplotype tree indicates that the three Bahama populations (Abaco, Inagua, Acklins) and the Grand Cayman population all form monophyletic groups with high posterior probabilities (93-99%), whereas the two Cuban populations formed one phylogenetic group. Surprisingly, the two parrot populations from the Cayman Islands are not sister taxa and form a paraphyletic group with the Cuban parrots. There is a low posterior probability (52%) for the differentiation of the Cayman Brac and the Cuban populations; thus I am treating the taxonomy of this group (Cayman Brac and Cuban populations) as unresolved at this point. However, the Grand Cayman population is monophyletic.

The three Bahamas populations exhibit haplotypic diversity, suggesting divergence. Russello et al. 2010 identified Abaco and Acklins as each having three unique mitochondrial haplotypes and the Inagua population having six unique haplotypes as well as private alleles for each population (Table 2).

The estimated sequence divergence between various populations ranges from 1.2% to 4.4%. These differences correspond well to those expected of full species (Johns and Avise 1998) The two Cayman populations show the largest divergence of 4.4%. Interestingly, the distance between the Abaco and Inagua populations, which are currently considered one subspecies, is higher (2.8%) than that between currently recognized Cuban subspecies (*A. l. leucocephala and A. l. palmarum,* 1.2%). However, the genetic differences between the populations in the Cuban parrot complex are all higher than differences between recently recognized bird species in the Bahamas (0.7% - 1%; Table 3). The same domain of the control region (CR1) was used in the Cuban Parrot study as was used in the Yellow-throated Warbler study (McKay et al. 2010) which elevated the Bahamas' population to species status (American Ornithologists' Union 2010). Additional sequence coding genes (tRNA-Thr, pND6, pGLU) were used in the Cuban Parrot complex study, which adds greater confidence to the resolution.

**Recommendation:**

I propose that the phylogenetic species concept (Cracraft 1983) be used as a basis for the reclassification of *Amazona* parrots. Because interbreeding has been documented between well-established species of *Amazona* in sympatric situations (Snyder 1987, Nichols 1980), I suggest it is not a suitable measure of species divergence in this situation. The genetic differences summarized here correspond remarkably well with the differences in morphology and vocalizations found by Reynolds and Hayes (2009) and Reynolds et al. (2010). Although on their own the vocal and morphological characteristics may not be reason enough for species classification, the congruent genetic evidence shows a strong underlying diversity among the populations which are proposed here to be distinct species (Alström et al. 2008).

Based on the phylogenetic species concept and cumulative ecological, behavioral and morphological evidence, current subspecies within the Cuban parrot complex should be elevated to species level, with the exception of combining the two Cuban populations (Cuba and Isla del la Juventud) and the unresolved Cayman Brac population (Table 4; Figure 1). The proposed revisions follow the suggested classification of Russello et al (2010).

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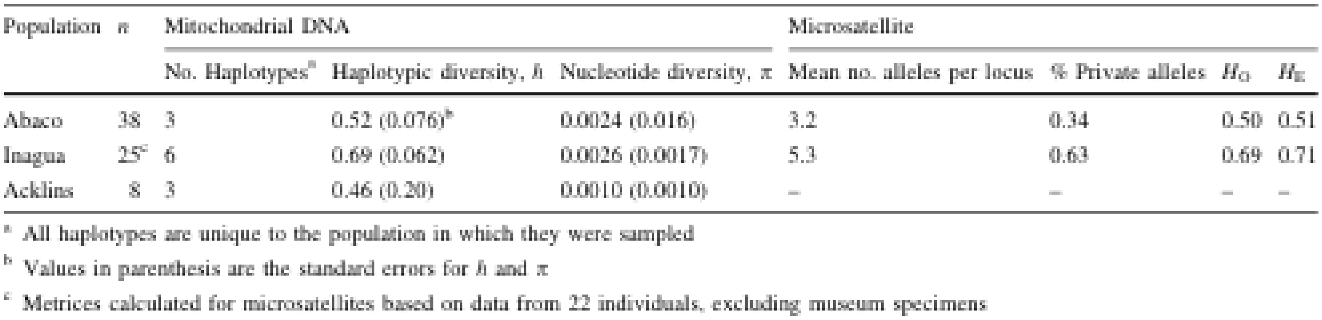
**Table 1: Diagnostic characteristics**

Bahama species descriptions are from Reynolds and Hayes (2009). Cuba and Cayman species descriptions are as described by Forshaw (2006) and Reynolds and Hayes (2009).

| |
|---|
| *Amazona bahamensis* (extinct)<br>Compared to all other *A. leucocephala* populations, specimens exhibit the largest average body size, more white on head and face, more rose on throat, less red on belly. |
| *Amazona abacoensis*<br>Distinguished from Cuba, Isla de la Juventud, and Cayman populations by larger size, more white on head and face, more rose on throat, and less red on the belly. Averages more red on belly and less red at orbit of eye than *bahamensis*. Averages more white on head and face and less red at orbit of eye than *inaguaensis*. Flight call typically consists of diagnostic paired syllables, unlike those of any other extant *A. leucocephala* population (Reynolds et al. 2010). |
| *Amazona inaguanensis*<br>Distinguished from Cuba, Isla de la Juventud, and Cayman populations by larger size, more white on head and face, more rose on throat, and less red on the belly. Averages much less white in the head and face than *A. l. bahamensis*. Diagnostic flight call syllables have a high fundamental frequency and a severe frequency jump that, together, create a squeaky quality (Reynolds et al. 2010). |
| *Amazona leucocephala*<br>Distinguished from *caymanensis* with more white on head and around eye and smaller in size. Less red on throat than *inaguanensis*. Shorter tail than *hesterna*. |
| *Amazona hesterna*<br>Distinguished from *leucocephala* with more red around eye but more white around eye than *caymanensis*. |
| *Amazona caymanensis*<br>Has the least amount of white on forehead and least amount of red on throat of any other population in the complex. |

Table 2. Genetic variation within Bahama parrot populations (Russello 2010)



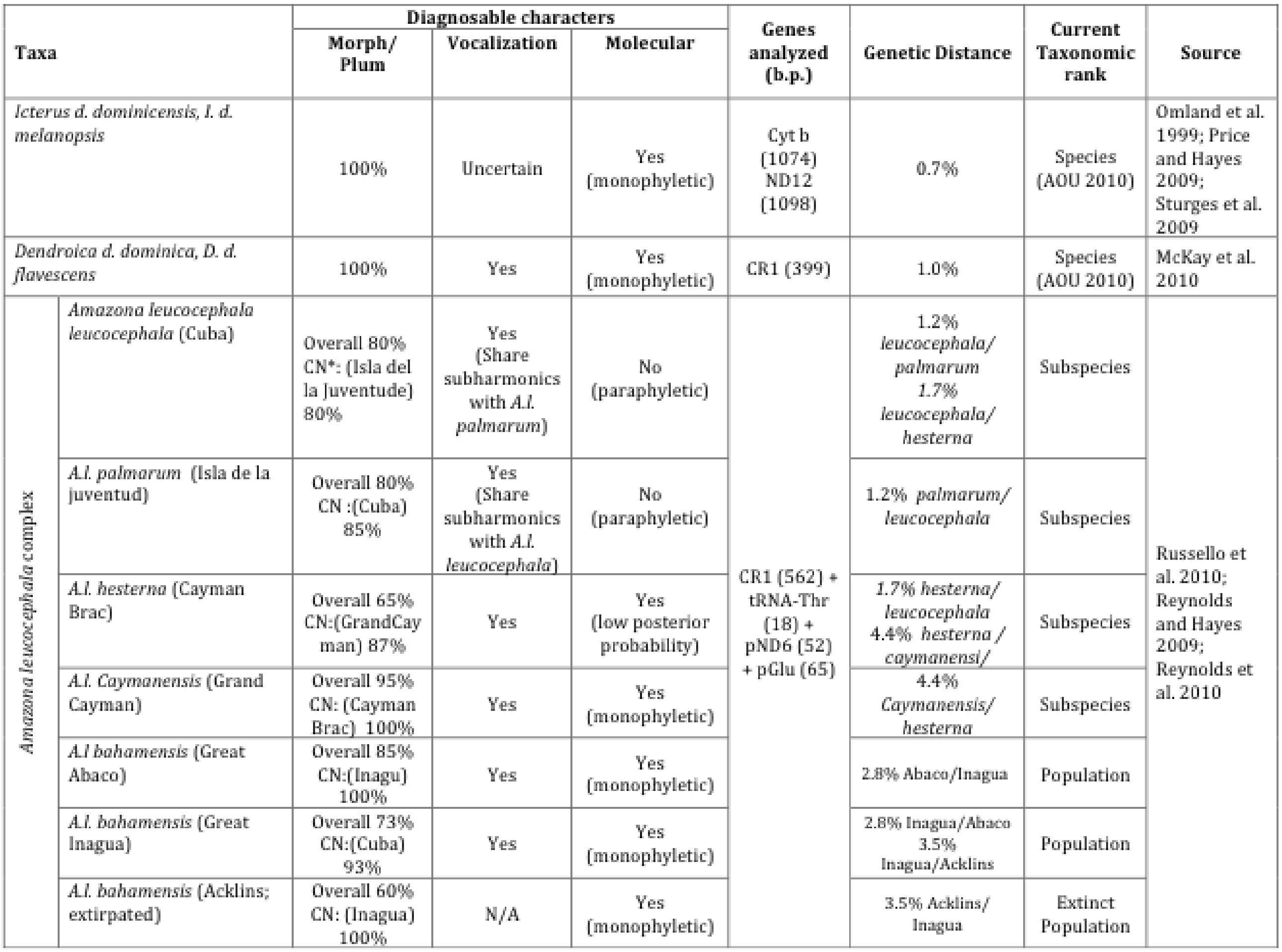
| Population | $n$ | Mitochondrial DNA | | | Microsatellite | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | No. Haplotypes[a] | Haplotypic diversity, $h$ | Nucleotide diversity, $\pi$ | Mean no. alleles per locus | % Private alleles | $H_O$ | $H_E$ |
| Abaco | 38 | 3 | 0.52 (0.076)[b] | 0.0024 (0.016) | 3.2 | 0.34 | 0.50 | 0.51 |
| Inagua | 25[c] | 6 | 0.69 (0.062) | 0.0026 (0.0017) | 5.3 | 0.63 | 0.69 | 0.71 |
| Acklins | 8 | 3 | 0.46 (0.20) | 0.0010 (0.0010) | – | – | – | – |

[a] All haplotypes are unique to the population in which they were sampled

[b] Values in parenthesis are the standard errors for $h$ and $\pi$

[c] Metrices calculated for microsatellites based on data from 22 individuals, excluding museum specimens

