

AOS Classification Committee – North and Middle America

Proposal Set 2018-B

17 January 2018

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Split Fork-tailed Swift *Apus pacificus* into four species

Effect on NACC:

This proposal would change the species circumscription of Fork-tailed Swift *Apus pacificus* by splitting it into four species. The form that occurs in the NACC area is nominate *pacificus*, so the current species account would remain unchanged except for the distributional statement and notes.

Background:

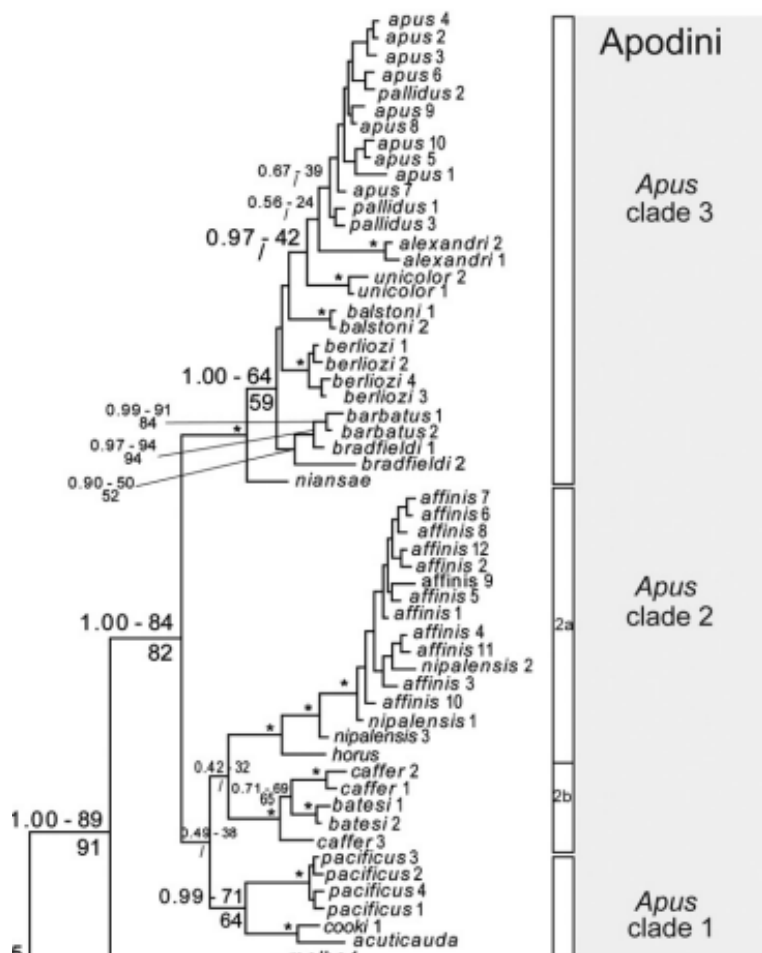
The Fork-tailed Swift *Apus pacificus* was until recently (e.g., Chantler 1999, 2000) considered to consist of four subspecies: *pacificus*, *kanoi*, *cooki*, and *leuconyx*. Nominate *pacificus* is highly migratory, breeding from Siberia south to northern China and Japan, and wintering in Australia, Indonesia, and Malaysia. The other subspecies are either residents or short distance migrants: *kanoi*, which breeds from Taiwan west to SE Tibet and appears to winter as far south as southeast Asia. The other subspecies are sedentary: *leuconyx* in the Himalayas and *cooki* in southeast Asia (south of *kanoi*).

This species was added to the AOU Checklist on the basis of a 1920 specimen of nominate *pacificus* from St. George Island, Alaska, and is now considered casual not only in the Pribilofs but also in the Aleutian Islands (AOU 1998).

New information:

Leader (2011) used specimens to review the taxonomy of the Fork-tailed Swift complex. He synonymized *kanoi* with *kurodae*, which has priority, and he concluded that an additional subspecies, *salimali*, formerly considered synonymous with *kanoi*, is valid. Thus, he recognized the five taxa *pacificus*, *kurodae*, *salimali*, *leuconyx*, and *cooki*. Furthermore, he proposed that four of these taxa (all except *kurodae*, which he treated as a subspecies of *pacificus*) be considered distinct species, based on a combination of plumage and mensural differences. He considered the case for phylogenetic species to be satisfied, and noted that it could be argued that “marked differences in the timing and altitude of breeding, migration strategy and, in the case of *cooki*, breeding habitat are effective isolating mechanisms and that some members of the *pacificus* complex meet the requirements of the BSC (perhaps most robustly in respect of *cooki*).” Although the differences in measurements were in many cases not diagnostic, it appeared qualitatively that diagnostic plumage differences did separate *pacificus* and the other proposed species (but see below). As to vocalizations, Leader (2011) wrote that “a review of a small number of recordings suggests clear differences between taxa” but offered no further details.

A recent molecular phylogeny based on two mitochondrial and three nuclear genes (Päckert et al. 2012) included five individuals of *A. pacificus* – four of nominate *pacificus* and one of *cooki*. The *Apus* section of their tree is shown on the next page. The four *pacificus* (towards the bottom of the tree) form a tight clade whereas the single individual of *cooki* is sister to *acuticauda*. This result is intriguing with respect to *cooki*, which was the taxon that Leader (2011) considered most distinctive, but note that it is based on only a single individual.



Two global lists (IOC, Clements) have adopted the four-species arrangement of Leader (2011), whereas Howard and Moore and HBW continue to consider *Apus pacificus* a single polytypic species. The online species account on HBW Alive includes this statement:

Recent reassessment proposed splitting all taxa accepted below into four species; some characters itemized, however, could not be determined in

independent review of material, while others involved averages and, in case of *leuconyx*, proven vs unproven use of other birds' nests, thus taxa retained here as subspecies pending further documentation of evidence including "clear" differences in voice.

Recommendation:

Swifts are notoriously conservative in morphology, and their taxonomy should be considered in this light. Leader (2011) alluded to this: "Given that *Apus* swifts are profoundly adapted to an aerial existence, it has been argued elsewhere (e.g., Brooke 1971) that consistent structural [i.e., mensural] differences between apparently closely related taxa are of taxonomic significance..." and he noted that the seven species of *Apus* recognized by Lack (1956) had by 2011 increased to 17 species in the IOC list. Leader (2011) consis increase of recognized species in *Apus*.

Nevertheless, the mensural differences in Leader's (2011) paper do not appear to be diagnostic, the plumage characters are difficult to evaluate, at least some of his conclusions on plumage been contradicted, and vocal differences among taxa at this point are based on assertions rather than data. Given the uncertainty surrounding this complex, as well as the lack of acceptance of the splits by HBW and Howard and Moore, I recommend that we reject the proposed splits and continue to consider *Apus pacificus* a single polytypic species pending further data.

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Submitted by: Terry Chesser

Date of Proposal: 29 December 2017

Restore Canada Jay as the English name of *Perisoreus canadensis*

Background:

The name “Canada Jay” dates back at least to Swainson and Richardson (1831) and was the official vernacular species name used for *Perisoreus canadensis* in the first two AOU checklists (1886, 1895). In its 3rd (1910) and 4th (1931) Checklists, however, the AOU did not recognize overall vernacular species names for polytypic species and instead used common names exclusively for subspecies. Thus, during the 47-year period (1910-1956) covered by the 3rd and 4th Checklists, “Canada Jay” explicitly referred to the nominate subspecies *P. c. canadensis* rather than the species *P. canadensis*. Only in 1957, with publication of the 5th Checklist, did the AOU return to its original policy of having overall common names for polytypic species. For *P. canadensis*, however, the AOU did not restore the original name “Canada Jay”. Instead, it picked “Gray Jay”, the English name of another *P. canadensis* subspecies (*P. c. griseus*), to become the new English name for the species.

This decision provoked some unpublished grumbling among Canadian birders and ornithologists (e.g., Earl Godfrey: pers. comm. to MG), but otherwise was generally accepted under the assumption that some compelling reason(s) must have justified such a change. One guess occasionally heard is that “Gray Jay” was chosen because it was descriptive, was in line with the English names of other jays (Blue Jay, Green Jay, etc.) and that some new common name had to be coined following the lumping (AOU 1944) of *P. canadensis* and a west coast form, *P. obscurus*. This was superficially plausible because these two species, at the time of the lump, are widely believed to have had the English names “Canada Jay” and “Oregon Jay” and the AOU later adopted a guideline (AOU 1983) suggesting that when two taxa with different English names are lumped, a new name should be found for the merged taxon (although in practice there are exceptions to this guideline). Some of our own published work (e.g., Strickland and Ouellet 2011) has been consistent with this view, which we argue is erroneous (see below), and it is implicitly supported by a website still linked to the AOU/AOS home page: “The History of North American Bird Names in the American Ornithologists’ Union Checklists 1886-2000” (darwiniana.org/zoo/AOUMenu.htm). This site makes no distinction between monotypic and polytypic species, fails to recognize that the latter did not have common species names in the 3rd (AOU 1910) and 4th (AOU 1931) Checklists, and clearly implies that “Gray Jay” came into existence only in 1957 when “Canada Jay” and “Oregon Jay” disappeared.