### Table 3: Comparison of criteria of recently reclassified species in the Caribbean to the Cuban Amazon complex.



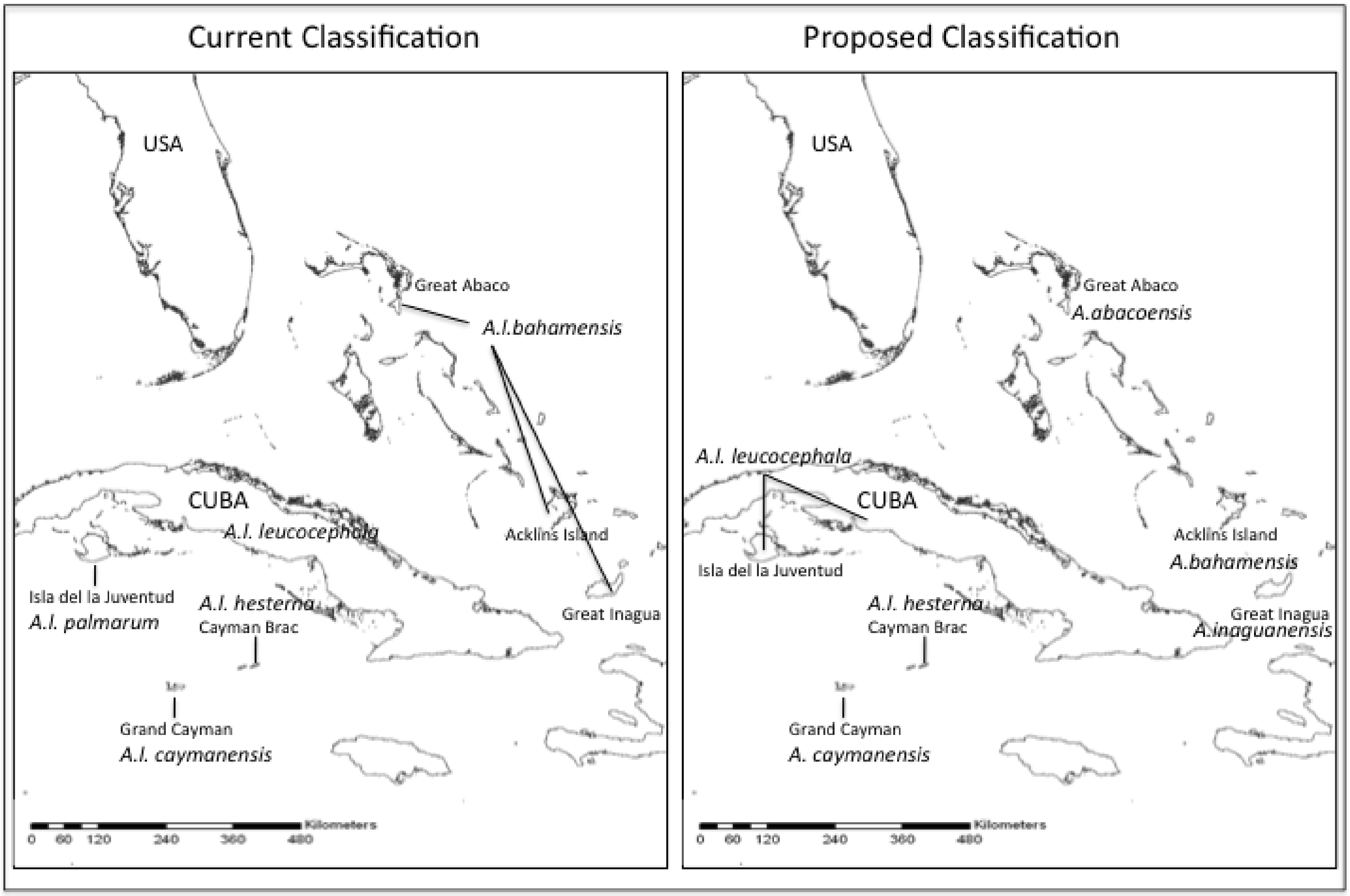
| Taxa | | Diagnosable characters | | | Genes analyzed (b.p.) | Genetic Distance | Current Taxonomic rank | Source |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Morph/ Plum | Vocalization | Molecular | | | | |
| *Icterus d. dominicensis, I. d. melanopsis* | | 100% | Uncertain | Yes (monophyletic) | Cyt b (1074)<br>ND12 (1098) | 0.7% | Species (AOU 2010) | Omland et al. 1999; Price and Hayes 2009; Sturges et al. 2009 |
| *Dendroica d. dominica, D. d. flavescens* | | 100% | Yes | Yes (monophyletic) | CR1 (399) | 1.0% | Species (AOU 2010) | McKay et al. 2010 |
| *Amazona leucocephala* complex | *Amazona leucocephala leucocephala* (Cuba) | Overall 80% CN*: (Isla del la Juventude) 80% | Yes (Share subharmonics with *A.l. palmarum*) | No (paraphyletic) | CR1 (562) + tRNA-Thr (18) + pND6 (52) + pGlu (65) | 1.2% *leucocephala/ palmarum*<br>*1.7% leucocephala/ hesterna* | Subspecies | Russello et al. 2010; Reynolds and Hayes 2009; Reynolds et al. 2010 |
| | *A.l. palmarum* (Isla de la juventud) | Overall 80% CN :(Cuba) 85% | Yes (Share subharmonics with *A.l. leucocephala*) | No (paraphyletic) | | 1.2% *palmarum/ leucocephala* | Subspecies | |
| | *A.l. hesterna* (Cayman Brac) | Overall 65% CN:(GrandCayman) 87% | Yes | Yes (low posterior probability) | | *1.7% hesterna/ leucocephala*<br>4.4% *hesterna / caymanensi/* | Subspecies | |
| | *A.l. Caymanensis* (Grand Cayman) | Overall 95% CN: (Cayman Brac) 100% | Yes | Yes (monophyletic) | | 4.4% *Caymanensis/ hesterna* | Subspecies | |
| | *A.l bahamensis* (Great Abaco) | Overall 85% CN:(Inagu) 100% | Yes | Yes (monophyletic) | | 2.8% Abaco/Inagua | Population | |
| | *A.l. bahamensis* (Great Inagua) | Overall 73% CN:(Cuba) 93% | Yes | Yes (monophyletic) | | 2.8% Inagua/Abaco<br>3.5% Inagua/Acklins | Population | |
| | *A.l. bahamensis* (Acklins; extirpated) | Overall 60% CN: (Inagua) 100% | N/A | Yes (monophyletic) | | 3.5% Acklins/ Inagua | Extinct Population | |

*CN – Closest neighboring parrot population

**Table 4. Proposed Classification** (based on diagnostic characteristics in Table 1)

| **Current Classification** | **Proposed Classification** | **Population locations** |
|---|---|---|
| *Amazona l. leucocephala & A. l palmarum* | Remains: *Amazona leucocephala* subsp. *leucocephala* | Mainland Cuba; Isla de la Juventud |
| *A. l. hesterna* | Remains: *Amazona leucocephala* subsp. *hesterna* | Cayman Brac |
| *A. l. bahamensis* | Proposed: *Amazona abacoensis* | Great Abaco, Bahamas |
| | Proposed: *Amazona inaguanensis* | Great Inagua, Bahamas |
| | Proposed: *Amazona bahamensis* | Acklins, Crooked, Long Cay Bahamas (extinct) |
| *A. l. caymanensis* | Proposed: *Amazona caymanensis* | Grand Cayman |

**Figure 1: Distribution map of Cuban Amazon complex with current and proposed classification.**



# Split Galapagos Shearwater *Puffinus subalaris* from *P. lherminieri*

## Description of the problem:

Species limits in Audubon's Shearwater *Puffinus lherminieri* are highly contentious, with several taxa sometimes ascribed to this species being variously considered separate species or part of Little Shearwater *P. assimilis*; all taxa in *lherminieri* and *assimilis* have even been considered conspecific, with 19 races (Bourne 1986). Morphological characters used to assign taxa to one species or the other have been primarily darkness of upperparts (darker in *assimilis*), leg color (blue in *assimilis*, pink in *lherminieri*), undertail coverts color (white in *assimilis*, brown in *lherminieri*), wing and tail length (shorter in *assimilis*), and color of inner webs of primaries (white in *assimilis*, gray in *lherminieri*). Some taxa do not fit neatly into these categories, however. Three new extralimital taxa in this complex have recently been described at the species level as well.

Originally described as *Puffinus subalaris* Ridgway 1897, the Galapagos Shearwater (treated as *Puffinus lherminieri subalaris* in Peters and subsequent sources until 2004) breeds only in the Galapagos but disperses widely to the coast of Oaxaca, W Mexico. It has also been sight-reported at least as far north as Jalisco. Compared to nominate *lherminieri*, *subalaris* is smaller and shorter-tailed, lacking the dark half-collar (Howell and Webb 1995).

## New information:

Austin *et al.* (2004) published a molecular phylogeny of the small *Puffinus* shearwaters based on 917 bp of mtDNA cyt-*b.* Their phylogeny showed massive lack of concordance compared to all morphologically based treatments of *assimilis* and *lherminieri*. Their analysis included 68 specimens of about 21 ingroup taxa, plus several outgroups, and four specimens of *subalaris*. Almost all samples, including all the *subalaris*, were footpads, feathers, or blood, with just one (LSUMZ) tissue sample! However, even if sample quality might be an issue in resolving some relationships, the complicated issues involving species limits are outside the scope of this proposal to split *subalaris*. The *subalaris* samples are from museum specimens collected in the Galapagos. According to the Austin *et al.* (2004) phylogeny, *subalaris* is not a member of this complex at all, but is closely related to Christmas Shearwater *P. nativitatis* (see Fig. 2, below). Bootstrap values for this node are 57 (MP) and 71 (NJ).

More recently, Ramirez et al. (2010) published a phylogeny of small shearwaters, with a similar result as regards placement of subalaris, again sister to *nativitatis* and well removed from *lherminieri* and *assimilis* (http://www.plosone.org/article/showImageLarge.action?uri=info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0016072.g002).

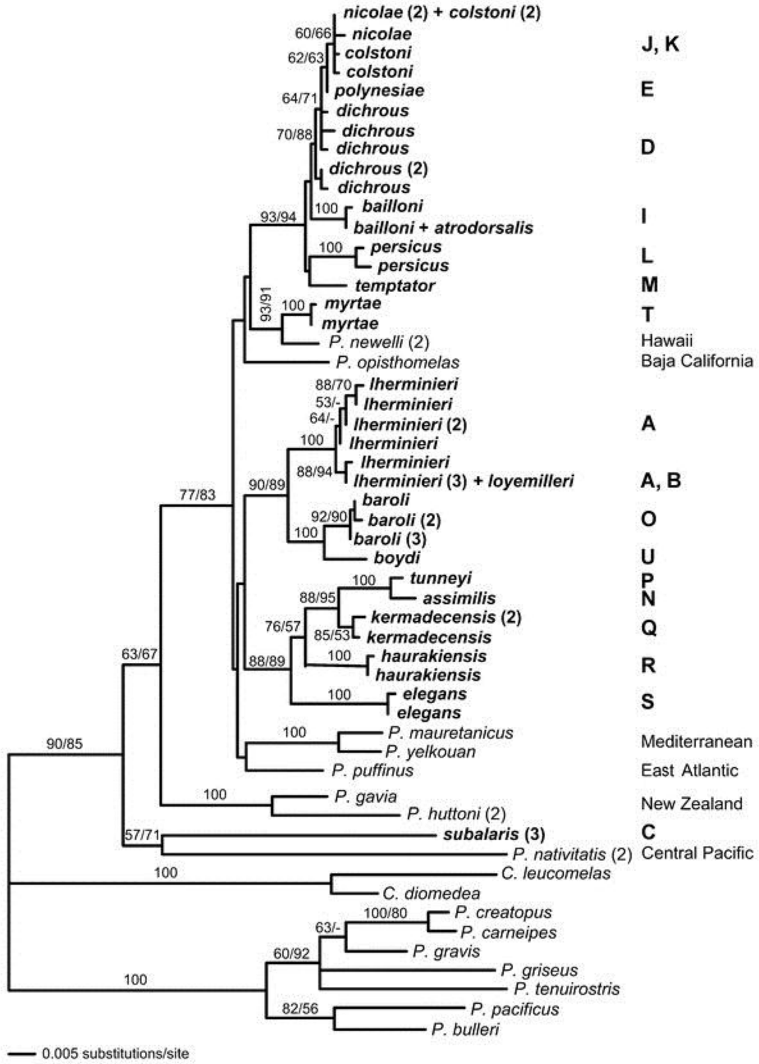


Fig. 2. Maximum-likelihood phylogenetic tree for *Puffinus* shearwaters based on 917 bp of mtDNA cytochrome-*b* gene sequence (-ln *L* = 4248.65). Numbers above and adjacent to branches are maximum-parsimony (MP) and neighbor-joining (NJ) bootstrap support values. Where only one value is given, MP and NJ support values were identical. Uppercase letters refer to breeding ranges shown in Figure 1. (From Austin *et al.* 2004)

**Recommendation:**

Virtually all other major sources (most of them online) have already adopted the treatment of considering *subalaris* a separate species, as Galapagos Shearwater *Puffinus subalaris*. See SACC proposal **http://www.museum.lsu.edu/~Remsen/SACCprop160.html**, which passed unanimously in 2005.

I recommend that we follow this proposed split to reflect the fact that *subalaris* is not a member of the *lherminieri* complex. We will defer revisiting species limits in core members of *lherminieri* and *assimilis* to a subsequent proposal, as this will further affect taxa in the Check-list area and our range statements. For now I am providing a draft-edited version of the *lherminieri* account and a new one for *subalaris*, assuming passage of this recommendation.

**Effect on AOU-CLC area:**

If approved, this will add a species to the Check-list area.

***Puffinus lherminieri*** Lesson. Audubon's Shearwater.

*Puffinus* [sic] *Lherminieri* Lesson, 1839, Rev. Zool. [Paris] 2: 102. (ad ripas Antillarum
= Straits of Florida.)

**Habitat**.—Pelagic Waters; nests in rock crevices or under dense vegetation on islands.

**Distribution**.—*Breeds* in the Caribbean and western Atlantic region on Crab Cay (off Isla Providencia~~ east of Nicaragua~~), on Tiger Rock and other nearby islets (off the Caribbean Coast of Bocas del Toro, Panama), on Los Hermanos and Islas Los Roques (off Venezuela), on Bermuda (formerly), in the Bahamas, near Puerto Rico (Mona Island, and Cayo del Agua, off Culebra), in the Virgin Islands, and widely in the Lesser Antilles (from St. Martin south to islets off Tobago); in the eastern Atlantic on the Cape Verde Islands; in the Indian Ocean (islands in the southern Persian Gulf south to the Mascarene, Seychelles, and Maldive groups); and in the Pacific Ocean from the Bonin and Volcano islands south to the Palau, Vanuatu, Samoa, Society, and Tuamotu~~, and Galapagos~~ islands.
*Ranges* at sea in the western Atlantic from Massachusetts (at least casually, sight reports coast of Costa Rica and Panama, and in the Gulf of Mexico west (casually) to Louisiana and Texas; in the tropical Indian Ocean north to the Persian Gulf, Arabian Sea, and India;~~ in the eastern Pacific along the Pacific coast of Mexico from Jalisco (sight report) south to northern South America in Colombia; ~~and in the tropical Pacific from the general breeding range south to Indonesia, New Guinea, and northern Australia.

Accidental in Ontario (Almonte) and England.

**Notes**.—*Puffinus lherminieri* and *P . assimilis* constitute a superspecies (Sibley and Monroe 1990); they are often treated as conspecific. *Puffinus subalaris*, formerly considered conspecific with *P. lherminieri*, is treated as a separate species (Austin et al. 2004).

***Puffinus subalaris*** Richmond. Galapagos Shearwater.

*Puffinus subalaris* Ridgway (“Townsend MS”), 1897, Proc. U.S.N.M. 19 (1116): 650.
(Dalrymple Rock, Chatham Id., Galapagos.)

**Habitat.**—Pelagic Waters; nests in rock crevices or under dense vegetation on islands.

**Distribution.**—*Breeds* in the Galapagos Islands (at least Santa Cruz, Española, Santa Cruz, Champion, and Wolf Islands).

*Ranges* at sea near shore, commonly north to the coast of Oaxaca, Mexico.

Accidental in Colombia (Chocó); sight reports from Mexico (Jalisco), mainland Ecuador, and Peru.

**Notes.**—See *P. lherminieri*.

***Puffinus creatopus*** Pink-footed Shearwater. (N)
***Puffinus carneipes*** Flesh-footed Shearwater. (N)
***Puffinus gravis*** Greater Shearwater. (N)
***Puffinus pacificus*** Wedge-tailed Shearwater.
***Puffinus bulleri*** Buller's Shearwater. (N)
***Puffinus griseus*** Sooty Shearwater. (N)
***Puffinus tenuirostris*** Short-tailed Shearwater. (N)
***Puffinus nativitatis*** Christmas Shearwater. (H)
***Puffinus subalaris*** Galapagos Shearwater. (N)
***Puffinus puffinus*** Manx Shearwater.
***Puffinus auricularis*** Townsend's Shearwater.
***Puffinus opisthomelas*** Black-vented Shearwater.
***Puffinus lherminieri*** Audubon's Shearwater.
***Puffinus assimilis*** Little Shearwater. (A)

**Literature cited:**

Austin, J.J., V. Bretagnolle, and E. Pasquet. 2004. A global molecular phylogeny of the small *Puffinus* shearwaters and implications for systematics of the Little-Audubon's Shearwater complex. Auk 121:847–864.

Bourne, W.R.P. 1986. Recent work on the origin and suppression of bird species in the Cape Verde Island, especially the shearwaters, the herons, the kites and the sparrows. Bull. B.O.C. 106:163–170.

Howell, S.N.G. and S. Webb. 1995. A guide to the birds of Mexico and northern Central America. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Ramirez, O., J.C. Illera, J.C. Rando, J. Gonzalez-Solis and J.A. Alcover, et al. 2010 Ancient DNA of the extinct Lava Shearwater (*Puffinus olsoni*) from the Canary Islands reveals incipient differentiation within the *P. puffinus* complex. PLoS ONE 5(12): e16072.

**Submitted by:**
Pamela C. Rasmussen, Michigan State University

**Proposal date:** 26 Feb 2012

## Recognize Bryan's Shearwater *Puffinus bryani*

### Description of the problem:

In February 1963, a small male shearwater (USNM 492974) was collected from a burrow within a Bonin Petrel colony on Midway Atoll. It was identified by Clapp and Woodward as a Little Shearwater *Puffinus assimilis*, probably primarily because of its very small size, smaller than any taxon of Audubon's Shearwater *P. lherminieri*. Recently Peter Pyle reexamined it to try to determine to which taxon of *assimilis* it pertains, but instead he found that it differs from any known taxon in plumage and soft part colors.

### New information:

Pyle et al. (2011) showed that USNM 492974 is closer in several respects to taxa of *lherminieri*, but even smaller than females of most taxa of *assimilis* (see Table 1 from their paper below), and, given that it is a male and that no females (which are smaller in this group of shearwaters) were available, that the taxon most likely averages even smaller than the sole specimen. The specimen has a unique combination of a longish tail and blackish undertail coverts and inner primary webs, typical of the *lherminieri* group, and white lores, auriculars and superciliary area and blue legs, typical of the *assimilis* group. It is a full adult, at least two years of age.

Pyle et al. (2011) obtained 1020 bp of mitochondrial cyt-b from the specimen, and ran a phylogenetic analysis of 36 shearwater taxa. Their analysis showed that USNM 492974 is genetically distinct, by at least 3.8% from *myrtae* of Rapa I. (Austral I., S Pacific), and more than 4% from all other sampled taxa. In their mtDNA trees, USNM 492974 and *myrtae* group mostly closely with two taxa not normally considered part of the *lherminieri/assimilis* complex—*newelli* and *opisthomelas*. USNM 492974 differs in a number of morphological respects from *myrtae* (to which it is most similar genetically), and is not genetically close nor particularly similar in plumage to *boydi*, the taxon it most resembles mensurally. Hence it was described as a mysterious, possibly extinct new species, Bryan's Shearwater *Puffinus bryani* (Pyle et al. 2011). These authors believed that it must have been a wandering individual, not an overlooked NW Hawaiian breeding bird, given the thorough work done there during the Pacific Seabird Project and subsequently. Pyle et al. (2011) also mentioned a record of a similar-looking bird that occupied a burrow in Midway in the winter of 1991–1992 (Pyle and Pyle 2009).

Shortly after the description of *P. bryani* appeared (when it made news worldwide), specimens previously collected (1997, 2005) from the Bonin (Ogasawara) Islands in Japan came to light, first tentatively (Chikara 2011) and then definitively (Horikoshi et al. 2012). These specimens (half of them rat-killed) have been salvaged from the Bonins, and, according to Horikoshi et al. (2012), have now been identified genetically as Bryan's (**http://www.pacificseabirdgroup.org/2012mtg/PSG2012.AbstractBook.pdf) .** The species presumably breeds in the Bonins but is very rare there. Birds thought to be this species have also been seen recently from the ferry between the Bonins and Tokyo. (Note that there is a much larger 'small' shearwater also regularly breeding on the Bonins, *P.* [*lherminieri*] *bannermani*, not relevant to this matter.)

Table 1. Measurements of small "black-and-white" shearwaters of the genus *Puffinus*.(From Pyle et al. 2011)

| **Taxon (*n*)** | **Culmen** | **Tarsus** | **Wing** | **Tail** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *puffinus* (64) | 34.8 (31–38) | 45.2 (43–49) | 236 (221–243) | 73.9 (68–79) |
| *newelli* (44) | 33.2 (30–36) | 45.7 (43–48) | 237 (223–250) | 84.2 (80–89) |
| *auricularis* (35) | 31.2 (29–35) | 45.0 (43–48) | 229 (220–238) | 75.4 (65–79) |
| *lherminieri* (105) | 29.5 (25–34) | 39.7 (35–44) | 206 (185–216) | 85.2 (74–94) |
| *bailloni* (114)g | 27.6 (23–30) | 38.5 (35–41) | 200 (188–212) | 79.8 (73–84) |
| *bannermani* (9) | 29.5 (28–31) | 41.3 (40–42) | 212.6 (206–219) | 77.5 (74–81) |
| *subalaris* (100) | 27.9 (24–30) | 36.6 (33–38) | 195 (187–205) | 73.0 (66–77) |
| *assimilis* (296) | 25.5 (22–29) | 37.7 (35–43) | 187 (175–197) | 67.1 (61–73) |
| *myrtae* (1) | 25 | 40 | 196 | 81 |
| *baroli* (60) | 25.4 (23–28) | 36.7 (35–39) | 180 (171–189) | 72.1 (63–82) |
| *boydi* (40) | 26.1 (23–29) | 37.3 (35–39) | 187 (178–193) | 77.0 (71–84) |
| Midway specimen | 25.2 | 34.7 | 174 | 71 |