Discovering the true reason for the 1957 designation of “Gray Jay” became a matter of some interest in 2015-16 when the Royal Canadian Geographical Society (RCGS) conducted a much-publicized, two-year campaign to choose a national bird for Canada (Anonymous 2015). Even though “Gray Jay/Whiskyjack” finished third in the campaign’s popular vote, and in spite of the American spelling of “gray” (instead of the Canadian “grey”), the RCGS nevertheless announced “Gray Jay” as its choice in December 2016

(Walker 2016). Contrary to widespread opinion, however, the Canadian government has not endorsed the choice, perhaps because of the official name's American spelling and, compared to "Canada Jay" (or "Whiskyjack"; Gosselin 2017), "Gray Jay's" lack of historical legitimacy.

Even without its indisputable historic authenticity, "Canada Jay" would seem to be far more appropriate than "Gray Jay" as the name of a Canadian national bird. Just as several U.S. states have done (<https://state.1keydata.com/state-birds.php>), Canada could well decide, therefore—and with far more justification—to ignore AOU nomenclature and go its own way by restoring the original official common name used by the AOU itself until 1910. However, given the monolithic respect normally accorded the AOU's taxonomic and nomenclatural decisions, the Canadian government might well assume that there must have been some valid reason the AOU failed to restore "Canada Jay" as the overall English species name in 1957 and that, in unilaterally restoring the name now, the government would be guilty of some unintended ornithological heresy.

It was in this new context of the Canadian national bird project that it became of particular interest and relevance to discover, if possible, the actual reason for the AOU's 1957 rejection of "Canada Jay" and designation of "Gray Jay" as the English name for *Perisoreus canadensis*. Was there a good reason or wasn't there?

New Information:

In 2016, one of us investigated the rationale for the 1957 decision, relying particularly on unpublished archival material in the AOU archives (Strickland 2017). The principal findings were as follows:

1. The suggestion that "Gray Jay" was coined to be the species name consequent to the supposed lumping of the "Canada Jay" and the "Oregon Jay" in 1944 is false. All three common names were used concurrently and designated only subspecies during the combined "lifetimes" of the 3rd and 4th Checklists (1910-1957): Oregon Jay, *P. obscurus obscurus*; Canada Jay, *P. canadensis canadensis*; Gray Jay, *P. o. griseus*. The 1944 lumping of *P. canadensis* and *P. obscurus*, neither of which had overall common names at the time, had only one nomenclatural effect: the scientific names of the Oregon Jay and the Gray Jay changed, respectively, from *P. o. obscurus* and *P. o. griseus* to *P. c. obscurus* and *P. c. griseus*. The common names of these subspecies were not affected.
2. The nomenclatural policies followed in the 3rd and 4th Checklists posed two major obstacles to popular understanding of North American birds. First, the AOU provided no overall common names for polytypic species (about half of all species on the list). Second, for 671 subspecies names on the 1931 Checklist (of 1020), it was impossible to tell from their structure alone whether they referred to subspecies at all (e.g., Alaska Jay, Labrador Jay, Rocky Mountain Jay, etc.) or, if so, to what species those subspecies belonged. Peterson (1941) and Pough

(1946) complained in private correspondence with AOU Checklist Chairman A. Wetmore and publicly in their popular field guides, with Peterson (1947) later using the specific example of *P. canadensis* to illustrate his frustrations with AOU nomenclatural conventions.

3. In 1947-48, after resisting calls for reform for more than a decade, AOU Checklist Chairman Wetmore, secretly and under protest, circulated to Committee members two lists (non-passerines and passerines) of proposed common names reformed along principles espoused earlier by Grinnell and Miller (1944) and Eisenmann and Poor (1946). Those principles included: (i) every species should have an overall species name, (ii) the species name should be included in the subspecies name, (iii) it would be *“desirable to retain many established names regardless of whether or not they are appropriate”*, and (iv) *“a [new] species name should not be formed from the name of a geographical or political subdivision”* (the reason being that this could lead to geographically awkward subspecies names, e.g. “California Florida Jay”). For the 299 polytypic taxa without an obvious potential species name included within any of their subspecies’ names, the usual procedure was to elevate the English name of the nominate subspecies to be the new species name. However, in the case of *P. canadensis*, re-elevation of “Canada Jay” would have resulted in geographically awkward subspecies names such as “Alaska Canada Jay”, “Oregon Canada Jay”, “Idaho Canada Jay” etc. Of all the vernacular *P. canadensis* subspecies names available in the mid 1940s (see Table 1, Strickland 2017), “Gray Jay” was the only one whose elevation to species name would **not** have resulted in geographical awkwardness in the corresponding proposed new subspecies names (i.e., “Alaska Gray Jay”, “Oregon Gray Jay”, “Idaho Gray Jay”, not to mention “Canada Gray Jay” [*P. c. canadensis*]).
4. The principle of avoiding geographic awkwardness in subspecies names that led to the 1948 proposal “Gray Jay” instead of “Canada Jay” as the restored common species name for *P. canadensis* in the 5th Checklist seems reasonable. However, this justification evaporated in 1954 when the AOU decided not to have English names for subspecies after all. There could not be any geographic awkwardness in the common names of subspecies because such names were not going to exist. The AOU minutes explicitly recognized that the decision not to have common subspecies names meant it would be *“possible to retain as specific names a number that have been long in use”*. Consistent with this realization, in at least 18 cases the new species names proposed in 1947-48 were not used in the 5th Checklist (AOU 1957). Instead, the original (pre-1910) common names or the names of nominate subspecies appeared in their place. No reason was apparent for not similarly reinstating “Canada Jay” as the species common name for *P. canadensis*.

Overall, Strickland (2017) established that there was no valid taxonomic or nomenclatural reason for the AOU’s failure in 1957 to restore “Canada Jay” as the English name of *P. canadensis*. Thus, there would be no biological reason for the

Canadian government, should it endorse the RCGS's choice of this species as Canada's national bird, to hesitate in also declaring that, in Canada at least, it would be known again as the Canada Jay.

Does a Precedent Exist for this Kind of Proposal?

As suggested by the AOU itself (AOU 1998), it is possible that *P. canadensis* may be two species, as was deemed to be the case before *P. obscurus* was absorbed into *P. canadensis* in 1944. In the event of a future re-split, the name "Canada Jay" would be restored for the principal daughter species according to current renaming guidelines (AOU 1998). That is not what we are advocating here. Instead, we are proposing the "immediate" restoration of "Canada Jay" for reasons that have nothing to do with taxonomy. We recognize that the Committee has traditionally resisted such proposals, but we point out that a highly relevant precedent exists for possible acceptance of the one we are making now:

The name "Mexican Jay" had been used at least as early as Gross (1949) and Pitelka (1951) as the common name for what was then known as *Aphelocoma ultramarina*, but never in an AOU Checklist or Supplement until the 5th edition (AOU 1957). Twenty-six years later, however, in the 6th edition (AOU 1983), "Mexican Jay" was abruptly replaced by "Gray-breasted Jay", a name that was apparently a personal preference of the then Committee chair, Eugene Eisenmann, but which otherwise had no historical legitimacy (J.L. Brown, personal emails to DS, November 20 & 23, 2017). Brown, who had been publishing on the Mexican Jay and using that name since 1963, was "angry and disgusted" and gave vent to his displeasure at least once in print (Brown and Brown in Stacey and Koenig 1990). He also objected strenuously in writing to the committee, and later was told privately that, although he was the only complainant, his letter convinced the Committee to reverse its decision and revert to the former "Mexican Jay" (AOU 1995).

The already accomplished reversion to "Mexican Jay", and our proposed reversion to "Canada Jay," have in common the fact that neither change was/is motivated by a taxonomic change and, bizarrely, also the fact that both involve(d) jays and one of the major geographic neighbours of the U.S.

This raises the question of why, if it was deemed legitimate to restore the name "Mexican Jay", would it not be similarly legitimate to restore "Canada Jay"? Below, we address a few possible considerations in answering that question:

1. The name "Canada Jay" has far greater historical legitimacy than "Mexican Jay". "Canada Jay" goes back at least to 1831, and was used in the AOU's first two Checklists (1886 and 1895) as the official English name for *P. canadensis*. "Mexican Jay", on the other hand, seems not to have been used before Gross (1949) or Pitelka (1951) and did not appear in an AOU checklist until 1957. We interpret these differences to mean that the argument for restoring "Canada Jay"

is considerably stronger than was the previously successful argument for restoring “Mexican Jay”.

2. “Gray-breasted Jay”, the name chosen in 1983 to replace “Mexican Jay” as the overall name for *Aphelocoma ultramarina*, had almost no prior legitimacy. “Gray Jay” was coined much earlier (Ridgway 1899) but for most of that time (1899-1944) was the name of a race deemed to belong, not to *P. canadensis*, but to a different species (*P. obscurus*). We suggest that, in the realm of historic legitimacy, both names (“Gray-breasted Jay” and “Gray Jay”) are similarly weak and it would be difficult to argue that one is, or was, more worthy of retention than the other.
3. In requesting that the Committee revert to “Mexican Jay”, Brown argued that “*the interests of active scientists should come first*”. True, he also showed that far more literature had been published using the name “Mexican Jay” than “Gray-breasted Jay” and used this fact to bolster his argument for a return to the former name. We do not contest that the opposite applies to the *P. canadensis* literature. That is, most studies on or involving this species have been published since 1957 and they have all used the name “Gray Jay”. Nonetheless, authors on this proposal have been responsible for a large fraction of the “Gray Jay” literature and feel that there is a strong historical argument for restoring “Canada Jay.”

Discussion

Our proposal to restore “Canada Jay” as the common name of *P. canadensis* is based largely on three facts: (1) both “Gray Jay” and “Canada Jay” were used concurrently for different subspecies of what were formerly *P. obscurus* and *P. canadensis*, respectively, at a time when common names were not applied to overall species names. The 1948 proposal to adopt “Gray Jay” as the overall common species name had the laudable intent of avoiding geographic awkwardness in subspecies names but lost its justification with the 1954 decision not to have subspecific common names. (2) Failure to rescind the substitution of “Gray Jay” for “Canada Jay” ended up violating another AOU nomenclatural principle, namely the retention of traditional vernacular names whenever possible. (3) The strikingly parallel events in which the AOU first imposed “Gray-breasted Jay” in 1983 in place of “Mexican Jay,” and then reversed its decision in 1995, without the trigger of a taxonomic change in either case, established a particularly relevant precedent for acceptance of our present proposal.

In addition to the above, a distinctly unique additional matter needs to be considered by the Committee when weighing our proposal to restore “Canada Jay”. We return here to the possible designation of *P. canadensis* as Canada’s national bird. Admittedly this is not a sure thing but if Canada does so act, it will be in Canada’s clear interest to simultaneously declare that the national bird shall, in English, be called “Canada Jay” whether or not the AOS keeps “Gray Jay”. But having Canada go its own way would

clearly not be in the interests of the AOS. What principle would AOS be defending if it insisted that "Gray Jay" be maintained?

Recommendation

We recommend that the NACC proactively change the official English name back to "Canada Jay". That's what the AOU should have done in the first place before the 5th edition was published in 1957. Such action would be a "win-win" for everybody.

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Submitted by:

Dan Strickland, Carla Cicero, Ryan Norris, Theresa Burg, David Bird, Michel Gosselin, and Ken Otter (President of the Society of Canadian Ornithologists, with support of SCO Council; see attached supporting letter)

Date of Proposal: 29 December 2017

22 Dec 2017

Nomenclature and Classification Committee
American Ornithological Society



Society of Canadian Ornithologists
Société des ornithologistes du Canada

Re: Letter in support of name change of Gray Jay back to the original Canada Jay

I would like to offer this letter on behalf of the Society of Canadian Ornithologists/Société des ornithologistes du Canada (SCO-SOC) regarding consideration of reversion of the Gray Jay (*Perisoreus canadensis*) to Canada Jay (*Perisoreus canadensis*).

Dan Strickland recently investigated the history of the designated name change of this species from "Canada Jay" to "Gray Jay" by the American Ornithological Society's Nomenclature and Classification Committee (AOS NACC) in 1944¹. Dr. Strickland suggests that the historic name of "Canada Jay" for this species has taxonomic validity and by rules of naming conventions should have been reinstated as far back as the 1950s. The executive council of the SCO-SOC have reviewed the arguments set forth in the paper, and found his rationale convincing. These arguments are outlined in the proposal to the NACC that Dr. Strickland and his consortium have submitted, the SCO-SOC Executive Council supports the previous name of Canada Jay to be nomenclaturally-valid, and would also support consideration from the AOS NACC to redesignate this species in its annually-published *AOS Checklist of North American Birds*. Restoring a previously-used, regionally-specific common name would also not be unique, even among other jay families in North America – the Mexican Jay (*Aphelocoma wollweberi*) was officially re-designated by the AOS NACC in 1983 as the "Gray-breasted Jay", only to have its name officially restored to the Mexican Jay in the 1998. Further, such a naming convention would restore some of the parallelism with the French common name (*le mésangeai du Canada* – "the Jay-tit of Canada"). It also reflects the direct translation of the official Latin species name - *Perisoreus canadensis*; the Generic name '*Perisoreus*' designates this as a species within a group of boreal jays, with the species name '*canadensis*' indicating it as "Canada's Boreal Jay".

While the basis for this support is based solely on nomenclatural validity, as outlined in Dr. Strickland's letter, the SCO-SOC Executive Council also recognizes that such a re-designation would greatly assist in the current effort afoot to have the Canadian government recognize the Canada Jay as our National Bird. While the current name of Gray Jay is not the sole impediment to the bird receiving symbol status, reinstating the national name of Canada Jay would certainly help the ground-swell support that is occurring across the country, and increase the likelihood of the government noting this.

Sincerely,

Ken A. Otter
President, Society of Canadian Ornithologists/Société des ornithologistes du Canada
Professor (Biology), University of Northern British Columbia.

¹ Strickland, D. 2017. How the Canada Jay lost its name and why it matters. *Ontario Birds* 35 (1): 2-16

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Recognize two genera in Stercorariidae

Effect on NACC:

This proposal would resurrect the genus *Catharacta* for all species of *Stercorarius* except *S. parasiticus* and *S. longicaudus*.

Background:

Despite considerable attention over the past two decades, the phylogeny of the Stercorariidae (skuas and jaegers) has not yet been convincingly resolved. Most authoritative works presently consider the skuas and jaegers to be in a single genus, *Stercorarius* (e.g., AOU 2000). Nevertheless, there is support in existing data for *S. pomarinus* being more closely related to the traditional *Catharacta* species (skuas) than to the other jaegers (e.g., Braun & Brumfield 1998, Carlos 2016).

New information:

Carlos (2016) re-examined existing data and concluded based on chewing lice, behavior (displays and calls), and mtDNA that *S. longicaudus* and *S. parasiticus* form a clade sister to the traditional *Catharacta* + *S. pomarinus*, and they proposed splitting the group into two genera accordingly: *Stercorarius* (spp. ***parasiticus*** and ***longicaudus***) and *Catharacta* (spp. ***pomarina***, ***skua***, ***maccormicki***, *lonnbergi*, *hamiltoni*, *chilensis*, and *antarctica*). (Those in our checklist area in bold.)

However, this conclusion rests entirely on cladistic reasoning (“a cladistic-based classification by sequencing”, p.193), and there remains considerable uncertainty about relationships in the group. There is no suggestion that all members are *not* part of a monophyletic clade, and using a single genus for this clade, *Stercorarius*, is what we chose to do when last visiting this issue (AOU 2000). We are also presently seeing some noteworthy failures of mtDNA to accurately reconstruct intra-generic relationships (e.g., Harris et al. 2018, Drovetski et al. 2018). This becomes relevant here in two contexts: a) it would be good to get final confirmation of this intrageneric split, and b) we need clarification of the relationship of *pomarinus* with respect to the *Catharacta* species to know whether there is support for it being considered in its own, monotypic genus (*Coprotheres*, Braun & Brumfield 1998, Carlos 2016). Given historic uncertainties in this group’s systematics and the interest in it expressed among diverse researchers worldwide, I think we can expect a convincing resolution of these issues in the next few years (although I have no inside knowledge of such an effort). That would enable us to make any further necessary changes just once.

Recommendation:

No. Retain the single genus *Stercorarius* for all species in Stercorariidae at this time.

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Submitted by: Kevin Winker

Date of Proposal: 31 December 2017

Split Red-eyed Vireo (*Vireo olivaceus*) into two species

Background:

Current taxonomy recognizes the Red-eyed Vireo (*Vireo olivaceus*) as one species with two allopatric groups during the breeding season, which become sympatric during the nonbreeding season (AOU 1998). Ridgway (1904) referred to the species as monospecific, but a long history of debate has surrounded this species and the complex of related species. The two allopatric groups are known as *olivaceus* and *chivi*. The *olivaceus* group includes one or two migratory subspecies that breed in North America and spend the winter in South America. The *chivi* group includes nine subspecies from South America that consist of sedentary and migratory populations (Cimprich et al. 2000). The main reasons why both groups have been referred to as subspecies are their subtle plumage differences and the eye color of adults, which is red in *olivaceus* and brown in *chivi* (Johnson and Zink 1985).

Johnson and Zink (1985), using starch gel electrophoresis, showed that the two geographically disjunct groups of the Red-eyed Vireo are conspecific. In that study they included 17 *olivaceus* samples from North America, 14 *chivi* samples from Paraguay (only the *diversus* subspecies), 1 sample of *V. flavoviridis*, and 1 sample of *Cyclarhis gujanensis* as an outgroup. Subsequently, Slager et al. (2014) reconstructed a phylogeny of the Vireonidae family using the complete mitochondrial gene ND2, which suggests that the two disjunct groups of *V. olivaceus* do not represent sister clades. In their phylogeny, the North American lineage is more closely related to populations of *V. flavoviridis* from Yucatán, Mexico, whereas the South American lineage is more closely related to *V. altiloquus*. Slager et al. (2014) concluded that the reciprocal monophyly recovered by Johnson and Zink (1985) might represent an artifact of incomplete taxon sampling. However, they recommended analyses using more loci to fully resolve the species relationships.

New Information:

Batthey and Klicka (2017) published a phylogenetic study of the Red-eyed Vireo species complex. The aim of this study was to identify cryptic species and to assess rates of gene flow in a lineage that includes migratory species that alternate between sympatry and allopatry during an annual cycle. Batthey and Klicka (2017) analyzed 40 individuals and 6 species of *Vireo*, which included four members of the Red-eyed Vireo complex: *V. olivaceus*, *V. flavoviridis*, *V. altiloquus*, and *V. magister*; and two outgroup taxa: *V. gilvus*, and *V. plumbeus* (Figure 1). They obtained genetic data following the ddRADseq protocol, which resulted in a final dataset of 38 individuals with an average of 13,323 loci per individual. They inferred a maximum likelihood phylogenetic tree (RAxML v8) and a species tree (SNAPP v. 1.3). They also conducted clustering analysis (STRUCTURE), Principal Components Analysis (Adegenet), and admixture analysis using D statistics.