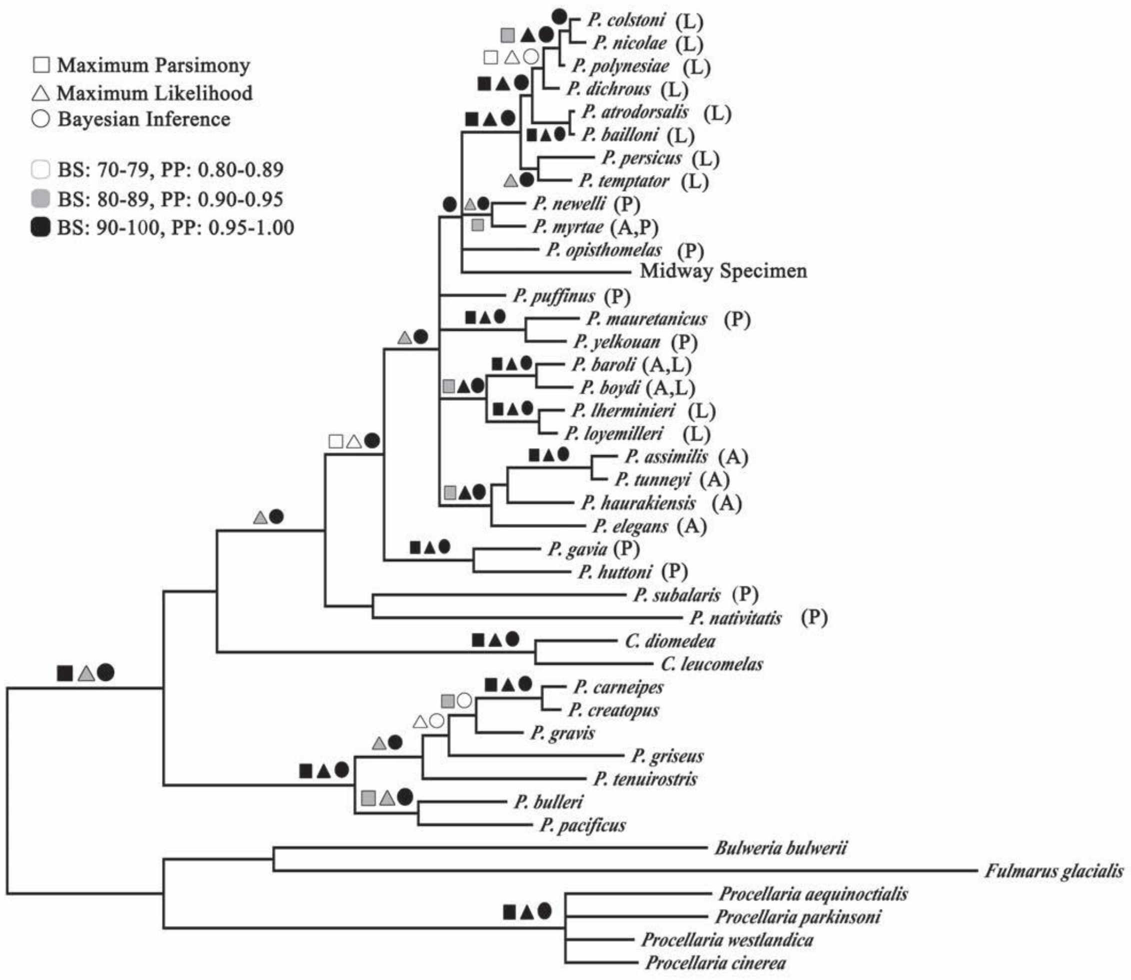


Figure 4. Bayesian 50% majority rule consensus tree for cytochrome *b* gene sequences from 36 shearwater taxa and 6 outgroups. Maximum likelihood and maximum parsimony analyses yielded the same topology as well. Letters in parentheses after taxon names indicate whether that taxon has previously been considered to belong to the traditional *puffinus* (P), *assimilis* (A), and/or *lherminieri* (L) groups. Support is indicated along branches and in the legend above: BS, bootstrap support for maximum parsimony and maximum likelihood; PP, posterior probability for Bayesian inference. See Table 3 for GenBank accession numbers. (From Pyle et al. 2011).

## Recommendation:

I recommend that we recognize *Puffinus bryani* as a new, distinct species. In anticipation of passage, I attach a new draft account, following the slightly modified one of *P. assimilis*.

## Effect on AOU-CLC area:

If approved, this will add a species to the Check-list area and will help validate its description. The two Hawaiian records of *P. assimilis* will have to be expunged as confirmed or probable *bryani*. Note that further taxonomic proposals concerning the *lherminieri-assimilis* assemblage will be forthcoming, but they marginally (if at all) affect the present proposal.

The account for *P. assimilis* would be modified and a new account for *P. bryani* would be added, as follows:

***Puffinus assimilis*** Gould. Little Shearwater.
*Puffinus assimilis* Gould, 1838, Synop. Birds Aust., pt. 4, app., p. 7. (New South Wales
= Norfolk Island.)
**Habitat**.—Pelagic Waters; nests in burrows or crevices on islands.
**Distribution**.—Breeds on islands in the eastern Atlantic (the Azores, Desertas, Salvage,
and Canary islands), southern Indian Ocean (St. Paul, formerly Amsterdam), and off Australia
and New Zealand (east to Lord Howe and Norfolk islands), and ranges at sea primarily in
southern oceans.
Casual or accidental in ~~the Hawaiian Islands,~~ Nova Scotia, South Carolina, and continental
Europe; sight reports for Puerto Rico and off North Carolina.
**Notes**.—Also known as Allied Shearwater. See comments under *P. lherminieri*.
Hawaiian records pertain to *P. bryani*.

***Puffinus bryani*** Pyle et al. (2011). Bryan's Shearwater.
*Puffinus bryani* Pyle et al., 2011, Condor 113:525. (Midway Island)
**Habitat**.—Pelagic Waters; nests in burrows on islands.
**Distribution**.—Probably breeds on Bonin (Ogasawara) Islands, Japan, and probably ranges at sea in the northern Pacific Ocean. Has been found in a burrow on Midway Island.
Accidental in the Hawaiian Islands.
**Notes**.— See comments under *P. lherminieri*.

## Literature cited:

Chikara. 2011. Little-known Asian bird: Possible records of the newly described Bryan's Shearwater *Puffinus bryani* in Japan. BirdingASIA 16: 86–88.

Pyle, R. L. and P. Pyle [online]. 2009. The birds of the Hawaiian Islands: occurrence, history, distribution, and status, version 1. B. P. Bishop Museum, Honolulu, HI. <http://hbs.bishopmuseum.org/birds/rlp-monograph> (31 December 2009).

Pyle, P., A.J. Welch and R. C. Fleischer. 2011. A new species of shearwater (Puffinus) recorded from Midway Atoll, northwestern Hawaiian Islands. Condor 113:518–527.

**Submitted by:**
Pamela C. Rasmussen, Michigan State University

**Proposal date:** 26 Feb 2012

# Split *Pseudobulweria* from *Pterodroma*

## Description of the problem:

The genus *Pseudobulweria* was established for the Fiji Petrel *Pseudobulweria macgillivrayi* by Mathews in 1936 (Jouanin and Mougin 1979). It received limited usage for many years, until Imber (1985) resurrected it and added to it *aterrima*, *rostrata* (including *becki*), and the extinct *rupinarum*. Even after that, however, several major sources have chosen not to recognize *Pseudobulweria*, treating all contained species within *Pterodroma*. And, even when treated as a separate genus, *Pseudobulweria* had always been assumed to be close to *Pterodroma* and not especially distinct.

## New information:

Bretagnolle et al. (1998; http://elibrary.unm.edu/sora/Auk/v115n01/p0188-p0195.pdf, OK so not so new!), on the basis of a phylogenetic analysis of 496 bp of mitochondrial cyt-*b* of 19 taxa, showed that *Pseudobulweria* is a member of a clade that includes *Calonectris* and *Puffinus*, not the larger clade that includes *Pterodroma, Macronectes, Fulmarus, and Pagodroma*. *Pseudobulweria rostrata* was included in the study, along with *Ps. aterrima*, and the two were sister groups in the tree (screenshot attached). Although the analysis (published in 1998) had relatively low taxon sampling and was based on a relatively small segment of a single gene, it seems hard to argue with the great divergence between *Pseudobulweria* and *Pterodroma* and the placement of the former with the *Puffinus* clade.

Unfortunately, no subsequent phylogeny that I am aware of has included *Pseudobulweria*. Penhallurick and Wink (2004), in a paper strongly criticized for methodological and interpretive problems by Rheindt and Austin (2005), gave taxonomic recommendations on the placement of *Pseudobulweria* without having actually included it in their matrix due to the short sequences deposited in GenBank. Their recommendations change nothing, in any case.

On the basis of a proposal submitted by Gerardo Obando Calderón (http://www.aou.org/committees/nacc/proposals/2010-C.pdf) we voted in 2010 to transfer *P. rostrata* from the Appendix to the main AOU list on the strength of photos taken off Costa Rica (Chesser et al. 2011). This proposal did not mention the transfer of *rostrata* into *Pseudobulweria*, so we voted on it as *Pterodroma rostrata* at that time, but we did include mention of this genus in the Notes (see below for suggested edited version of our 2011 account).

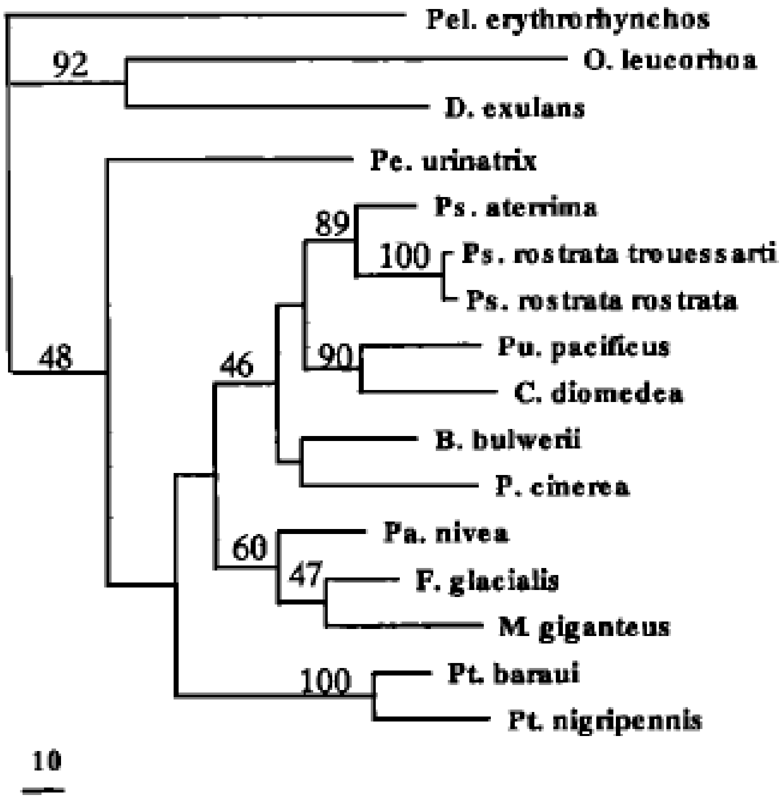


FIG. 3. Single most-parsimonious tree obtained using a TV:TS = 5:1 weighting scheme with bootstrap proportions (percentages) shown to the left of internal branches. The same topology was found with the 10:1 weighting scheme (see text for method and parameters). Bootstrap proportions are given

(From Bretagnolle et al. 1998)

**Recommendation:** I recommend that we make this change, which seems uncontroversial.

**Effect on AOU-CLC area:** This proposal would transfer one species, *Pterodroma rostrata*, into the genus *Pseudobulweria*, which would be a new genus for our region.

A new genus would be added to the checklist and the species account from Chesser et al. 2011 would be modified as follows:

***~~Pterodroma~~ Pseudobulweria rostrata*** (Peale). Tahiti Petrel.
*Procellaria rostrata* Peale, 1848, U.S. Explor. Exped. 8: 296.

(Mountains about 600 feet on Tahiti, Society Islands.)

**Habitat**.—Pelagic waters; nests in burrows or rock crevices on islands.

**Distribution**.—*Breeds* on New Caledonia and in the Society and Marquesas islands.

*Ranges* at sea in the tropical and subtropical Pacific, west to off the coasts of Australia and New Guinea and east as far as the eastern Pacific (e.g., off Peruvian coast).

Rare off the coast of Costa Rica (south and southwest of Nicoya Peninsula; Obando-Calderon et al. 2010). Sight reports near Clipperton and the Revillagigedo Islands. Sight reports from Hawaiian waters are inconclusive because of failure to distinguish this species from *P. alba* (Pyle 1988).

**Notes**.—~~Sometimes~~ Formerly included in the genus *Pterodroma*, but now known to be a member of *Pseudobulweria*, which appears to be distantly related to *Pterodroma* (Bretagnolle et al. 1998).

**Literature cited:**

Bretagnolle, V., C. Attié, and E. Pasquet. 1998. Cytochrome-*B* evidence for validity and phylogenetic relationships of *Pseudobulweria* and *Bulweria* (Procellariidae). Auk 115: 188–195.

Chesser, R.T., R.C. Banks, F.K. Barker, C. Cicero, J.L. Dunn, A.W. Kratter, I.J. Lovette, P.C. Rasmussen, J.V. Remsen, Jr., J.D. Rising, D.F. Stotz and K. Winker. 2011. Fifty-second Supplement to the American Ornithologists' Union Check-list of North American Birds**.** Auk 128: 600–613.