Phylogenetic analyses revealed that northern and southern *olivaceus* are paraphyletic, with South American breeders more closely related to the Caribbean taxa *altiloquus* and *magister* than to their North American conspecifics. The STRUCTURE analysis favored a five-population model (Table 1) that split northern and southern *olivaceus*. It should be noted that both clustering analyses, STRUCTURE and Adegnet, showed a tendency to lump northern and southern *olivaceus* when run at $k = 4$.

D statistics did not support significant introgression between northern and southern *olivaceus* populations. The Bayes factor delimitation analysis favored the models that split northern and southern *olivaceus* (Tables 2 and 3).

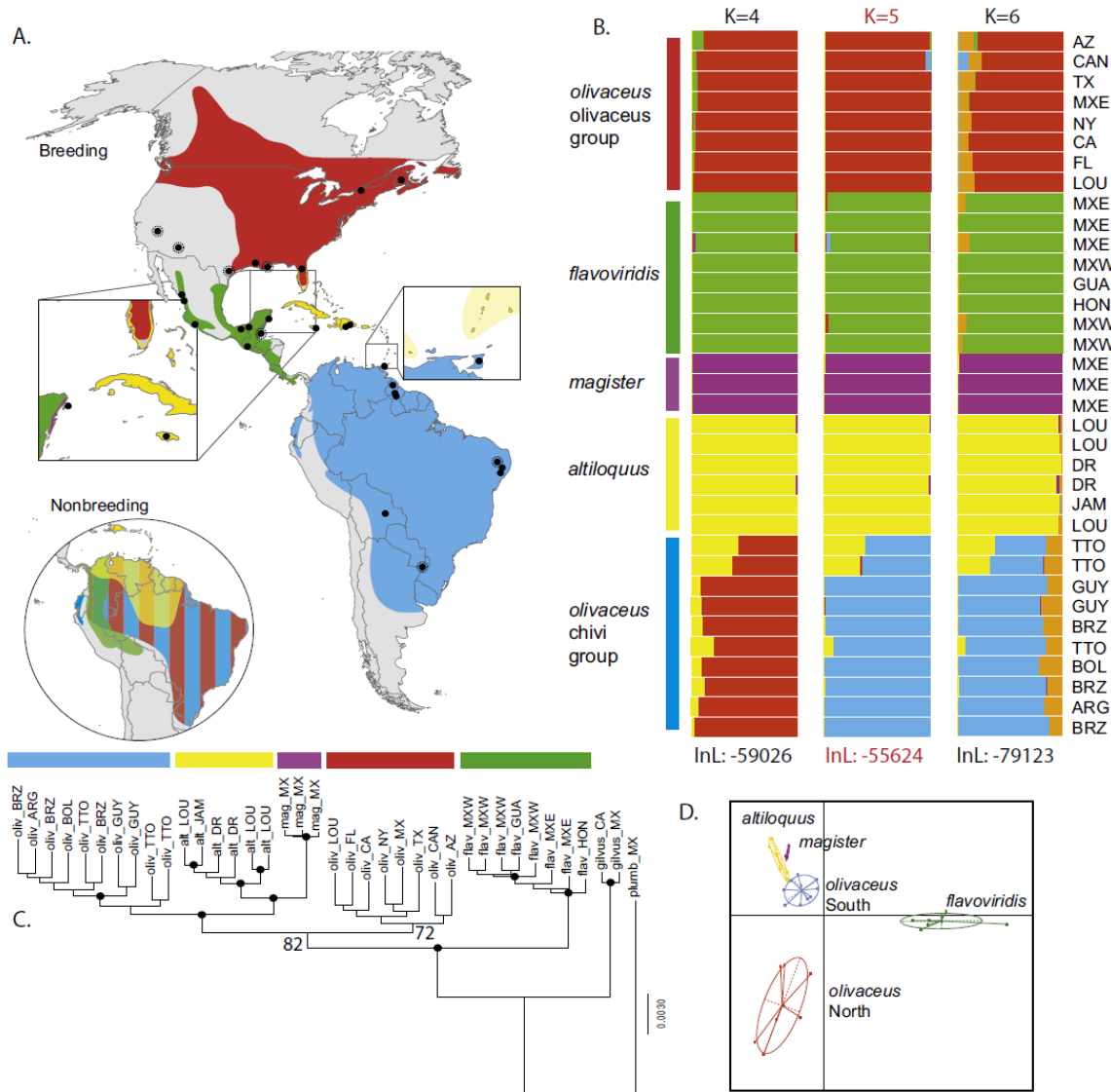


Fig. 1. A: range map for breeding (top) and nonbreeding (bottom, circled) seasons, adapted from Birdlife International & Natureserve, 2013. Circled points represent specimens captured during the migration season. Magnified cutouts are provided for two regions of parapatry. B: STRUCTURE output for highest marginal-likelihood runs at $k = 4-6$. C: RAXMLMD50 concatenated phylogeny. Numbers at nodes indicate bootstrap support, and circles represent bootstrap support > 90 . D: PCA sample and population coordinates on the first two PC axes, using population assignments from k -means clustering.

Table 1
Clustering analyses summary.

K	Structure		Adegenet
	Mean LnP(K)	Delta K	BIC
3	−63155.08	30.75	123.63
4	−61946.92	1.22	123.56
5	−55761.99	627.23	123.72
6	−94794.66	6.32	125.42
7	−72233.84	2.03	127.12

Table 3
BFD* results summary.

Model	lnL	2lnBF	Rank
Split <i>flavoviridis</i> + <i>olivaceus</i>	−6969.89	NA	1
Split <i>olivaceus</i>	−6983.59	27.41	2
Current taxonomy	−7168.87	397.96	4
Split <i>flavoviridis</i>	−7154.83	369.88	3
Lump <i>olivaceus</i> + <i>altiloquus</i>	−7220.66	501.54	5

Table 2
D-Test results summary. Number of loci, ABBA and BABA are mean values for all combinations in a given test. Tests are given as the species assigned to P1 + P2 and P3 tips.

Test	Number of loci	ABBA	BABA	Z range	Significant combinations
alt flav	3387	51	50	(0.03,1.69)	0/8
alt mag	2795	54	52	(0.1,1.1)	0/16
alt olivN	3148	48	43	(0.07,2.65)	0/30
alt olivS	3015	49	46	(0.2,89)	0/37
flav alt	3634	43	48	(0.24,1.83)	0/7
flav mag	3472	42	40	(0.09,0.68)	0/2
flav olivN	3515	39	44	(0.23,2.55)	0/14
flav olivS	3594	39	47	(0.06,1.86)	0/11
olivN alt	2357	63	65	(0.02,3.02)	0/126
olivN flav	2211	59	63	(0.03,3.9)	4/153
olivN mag	2218	63	65	(0.2,14)	0/62
olivN olivS	2203	59	59	(0.2,55)	0/205
olivS alt	2318	53	65	(0.02,5.71)	23/172
olivS flav	2476	57	58	(0.06,2.8)	0/99
olivS mag	2281	59	63	(0.03,2.46)	0/75
olivS olivN	2539	53	57	(0.2,88)	0/148

Bolded rows indicate tests returning significant signal of introgression.

Batthey and Klicka (2017) concluded that *olivaceus* includes two genetically divergent lineages breeding in disjunct ranges. Life history, in addition to genetics, also supports splitting the species. Northern (*olivaceus*) and southern (*chivi*) populations are non-monophyletic, do not exchange genes, and have different direction and timing of migration, which are heritable life-history traits and confer reproductive isolation between the groups. The authors propose elevating the *chivi* group (all populations breeding in South America) to species status under the English name Chivi Vireo, based on the scientific name.

Recommendation:

We recommend splitting *Vireo olivaceus* into two species.

North American populations: *Vireo olivaceus*, Red-eyed Vireo

South American populations: *Vireo chivi*, Chivi Vireo

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Submitted by: Rosa Alicia Jiménez and Carla Cicero, Museum of Vertebrate Zoology

Date of Proposal: 4 January 2018

Split *Pseudobulweria* from *Pterodroma*

Note: This is a revised version of Proposal 2011-C-5, which was rejected on a 5-5 vote.

Background:

The genus *Pseudobulweria* was established for the Fiji Petrel *Pseudobulweria macgillivrayi* by Mathews in 1936 (Jouanin and Mougín 1979). Imber (1985) recommended recognizing the genus on the basis of skeletal and intestinal differences from *Pterodroma* species, and broadened it to include *aterrima*, *rostrata* (including *becki*), and the extinct *rupinarum*. He concluded that *Pseudobulweria* was more closely related to petrels of the genera *Bulweria* and *Procellaria* than to *Pterodroma*.

Bretagnolle et al. (1998; <http://elibrary.unm.edu/sora/Auk/v115n01/p0188-p0195.pdf>), on the basis of a phylogenetic analysis of 496 bp of mitochondrial *cyt-b* of 19 taxa, presented a tree in which *Pseudobulweria* was 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 Bretagnolle et al.'s (1998) analysis had relatively weak taxon sampling and bootstrap support, and was based on a relatively small segment of a single gene, it does appear to demonstrate deep divergence between *Pseudobulweria* and *Pterodroma*. Their results, which support those of Imber (1985), were accepted by Christidis and Boles (2008), Howell (2012), and others.

New information:

Kennedy and Page (2002), using a supertree approach to generate a procellariiform phylogeny, obtained a strict consensus tree in which *Pseudobulweria* is part of a clade containing *Pachyptila* and *Halobaena*, as well as *Pelecanoides* and *Lugensa* (screenshot below). Their phylogeny thus disagrees with that of Bretagnolle et al. (1998) on the placement of *Pseudobulweria*, even though Bretagnolle et al.'s mtDNA sequences formed the basis for inclusion of *Pseudobulweria* in the supertree, but both studies do agree that *Pseudobulweria* is not closely related to *Pterodroma*.

Welch et al. (2014) used ancient mtDNA to examine the relationships of *Pterodroma rupinarum*. In their densely-sampled phylogeny (screenshot below), species of *Pseudobulweria* (including *rostrata*, *becki*, and *macgillivrayi*) are sister to *Bulweria*, with this clade sister to *Procellaria* and *Puffinus* species, and again are not closely related to species of *Pterodroma*.

Unpublished data from UCEs (Chesser et al. 2017), which included type species *Ps. macgillivrayi*, also strongly indicate that *Pseudobulweria* and *Pterodroma* are not closely related, and support the findings of Bretagnolle et al. (1998), Imber (1985), and Welch et al. (2014) that *Pseudobulweria* is more closely related to *Bulweria* and *Procellaria* petrels and the shearwaters (*Puffinus*, *Ardenna*, and *Calonectris*) than to *Pterodroma*. Moreover, separation of *Pseudobulweria* has been universally accepted in global lists (e.g., Howard & Moore, Clements, IOC, HBW) since our rejection of the previous proposal in 2011.

Effect on AOS-CLC area:

This proposal would transfer one species, *Pterodroma rostrata*, a vagrant to Costa Rica, into the genus *Pseudobulweria*, which would be a new genus for our region. A new genus account 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.*~~*Pterodroma 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* (Imber 1985, Bretagnolle et al. 1998, Kennedy and Page 2002, Welch et al. 2014).

Recommendation:

The recognition of *Pseudobulweria*, a genus represented in our area solely as a vagrant, has been universally adopted in global lists (e.g., Howard & Moore, Clements, IOC, HBW). Given the acceptance of this genus by global sources as well as regional authorities such as Christidis and Boles (2008), the lack of evidence of a close relationship between *Pterodroma* and *Pseudobulweria* in both morphological and molecular studies, as well as strong evidence for its sister relationship with the

shearwater clade, we recommend that the committee follow suit in recognizing the genus *Pseudobulweria*.

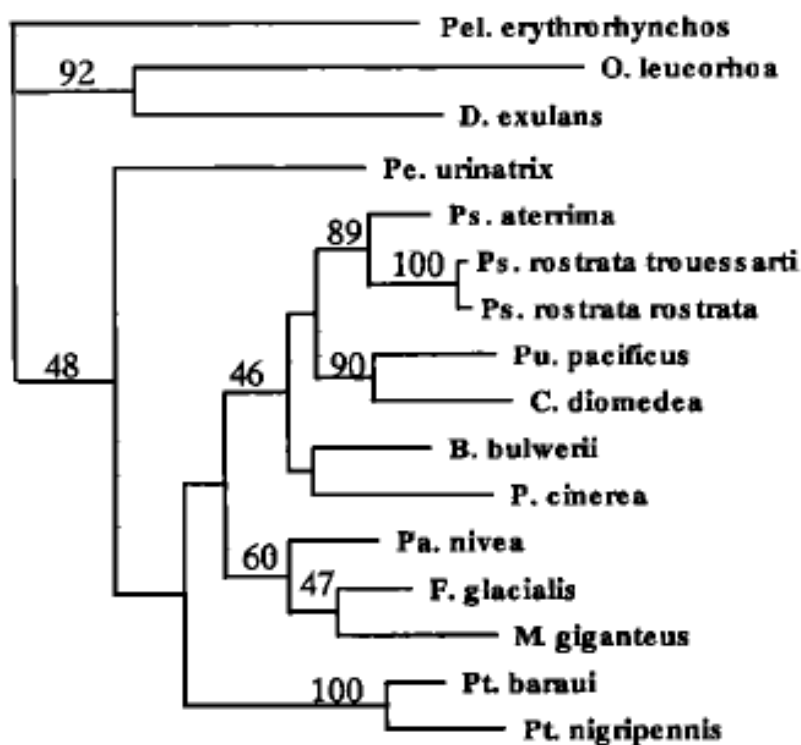
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Name and affiliation of submitter:

Pamela C. Rasmussen, Michigan State University, and Terry Chesser

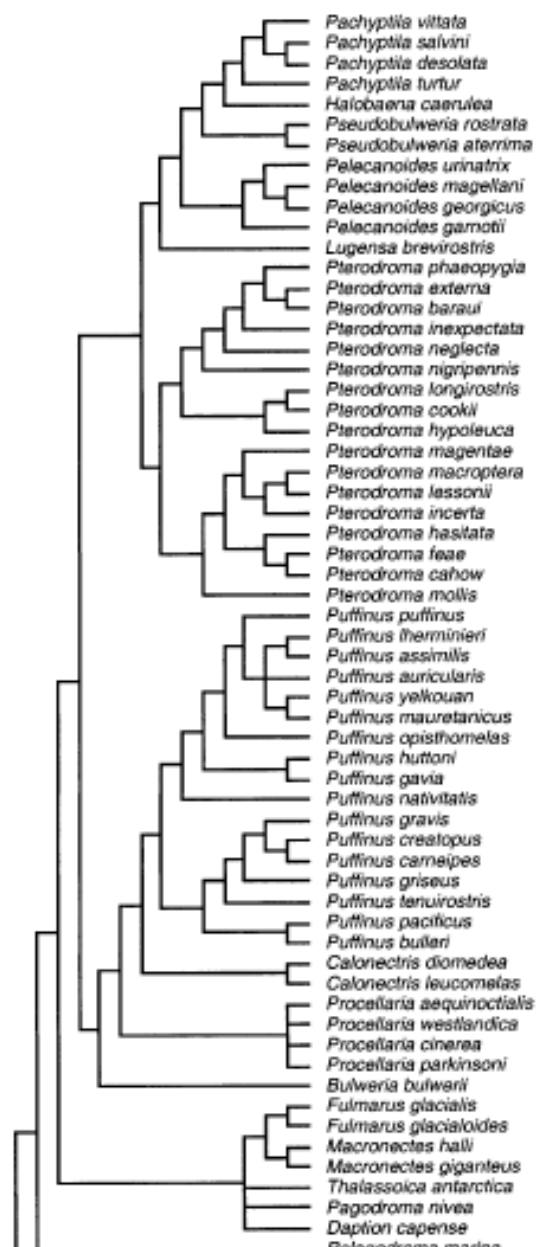
Date of Proposal: 7 January 2018, modified 10 February 2018



10

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)



(From Fig. 3 of Kennedy and Page 2002)

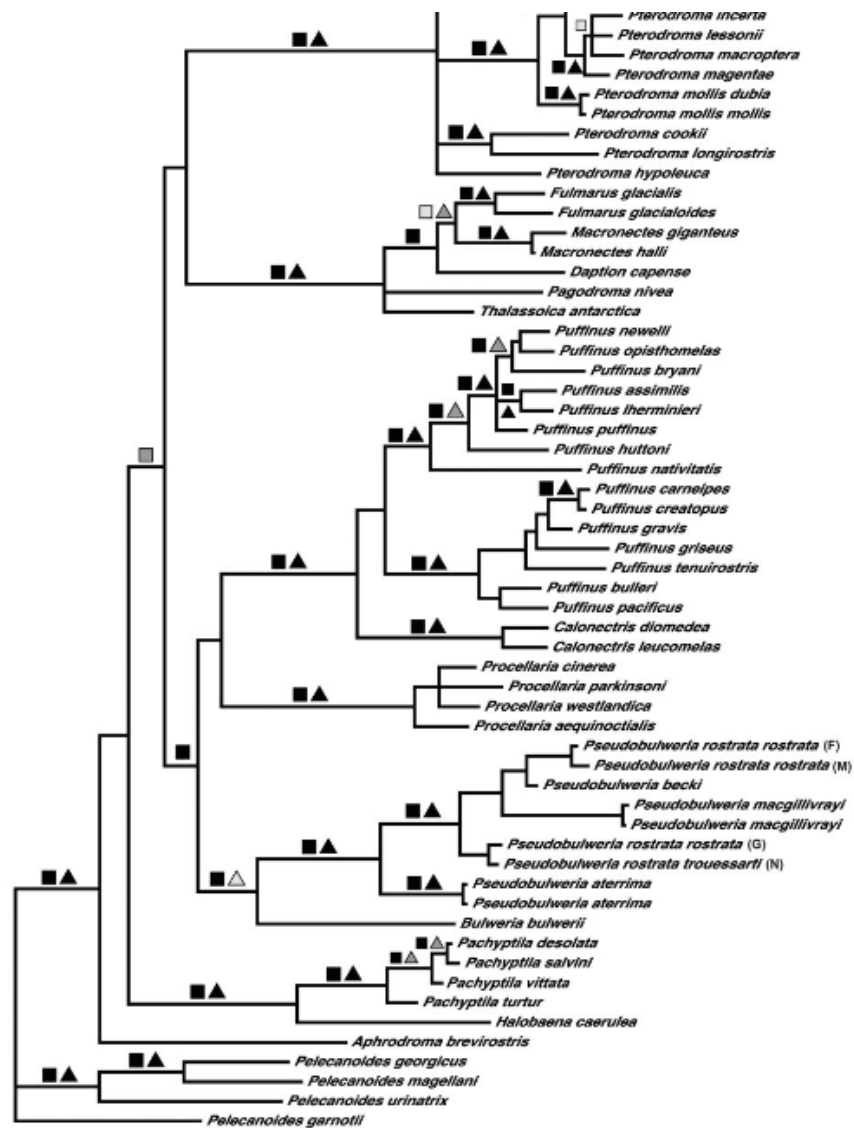


Figure 2. Bayesian consensus tree of cytochrome *b* sequences from 72 procellariid taxa and four *Pelecanoides* out-groups. Maximum-likelihood analyses yielded a congruent topology. Bayesian posterior probability and maximum-likelihood bootstrap support are shown along the branches. Sampling locations for *Pterodroma arminjoniana* and *Pseudobulweria rostrata* are as listed in Table 2.