Imber, M. J. 1985. Origins, phylogeny and taxonomy of the gadfly petrels *Pterodroma* spp. Ibis 127: 197–229.

Jouanin, C. and J.-L. Mougin. 1979. Order Procellariiformes. Pp. 48-121 in: E. Mayr and G.W. Cottrell, eds. Check-list of birds of the world. Vol. 1, 2nd ed. Museum of Comparative Zoology, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Penhallurick, J. and M. Wink. 2004. Analysis of the taxonomy and nomenclature of the Procellariiformes based on complete nucleotide sequences of the mitochondrial cytochrome *b* gene. Emu 104: 125–147.

Rheindt, F. and J. A. Austin. 2005. Major analytical and conceptual shortcomings in a recent taxonomic revision of the Procellariiformes—a reply to Penhallurick and Wink (2004). Emu 105:181–186.

**Submitted by:**
Pamela C. Rasmussen, Michigan State University

**Proposal date:** 26 Feb 2012

# Elevate *indica* group of Hill Myna *Gracula religiosa* to species status

The current listing for the Hill Myna, *Gracula religiosa*, includes the group *indica*. Marshall Iliff has pointed out that most recent literature splits these into two species and suggested that we follow suit.

Rasmussen and Anderton (2005) separate the forms, with the commentary: “Several consistent morphological differences, and even more striking vocal differences, confirm the previously suggested treatment of this [*G. indica*] as a species distinct from *G. religiosa*.” Pam has stated (in litt. to Terry): “I am not aware of a peer-reviewed journal publication splitting *indica*, although I haven't searched exhaustively.”

The two forms are allopatric. They are recognized as distinct by HBW 14, by Gill and Wright (2006, for IOC) but not by Dickinson (2003), although he mentions the possibility.

This extralimital species is on our list only because of its establishment (which should be verified) in Puerto Rico. We generally follow regional authorities on extralimital English names. Therefore, I suggest that we follow Pam (and Anderton), as an authority on India, and recognize *G. religiosa* without *indica*. This involves a minor re-writing of the account (p. 524) to remove the words “*religiosa* group” and all mention of the *indica* group from the text. The last sentence of the Notes should be replaced with something like: “Formerly included *G. indica* (Cuvier, 1829) [Southern Hill Myna], now recognized as distinct on the basis of morphological and vocal differences (Rasmussen and Anderton 2005).”

A corollary to this is the necessity for a change in English name. Common Hill Myna is generally used for *religiosa* (*indica* is of restricted range), and I propose that we follow. As this is an extralimital, I won’t even bother to bring up the matter of a hyphen.

**Literature cited:**

Rasmussen, P. C., and J. C. Anderton. 2005. Birds of South Asia The Ripley Guide, vol. 2.
Dickinson, E. C. 2003 The Howard and Moore list, 3rd ed.
Gill, F., and M. Wright 2006. IOC list of bird names.

**Submitted by:**
Richard C. Banks

**Proposal date:** 1 Mar 2012

# Move *Pipra coronata* to the genus *Lepidothrix*

## Description of the problem:

The phylogeny of the manakins has been investigated substantially over the last 20 years or so, and the arrangement we follow does not correspond to the results of either morphological or molecular studies done on the family. I am working on a proposal for a more significant rearrangement for taxa in the family for SACC and will produce one for this committee after SACC decides how to go forward. Because North America has a relatively small subset of the family, it seems to make sense to have SACC consider the broader issues first. However, even with that, there is one piece (recognizing *Lepidothrix* for the *Pipra serena* complex including *coronata,* which occur in Central America north to Costa Rica) that I think we can deal with before we consider the larger changes that may be in order for this family.

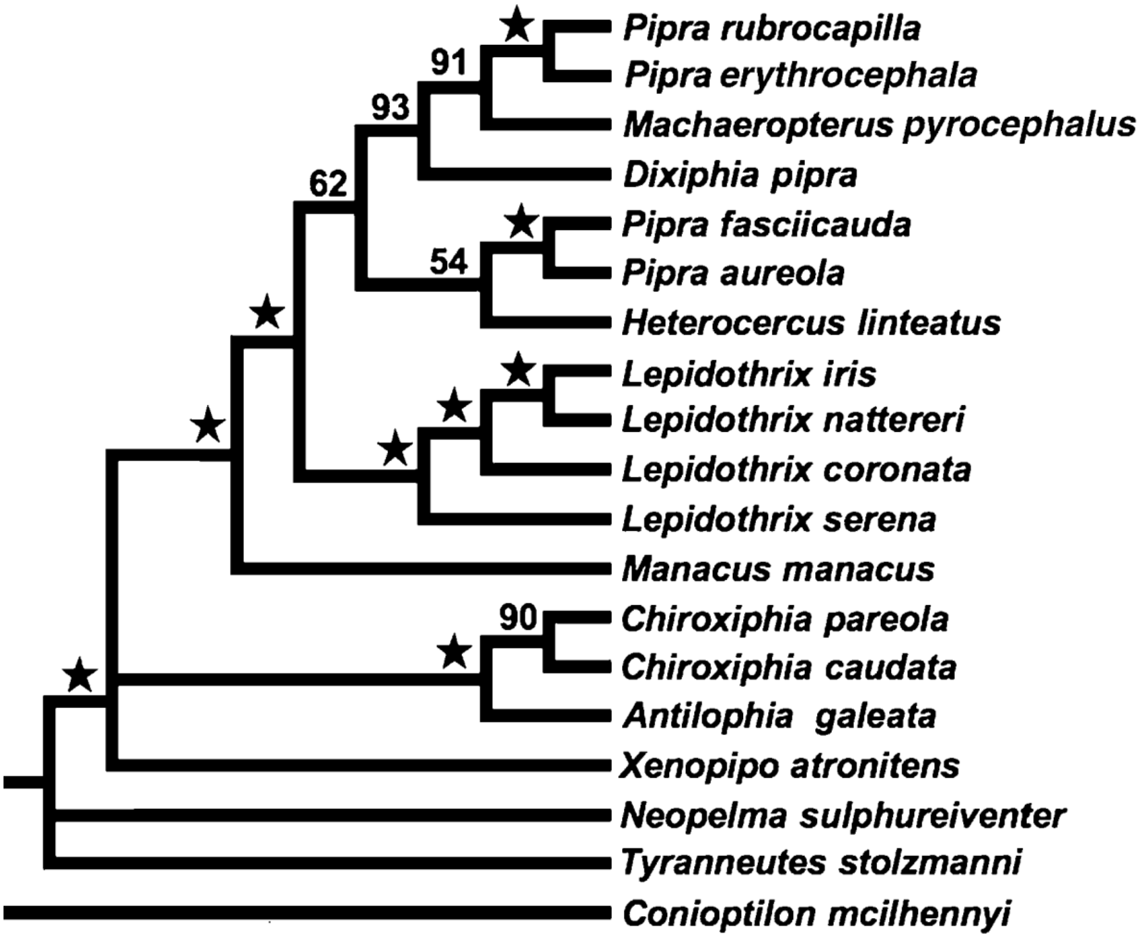
Based on syringeal morphology, Prum (1992) concluded that the large manakin genus *Pipra* was polyphyletic and split the small manakins of the *serena* group out into the genus *Lepidothrix*, and recognized *Dixiphia* for the White-crowned Manakin, *P. pipra.* The recognition of *Lepidothrix* has been accepted by nearly all subsequent authors, except for us (and those who follow us). This treatment is mentioned in the notes of *Pipra coronata* in the 7th edition (AOU 1998), but the issue has not been revisited at least since I have been on the committee. The recognition of *Dixiphia* has not been universally accepted and recent molecular work suggests that the issues with *Pipra pipra* are more complex.

## New information:

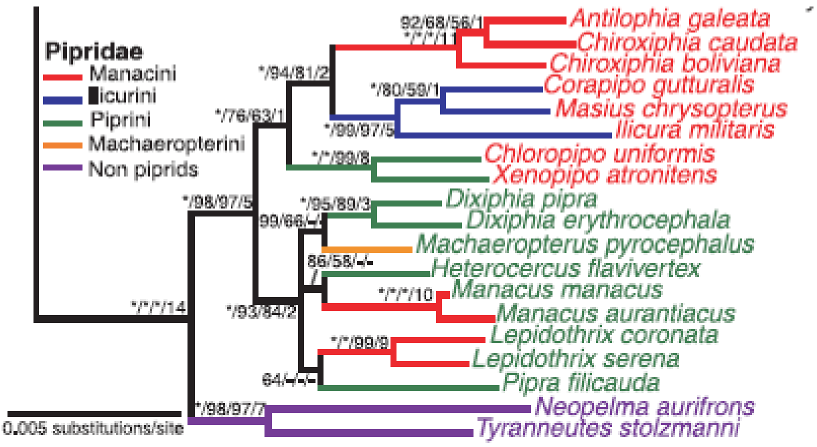
Since 2007, three studies using DNA sequences have provided data and analysis that bears on this issue. Rego et al (2007) used mitochondrial cytochrome-b and rRNA 16S to examine relationships within the Pipridae. They sampled 18 species representing 13 genera and including 4 species of *Lepidothrix*. McKay et al (2010) used two mitochondrial genes (ND2 and COl) and a nuclear intron (Musk intron 3) to look at Pipridae, sampling 14 species representing 13 or 14 (depending on treatment of *Pipra pipra*) genera. Tello et al (2009) used two nuclear genes (RAG-1 and RAG-2) to look at the broader radiation (Tyrannides) from Tyrannidae though Cotingidae to Pipridae. They sampled 19 manakin species including representatives of all of the relevant genera.

The relevant portions of the trees from these molecular studies are reproduced below. One thing you will note is that the taxon sampling is not close to complete in any of these studies, but that there is a fair amount of complementarity among the taxa used in the studies. There are a number of things going on, and certainly not complete agreement among the studies. All three studies identify a clade of what I would call classic manakins (plus the weird *Heterocercus*), including the genera *Pipra, “Dixiphia,” Heterocercus, Manacus, Lepidothrix* and *Machaeropterus*. There is disagreement on the relationships among these genera, but the key point for this proposal is the position of *Lepidothrix.* Tello et al and Rego et al both find support for *Lepidothrix* as a monophyletic unit (although not all taxa have been surveyed). Tello et al (2009) has *Lepidothrix* sister to the *Pipra aureola* species group, but with very little statistical support for that placement. Rego et al (2007) has *Lepidothrix* basal to the rest of the classic manakins, but the numbers for this placement are not strong. McKay et al (2010) also has *Lepidothrix* basal to this group, but again with weak support. They lack a representative of the *Pipra aureola* species group, which the other studies found to be distant from the other “true” *Pipra*. These further issues of manakin taxonomy will be considered in a later proposal.