(From Welch et al. 2014; black squares: posterior probabilities > 0.95, black triangles: bootstraps > 90%)

Add *Tadorna tadorna* (Common Shelduck) to the Checklist**Background:**

This species has a long history of occurrence in North America. The species is currently listed in the Appendix of the Checklist (AOU 1998, p. 690), based on records for Quebec, Massachusetts, and Delaware, with the caveat that “these reports likely pertain to escaped individuals.” Several other reports of birds definitely known to have escaped have appeared in the literature. Brinkley (2010) analyzed some 40 records (57 individuals) that have occurred previously in North America between 1921 and 2010. He argued that some, if not many, of these records involved naturally occurring vagrants. Although the ABA CLC had previously declined to accept records of this species (Pranty et al. 2011), they recently considered two records from Newfoundland, one on 17 November 2009 at St. John’s and the other on 3 April 2014 on the Avalon Peninsula. These records were accepted by the Newfoundland Checklist Committee (Mactavish et al. 2016) and then by the ABA CLC (Pyle et al. 2017).

Howell et al. (2014) detailed the status of various North American records and more importantly detailed the status of the species in Iceland, where it is now a regular visitant and breeder. The web site titled “The Icelandic Birding Pages” also details the status. Basically the species became much more numerous in Iceland in the 1990s.

Recommendation:

I recommend that we add the species to the main list of North American Birds. If the species is migratory and regular in Iceland, that pretty much clinches it for me, especially because there are multiple records for Newfoundland. Yes, one can quibble about east coast records for the U.S. and especially from points farther west, particularly west of the Mississippi. The species is not rare in captivity, or so I’m told. If the motion passes a new account will be needed with some discussion of the records that are most likely to have been wild birds, those that are more questionable, and those that are likely escapes (e.g., those from the West). I gather there is a fairly recent record from Barbados.

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Princeton University Press.

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Submitted by: Jon Dunn

Date of Proposal: 11 January 2018

Add three species to the U.S. list**A. Amethyst-throated Hummingbird (*Lampornis amethystinus*)****Background:**

Two individuals of this species occurred in North America north of Mexico in 2016, the first one in Saguenay, Quebec, 30-31 July 2016, and the second in the Davis Mountains, TX, 14-15 October 2016. Both records were accepted by the ABA Checklist Committee on a unanimous vote (Pyle et al. 2017). The article includes a color photo of the Texas bird. Photos taken of both birds are diagnostic. Both were males.

It can be argued that records of this species from the U.S. were overdue. The record from Quebec is much more surprising, but southern hummingbirds have been recorded from far northern locations in recent decades. I don't think a compelling argument for captive origin can be made.

Recommendation:

I recommend adding the species to the U.S. list.

Literature cited:

Pyle, P., M. Gustafson, T. Johnson, A.W. Kratter, A. Lang, M.W. Lockwood, R. Pittaway, and D. Sibley. 2017. 28th Report of the ABA Checklist Committee 2017. *Birding* 49:28-35.

B. Pine Flycatcher (*Empidonax affinis*)**Background:**

From 28 May to 7 July, an actively calling (call notes, not song, so a female?) Pine Flycatcher was present on the east side of the Santa Rita Mountains at Aliso Spring, Pima County, Arizona. The record was unanimously accepted by both the Arizona Bird Committee and the ABA CLC (Pyle et al. 2017). The bird was audio-taped and was widely photographed, and a photo appeared in Pyle et al. (2017). Pyle et al. mentioned that the bird may have attempted to nest with a Cordilleran Flycatcher (*E. occidentalis*).

Recommendation:

I recommend that Pine Flycatcher be added to the U.S. list. It had long been predicted to occur in the Southwest. This record is superbly documented.

Literature cited:

Pyle, P., M. Gustafson, T. Johnson, A.W. Kratter, A. Lang, M.W. Lockwood, R. Pittaway, and D. Sibley. 2017. 28th Report of the ABA Checklist Committee 2017. *Birding* 49:28-35.

C. Cuban Vireo (*Vireo gundlachii*)

Background:

A well photographed and audio-recorded Cuban Vireo was present at Fort Zachary Taylor State Historic State Park, Key West, Monroe County, Florida, 19-24 April 2016. The record was accepted by the Florida Ornithological Society Records Committee in 2016 and unanimously by the ABA CLC in 2017 (Pyle et al. 2017). A color photo of this bird is published in Pyle et al. (2017). The caption states that this species was found at this location a year later “fueling speculation that a returning or long-staying individual was involved.”

Recommendation:

This species is endemic to Cuba where it is fairly common. I see no significant issues of origin that make the record problematical, and I recommend we add the species to the U.S. list. The published photos alone are diagnostic.

Literature cited:

Pyle, P., M. Gustafson, T. Johnson, A.W. Kratter, A. Lang, M.W. Lockwood, R. Pittaway, and D. Sibley. 2017. 28th Report of the ABA Checklist Committee 2017. *Birding* 49:28-35.

Submitted by: Jon Dunn

Date of Proposal: 11 January 2018

Change the English names of the two species of *Gallinula* that occur in our area

Background:

English and scientific names of NACC species of *Gallinula* have a tortured history. *Gallinula chloropus* has sometimes been considered to include what are now treated as two species, *G. chloropus* and *G. galeata*, and sometimes *G. galeata* has been considered a separate species. In the 1st through 3rd editions of the Checklist (AOU 1886, 1895, 1910), the scientific name was *G. galeata* and the English name Florida Gallinule was used. The 4th edition (AOU 1931) merged *galeata* into *chloropus*, and referred to the taxon in North America as *G. chloropus cachinnans*, using the English name Florida Gallinule for this subspecies. In the 5th and 6th editions, the scientific name *G. chloropus* was used and the English name for this taxon became first Common Gallinule (in the 5th edition; AOU 1957) and then Common Moorhen (in the 6th and 7th editions; AOU 1983, 1998). A proposal to change the name back to Common Gallinule was rejected in 2007.

In the 52nd supplement (Chesser et al. 2011), we split *G. galeata* from *G. chloropus*, adopted the name Common Gallinule for *galeata*, and removed *chloropus* from the Checklist. In the 54th supplement (Chesser et al. 2013), *G. chloropus* was re-added to the Checklist as an accidental. Although this taxon was now *G. chloropus sensu stricto*, we re-used the English name Common Moorhen for it. Thus, both Common Gallinule and Common Moorhen have been used by NACC for two different taxonomic entities: Common Gallinule for *G. chloropus sensu lato* and *G. galeata*, and Common Moorhen for *G. chloropus sensu lato* and *G. chloropus sensu stricto*:

checklist edition	scientific name	English name
1-3	<i>galeata</i>	Florida Gallinule
4	<i>chloropus cachinnans</i>	Florida Gallinule
5	<i>chloropus s. l.</i>	Common Gallinule
6-7	<i>chloropus s. l.</i>	Common Moorhen
52 suppl	<i>galeata</i>	Common Gallinule
54 suppl	<i>galeata / chloropus s. s.</i>	Common Gallinule / Common Moorhen

Doug's comments on the proposal to add *chloropus* s.s. to the Checklist (2013-B-3) summed up the need for change: "Given that we now have a record for North America of true *Gallinula chloropus*, I think the continued use of Common Moorhen for the daughter species *chloropus* from the split of *chloropus* and *galeata* opens all sorts of opportunity for confusion (as does the use of Common Gallinule, formerly used by AOU for the entire *Gallinula chloropus*). Obviously this is not the place to deal with this issue but we really should fix this problem. I personally think that *Gallinula galeata* is a Moorhen, but even if it is a Gallinule, it needs to be something like American Gallinule, and *chloropus* should be Eurasian Gallinule or some such."

New Information:

Most global sources (IOC, HBW, Howard & Moore) use the same names for these taxa as we do, but Clements has adopted the English name Eurasian Moorhen for *G. chloropus*. They retain the English name Common Gallinule for *G. galeata*, in keeping with NACC usage, although apparently with reluctance.

Recommendation:

This is a mess, and I think it's worth considering changing the name of *G. chloropus* to Eurasian Moorhen and *G. galeata* to the parallel American Moorhen, especially considering that one global source has already made the change to Eurasian Moorhen. Advantages are that (1) it will be crystal clear what is being talked about when the names Eurasian Moorhen and American Moorhen are used, thereby greatly reducing confusion; (2) all species of *Gallinula* would be called Woodhen or Moorhen in English, restricting the English name Gallinule to *Porphyrio* or *Porphyriops*; (3) the geographical ranges of the species would be clear from the names, further reducing confusion; and (4) it would bring us into conformance with our own guidelines about creating new names for daughter species. The main disadvantages are (1) that this would be yet another change to names that have already been changed a number of times, thereby potentially introducing more confusion and consternation; and (2) that Common Moorhen is still used by most global sources. I don't feel strongly one way or the other, but I lean towards changing the names. Please vote on the following:

- (a) change the name of *G. chloropus* to Eurasian Moorhen, and
- (b) change the name of *G. galeata* to American Moorhen.