Rego et al (2007) tree:



Tree from Tello et al (2009):



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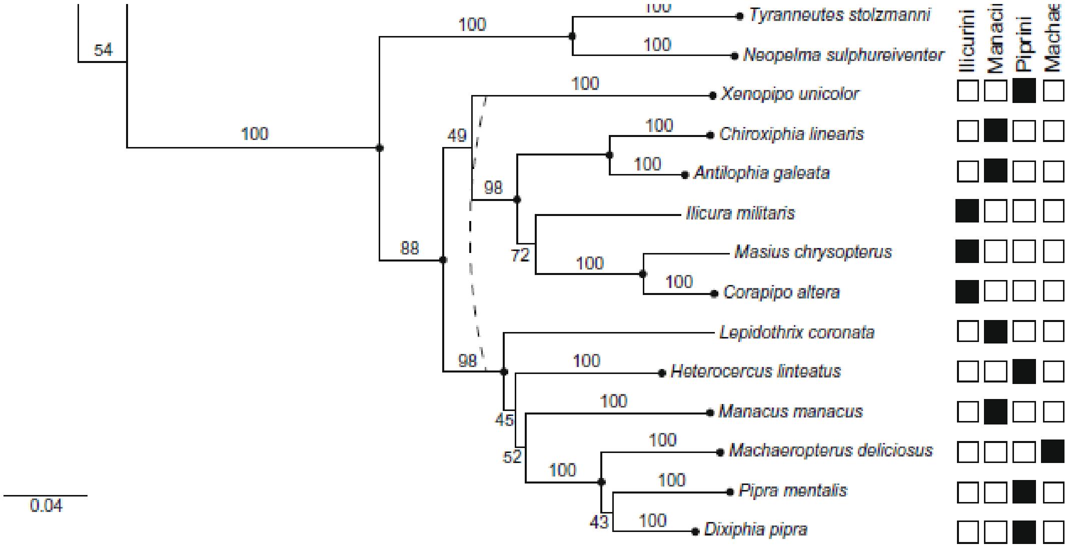
Tree from McKay et al (2010):



**Recommendation:**

I recommend a YES vote on this proposal. The exact position of *Lepidothrix* within the Piprid radiation is not completely clear, but it would seem that to maintain it as a *Pipra*, we'd have to expand the definition of *Pipra* to include all of the taxa currently placed in *Pipra, Heterocercus, Manacus,* and *Machaeropterus* as well. I think this would mean we would lose substantial information about relationships, ecology, morphology and displays that are contained within the relatively narrow species limits we now use. So our shifting to the treatment followed by essentially all other authorities appears to me to be the best choice.

As an aside, Paclt (2009) created a new generic name *Neolepidothrix* to replace *Lepidothrix* Bonaparte 1854 for the manakins, as he considered it a junior homonym to *Lepidothrix* Menge 1854, a name for a silverfish (Thysanura). Zuccon (2011) pretty convincingly showed that the correct name for the silverfish was *Lepidotrix*, so these are not homonyms, and *Lepidothrix* remains available for the manakins.

**Literature cited:**

AOU. 1998. The Checklist of North American Birds, 7th ed. American Ornithologists' Union, Washington, DC.

McKay, B. D., F. K. Barker, H. L. Mays, Jr., S. M. Doucet, and G. E. Hill. 2010. A molecular phylogenetic hypothesis for the manakins (Aves: Pipridae). Molecular Phylogenetics and Evolution 55:733-737.

Paclt, J. 2009. *Neolepidothrix*, a replacement name for *Lepidothrix* Bonaparte (Aves, Pipridae), nec Menge (Insecta, Lepidotrichidae). Zoosystematics and Evolution 85: 161-382.

Prum, R. O. 1992. Syringeal morphology, phylogeny, and evolution of the Neotropical manakins (Aves: Pipridae) American Museum Novitates 3043.

Rego, P. S., J. Araripe, M. L. V. Marceliano, I. Sampaio, and H. Schneider. 2007. Phylogenetic analyses of the genera *Pipra*, *Lepidothrix* and *Dixiphia* (Pipridae, Passeriformes) using partial cytochrome b and 16S mtDNA genes. Zoologica Scripta 2007:1-11.

Tello, J. G., R. G. Moyle, D. J. Marchese, and J. Cracraft. 2009. Phylogeny and phylogenetic classification of tyrant-flycatchers, cotingas, manakins and their allies (Aves: Tyrannidaes). Cladistics 25:429-465.

Zuccon, D. 2011. The case of *Lepidothrix*, *Lepidotrix* and *Neolepidothrix*: the importance of the original literature in taxonomic decisions. Zoosystematics and Evolution 87: 379-382.

**Submitted by:**
Douglas F. Stotz

**Proposal date:** 2 Mar 2012

## Correct several minor errors/typos in the Check-list

I have run across an old (1992) paper by David K. Wetherbee that lists a number of minor errors, mostly apparently typos, in citations in the 6th (1983) edition of the Check-list. These persist in the 7th (1998) edition and should be corrected. Some of these involve expansion of citations to Edwards as used by Linnaeus, probably by Charles W. Richmond, for the 4th (1931) edition of the Check-list. Linnaeus was not consistent in the way he cited Edwards' several volumes on "Natural History of . . . Birds" and Gleanings . . . ." I had the opportunity to examine some of Edwards' volumes in the SI Library that Richmond had used and marked.

I recommend the following changes:

p. 6. *Podilymbus podiceps*—Linnaeus cites vol. 1 of Catesby; we omit volume number. We should insert to follow Linnaeus.

p. 79. *Melanitta perspicillata*—Our citation gives vol. 2 of Edwards. Linnaeus (p. 125) cites no vol., just page and plate, as does AOU 5. Hellmayr and Conover (1948) include vol. number as 3. We should delete vol. number to follow Linnaeus exactly. I did not have a chance to verify volume number.

p. 288. *Anthracothorax mango*—Our citation gives vol. 2 and fig. 1 of Albin. Linnaeus (p. 121) gives vol. 3, fig. 2. We should change. Page and plate numbers are correct.

p. 554. *Seiurus aurocapilla*—Our citation gives vol. 5 of Edwards' Gleanings, as does AOU 5, AOU 4, Ridgway 1902. DKW says should be vol. 1. Linnaeus 12 (p. 334) gives no volume no., just the page, and does not cite "Gleanings", just "av". The fifth volume of Edwards' "av" was the first of the "Gleanings." We should change the 5 to 1. (Compare our citation for *Dendroica* (now *Setophaga*) *petechia*, the next species listed in Linnaeus and only a few pages later in Edwards. I have verified these.)

p. 650. *Icterus spurius*—Citation gives page and plate of Catesby as 48. Should be 49 (fide Ridgway 1902, Hellmayr 1937, Peters 1968, AOU 5). Need to change obvious typo.

**Literature cited:**

Wetherbee, D. K. 1992. An outline of 18th century, North American ornithology; with a critique of its coverage by the A. O. U. check-list. Published by the author, Shelburne, Massachusetts.

**Submitted by:**
Richard C. Banks,

**Proposal date:** 10 Mar 2012

## Modify the species-level taxonomy of the Savannah Sparrow

This is a resubmission of a proposal I put forward in 2008. Now everything that is known, to my knowledge, is published, and I do not expect more in our lifetimes. I'll be up front. I don't like the current 1-species taxonomy and would like to see something different in the next Check-list. I know that there are supplements, but I would like the new hard cover Check-list (a book) to be as up-to-date as possible. It will probably be the last one that most of us will know. This is a slightly altered proposal, to a new committee.

### Description of the problem:

The Savannah Sparrow was first named by Gmelin in 1789, from the Sandwich Bunting of Latham, based on material from Sandwich Bay, Unalaska Is., Alaska. Wilson later described the Savanna Bunting (sparrow) from Savannah, Georgia. These have long been synonymized – as they clearly should be. Lawrence described *Passerculus guttatus* from Lower California in 1867, and later Ridgway described *Passerculus beldingi* from San Diego, California, in 1885. In recent lists, *guttatus* and *beldingi* have generally been considered a subspecies (or subspecies group) of *Passerculus sandwichensis,* e.g. *P. s. guttatus* Lawrence 1867. *Emberiza rostrata* (= *P. rostratus*) was described by Cassin in December 1852, from coastal southern California (San Diego [a wintering bird, probably representing the population breeding along the Gulf Coast of Sonora.]) These, again, have generally been placed in *P. sandwichensis* as *P. s. rostratus. P. sanctorum* was described by Ridgway in 1883, with the type locality of San Benito [islands] off the coast of Baja California [now the state of Baja California]. These have been (universally?) treated as a subspecies of Savannah Sparrow, *P. s. sanctorum*; to my knowledge *P. s. sanctorum* has never been recorded from any place other than Islas San Benito, BC. It is large billed and, hence, many authors, as did Ridgway, have considered it a subspecies of *P. rostratus*; if not distinct, at least it seemingly is a close relative. Bill size seems an evolutionarily labile feature, and I don't place a lot of value in the evolutionary significance of bill size differences, and hence differences that would be helpful in unraveling relationships.

### New Information:

Zink et al. (1991) examined mtDNA of *P. s. rostratus* and representatives of typical Savannah Sparrows, and found that they differed "considerably" from "typical" Savannah Sparrows. In a much more extensive molecular survey (based on material from Sable Island, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, Ontario, Alaska, Washington, and from along the Pacific Coast, from San Francisco Bay area south to Bahia Magdalena, B.C.S. – the southern extreme of its range), Zink et al. (2005) identified three distinct molecular clades of Savannah Sparrows, let's call them A, B, and C. The separation between A and B-C is clear, and B & C are clearly separated higher on the tree.

Clade C contains all specimens of saltmarsh Savannah Sparrows, *P. s. beldingi* (*s.l.*), and ***nothing but these.*** Specimens from other collection sites are scattered between clades A & B (i.e., an "A" and a "B" could have been collected in the same field in Ontario – indeed could well have been mated to each other).

Rising (2001) studied size and shape variation among 55 populations of Savannah Sparrows. Variation among populations of "typical" Savannah Sparrows was found to be clinal, with the exception of the birds from Sable Island, Nova Scotia, which are also distinctly paler in coloration than other Savannah Sparrows (Rising et al., 2009). Color variation among other "typical" Savannah Sparrows is clinal (Rising et al., 2009).

Phenotypically, the saltmarsh sparrows are separate from "typical" ones, and within the saltmarsh group, the large, large-billed individuals that breed along the coast of Sinaloa and Sonora are easily separable from the saltmarsh birds from coastal southern California and Baja California. The songs of these birds are said to be different as well, but this has not been carefully studied (although apparent to those who have heard them; sonographs that I have taken show them to be "higher."). The songs of other saltmarsh sparrows from Santa Barbara to El Rosario, Baja California, have been carefully studied (Bradley 1977).

Phenotypically, *P. s. beldingi, s.l.* are distinct (Rising, 2001, Rising et al. 2009), but there is clinal variation among them. In terms of size and shape, there is a clinal increase in bill size and body size from Morro Bay and San Diego south to Bahia Magdalena. In coloration, birds from the northern part of the range, *P. s. beldingi,* have dark streaking, distinct lemon yellow supercilia, and a distinct, buffy median crown stripe. Phenotypically, there is a distinct separation between coastal birds from northern California (Humboldt County) and Morro Bay (San Luis Obispo County) and another, less pronounced step between Morro Bay and San Diego. Rising did not examine specimens from Santa Barbara, but they appear by casual inspection of birds in the field and museum specimens to be very similar to San Diego birds.

Savannah Sparrows from the Islas San Benito, off the west coast of Baja California (*P. s. sanctorum*) are phenotypically distinct (Rising 2001; Rising et al. 2009). They are, as well, ecologically distinct, living and presumably breeding in xeric shrub habitat (there are no saltmarshes on the islands, so far as I know—certainly none where I found the birds). And their breeding season does not seem to overlap that of Savannah Sparrows from the nearest mainland site (Guerrero Negro, BC).

**Recommendation:**

I recommend that we recognize these four as different species: (1) *Passerculus sandwichensis,* Savannah Sparrow, (2) *P. guttatus*, Belding's Sparrow, (3) *P. rostratus*, Large-billed Sparrow, and (4) *P. sanctorum*, San Benito Sparrow.

Voting options:

1. Change current taxonomy; recognize at least 2 different species.
2. Do not change.

If 1, the following options:

1a. Split into 4 species,

1b. Recognize 2 species, Savannah Sparrow (*sandwichensis*) and Belding's Sparrow (*guttatus*, including *rostratus* and *sanctorum*).

1c. Recognize 2 species, Savannah Sparrow (*sandwichensis*, including *guttatus* and *sanctorum*) and Large-billed Sparrow (*rostratus*).

1d. Recognize 3 species, Savannah Sparrow (*sandwichensis*), Large-billed Sparrow (*rostratus)*, and Belding's (*guttatus*, including *sanctorum*).

1e. As above in d, but put *sanctorum* with *rostratus.*

I think that 1a best reflects the data, and doubtless delimits good biological species – and perhaps also phylogenetic species.