Of course if anyone thinks a name change would be beneficial but considers other names to be better, such as American Gallinule for *G. galeata*, suggestions of different names would be welcomed.

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Submitted by: Terry Chesser

Date of Proposal: 16 January 2018

Change the English name of *Leistes militaris* to Red-breasted Meadowlark

NOTE: This proposal is based largely on SACC proposal 641-B.

Background:

The English group name of most species in the Sturnellinae is Meadowlark, but two species have been commonly known as Blackbird: the Red-breasted Blackbird (*Leistes militaris*) and the White-browed Blackbird (*L. superciliaris*). These English names go back as far as Ridgway (1902), and these species do indeed superficially look and act more like other icterids called Blackbird than the species we call Meadowlark, at least those in North America (the southern South American group, at least *L. bellicosa*, might be considered somewhat intermediate between blackbird and North American meadowlark). One of these primarily South American species, *L. militaris*, also occurs in our area, its range extending as far north as Nicaragua.

New Information:

Although the two *Sturnella* currently called Blackbird have a long history with that name, Jaramillo & Burke (1999) listed Red-breasted Meadowlark and Northern Marsh Meadowlark as alternative names for *L. militaris*, and White-browed Meadowlark and Southern Marsh Meadowlark for *L. superciliaris*. SACC recently considered a proposal to change the names of these species to Red-breasted Meadowlark and White-browed Meadowlark, respectively, which passed albeit with some dissenting votes (see comments from SACC below).

Recommendation:

The advantage of maintaining the name Red-breasted Blackbird is stability. It has been known as Blackbird in almost all regularly used references. Although Red-breasted Meadowlark has been adopted by SACC and Clements, it has not been adopted by other global sources (e.g., HBW, IOC, Howard & Moore). However, we generally go along with SACC for species that are primarily South American, as is the case here.

The advantage of changing the name to Meadowlark is that it removes the misleading notion that this species is closely related to the true blackbirds, all of which are in a distant branch of the Icteridae. The change would create a 1-to-1 correspondence between all NACC species of Sturnellinae and an English name (Meadowlark). Thus, it represents a rare opportunity for a match between English names and phylogeny. As is, two species in monophyletic *Leistes* are called Something Blackbird and the rest are Something Meadowlark. Also, removal of Blackbird from these two species of *Leistes*

would constrain the name Blackbird (in the W. Hemisphere) to members of the Agelaiinae except for monotypic Xanthocephalinae. Although we recognize that it is impossible to legislate such conformity of English names to phylogeny, this is an example of a relatively painless and rare opportunity to do so.

Disadvantages are that South American species *L. loyca*, *L. defilippii*, and *L. bellicosa* have all been known at one time or another as Something (Greater, Lesser, and Peruvian) Red-breasted Meadowlark, thus leading to potential confusion; on the other hand, a degree of confusion already exists because the only species currently with Red-breasted in its name is *L. militaris*.

We recommend a YES vote on this, to conform to SACC's classification and to improve the match between phylogeny and English names.

Literature Cited:

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Jaramillo, A., and P. Burke. 1999. New World Blackbirds. Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey.

Submitted by: Van Remsen and Terry Chesser

Date of Proposal: 16 January 2018

Comments from SACC:

Comments from Zimmer: NO. I'm less enthusiastic about changing on these two than I was in the preceding sub-proposal. We don't have the whole parasite versus non-parasite ecological question that is presented by the Baywings versus the Cowbirds, and, *S. militaris* and *S. superciliosus* are morphologically and vocally atypical *Sturnella*. I'm almost certainly guilty of logical inconsistency (relative to my votes on other proposals) by voting NO, but I just don't think the return for the blow to nomenclatural stability is worth the tradeoff in this particular case.

Comments from Robbins: YES. Regardless of what we do it will continue to cause confusion. So, it really doesn't matter; however, given that I voted YES to changing the English names of the cowbird and oropendolas, to be consistent, I will cast a YES for this proposal.

Comments from Jaramillo: YES. I can go either way on this one, either way it is confusing and imperfect. I also think that Red-breasted Meadowlark and White-browed Meadowlarks are about the least informative of names, as the rest of the South American meadowlarks are all red breasted and white browed. It is too bad that they are not restricted to marshes, as marsh-meadowlark has a nice ring to it. Having said all that, whenever I am on tour and I see these birds I tell people that they are actually meadowlarks, and it is interesting to realize how few folks had come to that conclusion on their own, but once you tell them, they see that indeed they are. I do think that some new travelers to the south assume that they are red and white browed versions of a Brewer's Blackbird or something of that sort, and that seems so off that maybe putting the name meadowlark in there to clarify things is not a bad idea. So cutting to the chase, let's change it to the more informative, but imperfect Meadowlark names.

Comments from Stotz: NO. White-browed Meadowlark is fine. Red-breasted Meadowlark for *militaris* is not fine. All the other red-breasted Meadowlarks have had Red-breasted in their names, and what is now *defilippii* was at one time called *militaris* in either *Pezites* or *Sturnella*. I think it would be really confusing to have a Red-breasted Meadowlark that is *Sturnella militaris* (ex-*Leistes*) rather than ex-*Pezites*).

So I think we need a new name for *militaris* if it is to be called a Meadowlark. I think at one time *militaris* was called Military Blackbird, so could go with Military Meadowlark. Not very creative. Another option is something that refers to the fact that it is the darkest headed of these birds, with no white eyebrow, so something like Black-faced, Black-cheeked, Black-cowled or something.

Revise generic assignments of woodpeckers of the genus *Picoides***Background:**

Based largely on the phylogeny of the pied woodpeckers from Fuchs and Pons (2015), as well as the findings of Weibel and Moore (2002a, 2002b) and Winkler *et al.* (2014), Proposal 2016-A-4 proposed that the genus *Picoides* be split into three genera (*Picoides*, *Dryobates*, and *Leuconotopicus*). This proposal did not pass, with most “no” votes opting to wait for additional studies, several of which were known to be in the works.

The following species were included in 2016-A-4 and are considered in this proposal:

Picoides scalaris

Picoides nuttallii

Picoides pubescens

Picoides fumigatus

Picoides villosus

Picoides arizonae

Picoides stricklandi

Picoides borealis

Picoides albolarvatus

Picoides dorsalis

Picoides arcticus

New Information:

Two papers that support the findings of Fuchs and Pons (2015) were recently published: a supertree of the family Picidae (Dufort 2016) and a comprehensive phylogeny of 203 of the 217 species of woodpeckers based on 6 genes (3 mtDNA loci, one Z-linked gene, and 2 autosomal loci; Shakya *et al.* 2017). Both studies largely corroborate the results of Fuchs and Pons (2015), supporting the finding that the *Picoides* of North America are paraphyletic and should be split into 3 genera.

Addressing some of the concerns of the committee from 2016, these studies (1) place the pied woodpeckers sampled by Fuchs and Pons (2015) into a broader context of other members of Picidae (notably sampling additional species of *Veniliornis*, which largely renders two large clades of *Picoides* paraphyletic); and (2) sample additional loci, providing greater confidence for important nodes relevant to the revision of