**Effect on AOU-CL:**

If adopted, this proposal would split *Passerculus sandwichensis* into 2 or more species, viz.: *P. sandwichensis, P. guttatus* (Belding's Sparrow), *P. sanctorum* (San Benito Sparrow), and *P. rostratus* (Large-billed Sparrow).

***Passerculus sandwichensis*** (Gmelin). Savannah Sparrow

*Emberiza sandwichensis* Gmelin, 1789, Syst. Nat. 1(2):875. Based on the "Sandwich Bunting" Latham, Gen. Synop. Birds 2(1):202. (In Unalaschea et sinu Sandwich = Unalaska).

**Habitat.—**Open areas, especially grasslands, tundra, meadows, bogs, farmlands, grassy areas with scattered bushes, and marshes, (Subtropical and Temperate Zones).

**Distribution.—***Breeds* from western and northern Alaska, northern Mackenzie, southern Nunavut (sw Baffin Island), and Newfoundland south to southwestern Alaska (including Middleton Island, Nunivak Island, and the Aleutians west to Amuka), coastal regions of west-central California (Monterey region), interior of east-central California (locally to San Bernardino County), southern Nevada, southern Utah, east-central Arizona, northern New Mexico, central Colorado, central Nebraska, Iowa, central Missouri (irregularly or formerly), northwestern Arkansas (irregularly or formerly), eastern Kentucky, eastern Tennessee, western Virginia, central Maryland, western North Carolina, and northern Georgia, southeastern Pennsylvania, and northern New Jersey, and locally in the interior highlands of Mexico, from Chihuahua, Coahuila, and Nuevo León south to Puebla, Guerrero, Oaxaca, and perhaps southwestern Guatemala.

*Winters* from southwestern British Columbia, southern Nevada, southwestern Utah, northern Arizona, central New Mexico, southern Kansas, Missouri, Tennessee, southern Kentucky, and, east of the Appalachians, from Massachusetts, (casually north to Alaska), and northern United States, southern Ontario (rare), and Nova Scotia south to southern Baja California (including most adjacent islands, but not the Islas San Benito), throughout most of Mexico (including the Yucatán Peninsula) to Guatemala, El Salvador, northern Honduras, and to the southern Gulf Coast of Texas, southern Florida, Bermuda, and the Bahama Islands (south to Rum Cay), Cuba, the Isle of Pines, and Cayman and Swan Islands.

*Resident* or partly resident in coastal and northern California.

***Passerculus guttatus*** Lawrence. Belding's Sparrow.

*Passerculus guttatus* Lawrence, 1867, Ann. Pyc. Nat. Hist. New York, 8, p. 473. (Lower California, San José [del Cabo].)

**Habitat.—**Open saltmarshes with *Salicornia* (pickleweed), *Allenrolfea, Sueda* (sea blight), *Frankenia grandifolia* (alkali heath), *Batis*, *Atriplex*, *Triglochin*, and *Laguncularia* (white mangrove) in lagoons, bays, and estuaries.

**Distribution.—***Breeds* from coastal southwestern California and northwestern Baja California south to Laguna Magdalena Bay, Baja California Sur and Santa Margarita Island.

*Winters* south to southern Baja California Sur (Cabo San Lucas).

***Passerculus rostratus*** (Cassin). Large-billed Sparrow [Large-billed Savannah Sparrow].

*Emberiza rostratus* Cassin, 1852, Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Philadelphia, 6, p. 184. (sea shore at San Diego, California.)

**Subspecies and Distribution**

*P. r. rostratus* (Cassin), 1852 – Breeds NE Baja California (Delta of the Colorado River, San Felipe) and NW Sonora (mouth of the Colorado River, S to Isla Patos); non-breeding north to Salton Sea, Santa Cruz, and Channel Islands, California, and on the Pacific Shore of Baja California south to Cabo San Lucas. Apparently wander south in post-breeding season, and north into the Salton Sea, California, and coastal southern California.

*P. r. atratus* van Rossem, 1930 – breeds E coast of Sonora (Bahia Tepopa, Bahia Kino; Guaymas) S to C Sinaloa (El Molino); non-breeding individuals perhaps wander to S Baja California Sur.

**Habitat—**Open saltmarshes with *Salicornia* (pickleweed), *Allenrolfea*, *Sueda* (sea blight), *Frankenia grandifolia* (alkali heath), *Batis*, *Atriplex*, and *Triglochin*.

***Passerculus sanctorum*** Ridgway. San Benito Sparrow.

*Passerculus sanctorum* Ridgway, 1883, Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus. 5. (island of San Benito, Pacific coast of Lower California.)

**Distribution.—**San Benito Islands, Baja California.

**Habitat.—**Coastal xeric scrub (“frutilla”); not found in saltmarshes (?).

**Notes.—**Generally considered a part of the *rostratus* complex of Savannah Sparrows.

**Literature cited:**

Bradley, R. A. 1977. *Bull. Florida State Mus. Biol. Sci.,* 22:57-99.
Rising, J. D. 2001. *Studies in Avian Biology* 23:1-65.
Rising, J. D. 2007. *Ornithol. Monogr*. 63:45-54.
Rising, J. D. 2010. *Birding*. 44-55.

Rising, J. D. & Beadle, D. 1996. Academic Press, London, United Kingdom.
Rising, J. D., Jackson, D. A., & Fokidis, H. B. 2009. *Wilson J. Ornithol.* **121**:253-264.
Zink, R. M., Rising, J. D., Mockford, S., Horn, A., Wright, J. M., & Westberg, M. C. 2005. *Condor* **107**:21-28.

**Submitted by:**
Jim Rising

**Proposal date:** 14 Mar 2012

## Elevate *Synthliboramphus hypoleucus scrippsi* and *S. h. hypoleucus* to species

### Description of the problem:

The current AOU Check-list (AOU 1998:213) noted that there is some evidence that the northern subspecies of Xantus's Murrelet *S. hypoleucus scrippsi* (hereafter *scrippsi*) and the southern subspecies *S. h. hypoleucus* (hereafter *hypoleucus*) both apparently breed in the San Benito Islands and on Santa Barbara Island, with limited hybridization. The Check-list cited Jehl and Bond (1975) who stated that the limited data suggest that interbreeding is not random. Morphological differences between *scrippsi* and *hypoleucus*, especially facial pattern and bill shape, were suggested by Jehl and Bond (1975) as characters for species recognition. Certainly facial pattern is a good field diagnostic character (see almost any field guide).

### New information:

Both *scrippsi* and *hypoleucus* are sympatric on West Island of the San Benito Islands, where the two taxa are also sympatric with *S. craveri* according the surveys reported by Keitt (2005; see also Jehl and Bond 1975).

Birt et al. (2012) published a thorough analysis of mitochondrial control region sequences (for 505 individuals) and 12 microsatellite loci (for 428 individuals) representing *hypoleucus* and *scrippsi* collected from after hatch-year birds at 13 breeding sites. They found gene flow between the two taxa to be essentially zero. The authors also reported no evidence of admixture between the two taxa. The taxa *hypoleucus* and *scrippsi* are reciprocally monophyletic on the gene tree and revealed strong phylogeographic structure (Birt et al. 2012).

Based on the genetic results, including genetic distance, morphological differences between the two taxa, sympatry, and lack of evidence of interbreeding, Birt et al. (2012) recommended *hypoleucus* and *scrippsi* be recognized as separate species.

Furthermore, vocalizations of *hypoleucus* and *scrippsi* differ (e.g., Sibley 2004, Dunn and Alderfer 2011, Birt 2012 and references therein). Although yet to be quantified, the lack of quantification of the differences in vocalization does not negate recognizing *hypoleucus* and *scrippsi* as separate species since the two taxa are genetically and morphologically different and are sympatric in the San Benito Islands. As discussed by Birt et al. (2012), both taxa are highly mobile and able to move into breeding and wintering grounds of the other taxon. Additionally, the authors (Birt et al. 2012 and references therein) note that *hypoleucus* breeds 1-2 months earlier than *scrippsi* and that *hypoleucus* probably forages further offshore than does *scrippsi*.

**Recommendation:**

Because the taxa *hypoleucus* and *scrippsi* differ genetically, morphologically and vocally, are sympatric, and probably differ in foraging modes, *hypoleucus* and *scrippsi* should be separate species known as *Synthliboramphus hypoleucus* and *S*. *scrippsi*. I recommend *S*. *hypoleucus* retain the English name Xantus's Murrelet and recommend *S*. *scrippsi* have the English name Scripps's Murrelet.

This will add an additional species to the AOU Check-list. The breeding distribution of the two species should include some changes based on information in Birt et al. (2012):

*S*. *scrippsi*.—Breeds on islands of southern California as in AOU (1998: 213) south to Baja California to San Benito Islands, including San Miguel, Santa Cruz, Anacapa, Santa Barbara, Santa Catalina, and San Clemente islands in California, and Coronado and San Jerónimo islands in Baja California. Breeding on San Martín and Cedros islands, Baja California, uncertain.

*S*. *hypoleucus*.—Breeds on offshore rocks and islands of Baja California including Guadalupe Island south to San Benito Islands. Breeding on San Martín and San Clemente islands uncertain. Unconfirmed breeding on Santa Barbara Island, California.

**Literature Cited:**

American Ornithologists' Union. 1998. Check-list of North American Birds. Seventh ed. American Ornithologists' Union, Washington, D.C.

Birt, T.P, H.R. Carter, D.L. Whitworth, A. McDonald, S.H. Newman, F. Fress, E. Palacios, J.S. Koepke, and V.L. Friesen. 2012. Rangewide population genetic structure of Xantus's Murrelet (*Synthliboramphus hypoleucus*). Auk 129:44-44.

Dunn, J., and J. Alderfer. 2011. National Geographic Field Guide to the birds of North America. Sixth ed., National Geog., Washington, D.C.

Jehl, J.R., and S.I. Bond. 1975. Morphological variation and species limits in murrelets in the genus *Endomychura*. Trans. San Diego Soc. Nat. Hist. 18:9-24.

Keitt, B.S. 2005. Status of Xantus's Murrelet and its nesting habitat in Baja California, Mexico. Marine Ornithol. 33:105-114.

Sibley, D.A.  2004.  The Sibley field guide to birds of western North America.
Alfred A. Knopf, New York.

**Submitted by:**
M. Ralph Browning (ret. National Biological Survey at Division of Birds, Smithsonian)

**Proposal date:** 16 Mar 2012

## Change English name of *Columbina inca* from Inca Dove to Aztec Dove

I'm serious. At least I want us to think about this one.

As you know, I'm strongly opposed to meddling with English names, and I regard stability as paramount. And as far as I know, this species has been called "Inca Dove" forever. But in this case, it's not just a bad name, but also a completely misleading, nonsensical, embarrassing name that should not be perpetuated – I think it reflects badly on us as a committee. In fact, I wonder how the planet manages to continue to rotate on its axis.

"Inca" Dove is in my opinion the most misleading English name in North American birds. We've all gotten used to it, but this bird has absolutely nothing to do with the Incas, who were endemic to the Andes of South America. Choate (1973; Dictionary of American Bird Names) concluded that "Inca" was a lapsus:

> *"The common name of the bird reflects the scientific name given it by Larson* [sic]*. It appears he confused the land of the Aztecs with the land of the Incas in Peru."*

I'm not sure if Choate had any grounds for this, but I confess that I see no other explanation for the name other than an outright mistake. The species is indeed common in the land of the Aztecs (their range heavily overlaps that of "Inca" Dove), and given how it thrives in agricultural areas, it might even have been common in their gardens. The complex markings on the back could even be construed as vaguely resembling the geometric patterns of some Aztec art motifs [am I artsy or WHAT!]. Regardless, I agree with Choate – "Larson" (= Lesson) presumably confused the two groups and actually meant Aztecs. I cannot think of any better name than Aztec Dove, and it also continues Lesson's intended theme in naming the bird for a major cultural group. We can't fix the scientific name, but we can stop blindly perpetuating a meaningless and misleading name as if we did not realize how dumb it is. Its perpetuation only confirms to Latin Americans how ignorant most Americans are of anything beyond our borders.

How does this differ from some of the other misleading names we live with, such as Hairy Woodpecker, Mountain Plover, Evening Grosbeak, etc? At least in these one could make a weak case that some feathers on the woodpecker are hair-like in appearance, that some mountains are usually visible in the distance in the plover's habitat, and that some of the grosbeak's activity involves the evening (?). But as for the dove, no such stretch is possible – Lesson just blew it. If any argument could be made that "Inca" Dove vaguely looks like, sounds like, or is associated in any way with the Incas, then I'd be opposed to changing it, but as far as I can tell, this is not the case. The only comparable example I can think of is our non-pelagic "Pelagic" Cormorant, but even that one might be closer to

“Mountain” Plover in that at least the pelagic zone is likely visible from Pelagic Cormorant habitat.

**Submittedl by:**
Van Remsen,

**Proposall date:** 16 Mar 2012

# Transfer the three North American species of *Carpodacus (cassinii, mexicanus, purpureus)* to the genus *Haemorhous*

## Description of the problem:

The genus *Carpodacus* was created in 1829; the type species is *C. roseus.* The North American species of *Carpodacus* are *C. purpureus* (Purple Finch), *C. cassinii* (Cassin's Finch), and *C. mexicanus* (House Finch). They have generally been considered congeneric with the Eurasian rosefinches, although Ridgway separated the New World birds in 1887 before re-merging them in 1901.

A proposal to remove the North American species from *Carpodacus* was rejected in 2007, at least in part because only 2 of the 3 North American species were included in the study on which the proposal was based. In that study, Arnaiz-Villena et al. (2007) sequenced 924 base pairs of mt cyt-b and found that *Carpodacus* was polyphyletic, with the Old World taxa clearly separated from the North American ones (*cassinii* and *mexicanus*; they did not sequence *purpureus*).

## New information:

Recently there have been two additional studies of cardueline finches that come to the same conclusions and provide more definite information on both the relationships of the American taxa and their proper generic name. Lerner et al. (2011) included five species of *Carpodacus* (*cassinii, mexicanus, purpureus, erythrinus*, and *roseus*) in their phylogenetic study of the Hawaiian honeycreepers. They constructed trees based on whole mitochondrial genomes and 13 nuclear loci, and found *Carpodacus* to be polyphyletic: the two Old World species form part of a clade that is sister to the Hawaiian honeycreepers, whereas the three North American species, *mexicanus, purpureus*, and *cassinii* cluster together far from other members of the genus as currently recognized. This paper, however, did not discuss the generic nomenclature of these species.

Zuccon et al. (2012) investigated the relationships of many forms in the family Fringillidae. Their conclusions relative to the North American species of *Carpodacus* were the same as those of Lerner et al., i.e., that the two species included in their phylogeny (*mexicanus* and *purpureus*) are not sister to the other species of *Carpodacus* and grouped by themselves. They assigned these species to the genus *Haemorhous*.

In the earlier proposal to transfer the three North American species I suggested the use of the generic name *Burrica* Ridgway, 1887, type species *mexicanus.* This was based on its use in the synonymy of *Carpodacus* in our check-list and elsewhere. Both Ridgway (1901) and Hellmayr (1938) list another name in this synonymy, *Haemorhous* (not of Boie, 1826) Swainson 1837, type species *purpureus*. This listing indicates that Swainson's name is preoccupied and not available. I questioned the authors of Zuccon et al. about their use of that generic name, and was informed (pers. comm.) that the name Boie had used, for a genus of fishes, was *Haemorrhois*, which does not preoccupy Swainson's name, so the latter is actually available. So, the proper generic name for the three native North American species now in *Carpodacus* is *Haemorhous* Swainson, 1837.

**Recommendation:**

I recommend that *cassinii, mexicanus,* and *purpureus* be transferred to the genus *Haemorhous.*

**Literature cited:**

Arnaiz-Villena, A., J. Moscoso, V. Ruiz-del-Falle, J. Gonzalez, R. Reguera, M. Wink, and J. I. Serrano-Vela. 2007. Bayesian phylogeny of Fringillinae birds: status of the singular African oriole finch *Linurgus olivaceus* and evolution and heterogeneity of the genus *Carpodacus.* Acta Zoologia Sinica 53: 826-834.

Lerner, H. R. L., M. Meyer, H. F. James, M. Hofreiter, and R. C. Fleischer. 2011. Multilocus resolution of phylogeny and timescale in the extant adaptive radiation of Hawaiian Honeycreepers. Current Biology 21:1838-1844.

Zuccon, D., R. Prŷs-Jones, P. C. Rasmussen, and P. G. P. Ericson. 2012. The phylogenetic relationships and generic limits of finches (Fringillidae). Molecular Phylogenetics and Evolution 62:581-596.

**Submitted by:**
Richard C. Banks

**Proposal date:** 22 Mar 2012

## Move genus *Pyrrhula* to follow *Pinicola* in the linear sequence

Our check-list currently places the extralimital species *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*, Eurasian Bullfinch, near the similarly large-billed *Coccothraustes*. Two recent genetic studies that include many cardueline finches (Lerner et al. 2011, Zuccon et al. 2012) both place the Pine Grosbeak *Pinicola enucleator* as sister to the genus *Pyrrhula*; in both studies, these taxa are far removed from the *Coccothraustes* spp.

We can easily adjust our sequence of species to reflect these relationships, by moving *Pyrrhula* from its present position preceding *Coccothraustes* to a position following *Pinicola*.

A number of other sequence changes might be in order as judged from these papers, but the two papers do not agree on a generic sequence and lack too many of our species for any other changes to be reasonably made. The two do, however, agree on the close relationship of *Pyrrhula* and *Pinicola*.

**Literature cited:**

Lerner, H. R. L., M. Meyer, H. F. James, M. Hofreiter, and R. C. Fleischer. 2011. Multilocus resolution of phylogeny and timescale in the extant adaptive radiation of Hawaiian Honeycreepers. Current Biology 21:1838-1844.

Zuccon, D., R. Prŷs-Jones, P. C. Rasmussen, and P. G. P. Ericson. 2012. The phylogenetic relationships and generic limits of finches (Fringillidae). Molecular Phylogenetics and Evolution 62:581-596.

**Submitted by:**
Richard C. Banks

**Proposal date:** 22 Mar 2012

# Adopt Guadalupe Murrelet and Ashy Hawk as the English names for *Synthliboramphus hypoleucus* and *Buteo plagiatus*, respectively

The NACC has passed proposals to split two widespread species—Xantus's Murrelet (*Synthliboramphus hypoleucus*) and Gray Hawk (*Buteo nitidus*)—each into two widespread species. In both cases, the proposed English name for one of the newly split species would be the same as that for the parent species (i.e., there would be *sensu stricto* and *sensu lato* version of the English names). I strongly feel that this is a dangerous practice that will lead to confusion in text references and (especially) databased records, because references to the species and superspecies are sure to be confused.

To adopt unique English names that refer only to the newly split species—as has been done in the past (e.g., for Plain Titmouse, Rufous-sided Towhee, Western Flycatcher, Traill's Flycatcher, Sage Grouse, Blue Grouse, Solitary Vireo … both daughter species in each case getting new names)—would largely prevent this confusion. I strongly recommend that the NACC consider alternative common names in these instances and in similar cases in the future.

## 2011-C-14a -- Adopt Guadalupe Murrelet as the English name for *Synthliboramphus hypoleucus*

The proposal suggests using the English name Scripps's Murrelet for *scrippsi*, and retaining Xantus's Murrelet for *hypoleucus*. The less-often seen species (*S. hypoleucus*, which is more pelagic) would be Xantus's Murrelet, a recipe for new confusion with murrelets. Birders will continue to report Xantus's Murrelet, unaware of the recent taxonomic changes since Scripps's Murrelet will not be in their field guide. Abandoning that name would provide a flag that the observer is using an antiquated taxonomy, and would ensure that birders and ornithologists more quickly get on the same page with the most modern taxonomy. This is especially dangerous in this case, because the English name-Scientific name combination would mean two totally different taxonomic concepts for AOU 2011 taxonomy and AOU 2012 taxonomy.

It still is worth honoring Xantus for his contributions in the region, but he still has the hummingbird named after him, right? But overall, why not adopt a novel name and preserve Xantus's Murrelet for the taxonomic concept representing the *S. hypoleucus/S. scrippsi?*

Guadalupe Murrelet is a good alternative, which is appropriate and informative. Almost the entire population of *hypoleucus* breeds on Isla Guadalupe, with a much smaller population breeding on the Islas San Benitos. I am not aware of prior usage of this name for *S. hypoleucus*, but the Guadalupe Caracara is used by the NACC for *Caracara lutosa* and Guadalupe Junco is used by the IOC, has been used in the past by the AOU, for *Junco hyemalis insularis*.

Avibase does not show any alternative common name for *S. hypoleucus*: http://avibase.bsc-eoc.org/species.jsp?lang=EN&avibaseid=2A8D086D6693F805&sec=summary&ssver=1

Recommendation: STRONG recommendation to use Guadalupe Murrelet (*S. hypoleucus*) (or anything BUT Xantus's) and Scripps's Murrelet for *S. scrippsi*.

**2011-C-14b -- Consider Ashy Hawk as the English name for *Buteo plagiatus***

Because this proposal would rename the nominate form (i.e., *B. nitidus* would become Gray-lined Hawk) and would use Gray Hawk with a new scientific name (*Buteo plagiatus*) the confusion will be lessened. However, given the widespread use of common names, I still feel that a novel name here would be preferable.

I do not think that Northern Gray Hawk (Northern Gray-Hawk?) and Southern Gray Hawk (Southern Gray-Hawk?) would be good options. I also think that Gray-lined Hawk has been used rather widely already and that should be the new name for the southern species.

I am not aware of any other name that has been used for *B. plagiatus*. The two species do not differ greatly in appearance, but one consistent difference seems to be that Gray-lined Hawk is barred on the back and upperwing coverts just as it is below. *Buteo plagiatus*, by contrast, is rather even-colored gray above and only shows the fine gray barring on the underparts. Gray-backed Hawk is already in use for *Pseudastur occidentalis*, so that is not available.

Using some synonym for gray is perhaps the best alternative and if so, I can think of nothing better than Ashy Hawk (this name has not been used for any species, according to Avibase). Other alternatives—Ash-colored Hawk, Leaden Hawk, etc.—don't seem like good alternatives. Plumbeous Hawk is obviously not available.

Ashy Hawk is imperfect, to be sure. It abandons an appropriate name (Gray Hawk--they are gray!) in wide usage and there is sure to be backlash from United States birders. But continuing with Gray Hawk for the northern species seems a poor choice too, given the potential confusion between *B. nitidus* and *B. plagiatus*.

I understand that in the absence of a good alternative, we may be stuck with Gray Hawk. Using Gray Hawk for *B. plagiatus* would allow for stability among United States and Middle American birders and ornithologists for the form that they know best. Birders in these areas are certainly the ones for whom English names (and their stability) is most important. Given that the scientific name would change as well, this is certainly a less confusing issue than in cases where the scientific name and English name would stay the same for the daughter species. The two daughter species are also allopatric, which also reduces the confusion. These arguments perhaps make a fair case for using Gray Hawk for *B. plagiatus*.

But as a general practice, I do think it is important that new English names be adopted and for that reason, I would prefer the pain of adopting a new and imperfect name (Ashy Hawk) over the confusion created by yet another case where the *sensu lato* and *sensu stricto* English names need to be constantly reconciled.

Recommendation: Use Gray-lined Hawk for *B. nitidus* and Ashy Hawk, or another novel name, for *B. plagiatus*.

**Submitted by:**
Marshall Iliff

**Proposal date:** 2 May 2012