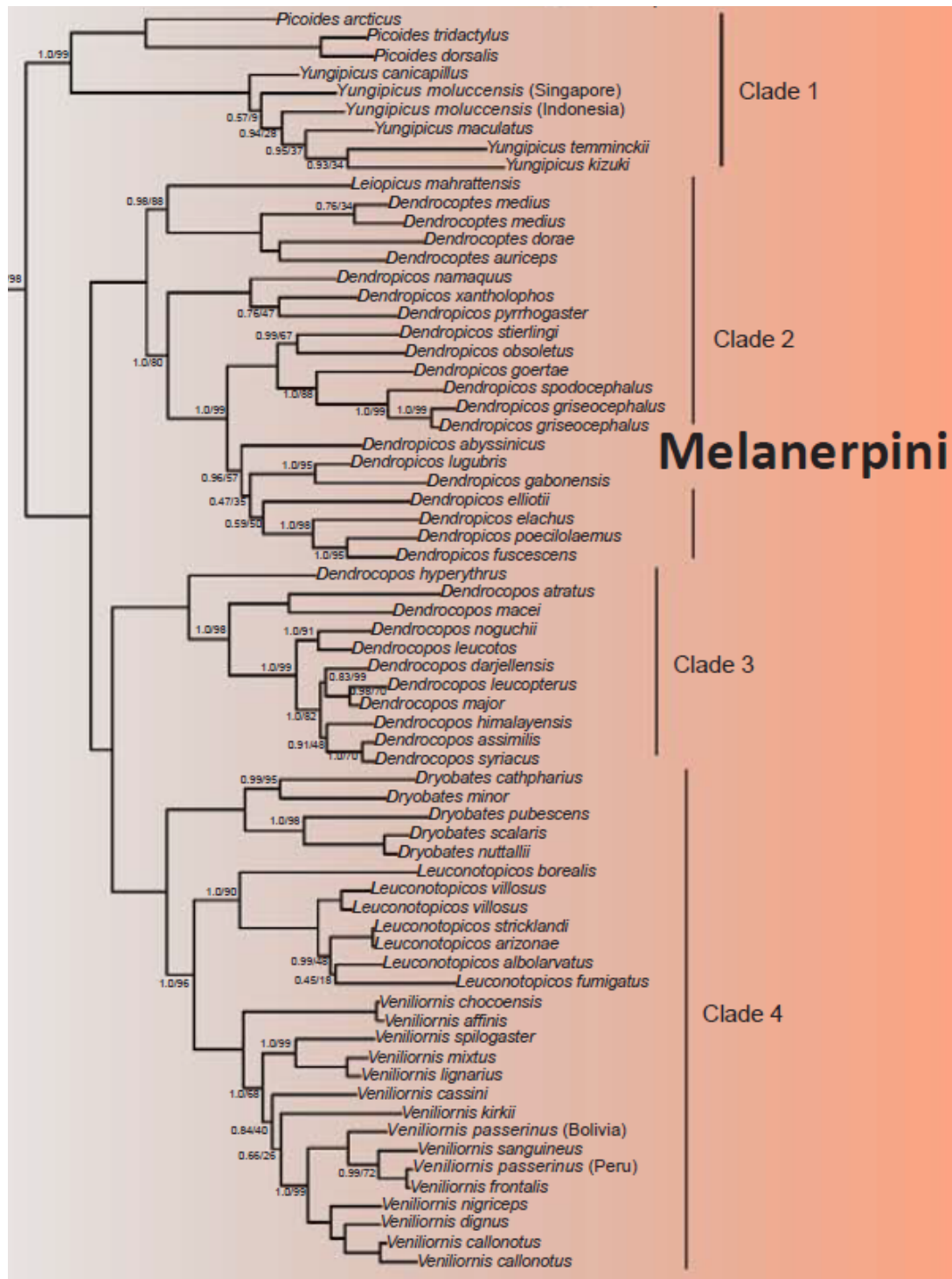


Figure 1: Part of Fig. 1 from Shakya *et al.* (2017), showing the relevant subset of their phylogeny. This is a Bayesian tree based on mtDNA and nuclear sequence data. Posterior probabilities less than 1.0 and bootstrap values less than 100% are shown next to nodes. Nodes without values have posterior probabilities of 1.0 and bootstrap values of 100%.

Picoides. Species of *Picoides* in the current NACC classification form 3 clades in all recent phylogenies (Fig. 1; Fuchs and Pons 2015, Dunfort 2016, Shakya *et al.* 2017). The “three-toed” woodpeckers (*P. dorsalis* and *P. arcticus*) are sister to a clade of Asian woodpeckers previously in the genus *Dendrocopos* (*Yungipicus* in Shakya *et al.* 2017). These two clades are in turn sister to the remaining species of *Dendrocopos*, *Picoides*, *Veniliornis*, and *Dendropicos*. In Shakya *et al.* 2017, this relationship received very high support, whereas Dufort 2016 found high to moderate support for this relationship. The other North American species of *Picoides* are further split between two clades, which are not sisters. Instead, *fumigatus*, *villosus*, *arizonae*, *stricklandi*, *borealis*, and *albolarvatus* form a well-supported clade, which is sister to a large and well-supported clade of *Veniliornis* (represented on the North American checklist only by *V. kirkii*). These two well-supported clades are in turn sister to the remaining North American species of *Picoides* (*pubescens*, *nuttallii*, and *scalaris*), which form a clade that also includes two Eurasian species of *Dendrocopos* (*minor* and *cathpharius*).

Recommendation:

(1) Based on these well-supported molecular phylogenies of the *Picoides*, I recommend following the taxonomic suggestions of Fuchs and Pons (2015), which were also followed by the two more recent woodpecker studies (Dufort 2016, Shakya *et al.* 2017). This included resurrecting two genera, *Leuconotopicus* and *Dryobates*. Under this new classification, *Dryobates* would include *pubescens*, *nuttallii*, and *scalaris*, whereas *Leuconotopicus* would include *fumigatus*, *villosus*, *arizonae*, *stricklandi*, *borealis*, and *albolarvatus*. Both *arcticus* and *dorsalis* would be retained in *Picoides*. Adopting these changes would also require revision to the linear sequence on the checklist. I propose the following linear sequence:

Sphyrapicus
Xiphidiopicus
Picoides arcticus
Picoides dorsalis
Dendrocopos major
Dryobates pubescens
Dryobates scalaris
Dryobates nuttallii
Leuconotopicus borealis
Leuconotopicus villosus
Leuconotopicus arizonae
Leuconotopicus stricklandi
Leuconotopicus albolarvatus

Leuconotopicus fumigatus
Veniliornis kirkii

(2) A second option for revising the generic limits of *Picoides* is available but not recommended. Under this option, *arcticus* and *dorsalis* would again be the only species of *Picoides* in North America, but all other members would be included in an expanded *Dryobates*, which would include *pubescens/scalaris/nuttallii*, all of *Veniliornis*, and all the members of the *borealis/villosus/arizonae/stricklandi/albolarvatus/fumigatus* clade. The genus *Dryobates* 1826 has priority over *Veniliornis* 1854 and *Leuconotopicus* 1845. This arrangement would eliminate the need for multiple genera of morphologically similar species. The linear sequence would be the same as the one shown above, except *Dryobates* would replace *Leuconotopicus* and *Veniliornis*.

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Submitted by: Shawn M. Billerman

Date of Proposal: 16 January 2018

Split the storm-petrels (Hydrobatidae) into two families

Background:

The relationships of the storm-petrels are complicated, and major revisions of this group are warranted. Currently treated as a single family by the AOS Checklist, the storm-petrels have sometimes been divided into two subfamilies, the northern (Hydrobatinae) and southern storm-petrels (Oceanitinae), with most Oceanitinae breeding in the Southern Hemisphere, and many Hydrobatinae breeding in the Northern Hemisphere (Dickinson and Remsen 2013).

New Information:

Recently, the monophyly of the storm-petrels has come into question. Although the exact relationships of the storm-petrels, both with respect to each other and the other Procellariiformes, has not been fully resolved, the two storm-petrel subfamilies have nonetheless been consistently been found to not be sister taxa (Kennedy and Page 2002, Hackett *et al.* 2008, Prum *et al.* 2015, Reddy *et al.* 2017). An early supertree analysis from Kennedy and Page (2002) was the first to suggest that the storm-petrels did not represent a monophyletic group. Their supertree, largely based on mtDNA sequence data, found that the northern storm-petrels (Hydrobatinae) were sister to the rest of the tubenoses, including the southern storm-petrels (Oceanitinae). The Oceanitinae were found to be sister to the petrels and shearwaters (Procellariidae) (Kennedy and Page 2002).

In more recent studies that investigate the deeper relationships of the avian tree of life, the storm-petrels have again been found to be paraphyletic. Although the different studies that have included the two groups of storm-petrels have not agreed on the exact placement within the Procellariiformes, they have consistently been found to be paraphyletic. Hackett *et al.* (2008) found a relationship opposite the findings of Kennedy and Page (2002), with *Oceanites* of Oceanitinae sister to the rest of Procellariiformes, and *Oceanodroma* of Hydrobatinae sister to the petrels and shearwaters (Procellariidae). A third hypothesis for relationships among Procellariiformes was proposed by both Prum *et al.* (2015) and Reddy *et al.* (2017), who found Hydrobatinae to be sister to Procellariidae, and Oceanitinae sister to the clade of Hydrobatinae + Procellariidae.

Recommendation:

Despite the conflicting hypotheses for relationships of the main groups of tubenoses, all recent analyses that include representatives of both northern and southern storm-petrels consistently find that they are not monophyletic. Therefore, I recommend that they be treated as separate families. The northern storm-petrels should retain the name Hydrobatidae, and the southern storm-petrels should be named Oceanitidae, based on the existing subfamily name. Although there has been no consensus of the exact placement of the storm-petrel groups, I recommend adopting a linear sequence following the relationships in Prum *et al.* (2015) and Reddy *et al.* (2017). Many others have taken the approach of splitting the two storm-petrel families, including the Howard and Moore Checklist (Dickinson and Remsen 2013) and the HBW/Birdlife Checklist (del Hoyo and Collar 2014). The linear sequence adopted by other authorities has differed. For example, Dickinson and Remsen (2013) followed the relationships in Hackett *et al.* (2008) and placing Oceanitidae first in the linear sequence, followed by Diomedidae, Hydrobatidae, and Procellariidae. Del Hoyo and Collar (2014), in contrast, placed Oceanitidae first in the linear sequence, followed by Hydrobatidae, Diomedidae, and finally Procellariidae.

Proposed Linear Sequence (family-level):

PROCELLARIIFORMES

Diomedidae (Albatrosses)

Oceanitidae (Southern Storm-Petrels)

- Wilson's Storm-Petrel (*Oceanites oceanicus*)
- White-faced Storm-Petrel (*Pelagodroma marina*)
- Black-bellied Storm-Petrel (*Fregetta tropica*)

Hydrobatidae (Northern Storm-Petrels)

- European Storm-Petrel (*Hydrobates pelagicus*)
- Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma furcata*)
- Ringed Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma hornbyi*)
- Swinhoe's Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma monorhis*)
- Leach's Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma leucorhoa*)
- Townsend's Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma socorroensis*)
- Ainley's Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma cheimomnestes*)
- Ashy Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma homochroa*)
- Band-rumped Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma castro*)
- Wedge-rumped Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma tethys*)
- Black Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma melania*)
- Guadalupe Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma macrodactyla*)
- Markham's Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma markhami*)

- Tristram's Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma tristrami*)
- Least Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma microsoma*)

Procellariidae (Petrels and Shearwaters)

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Submitted by: Shawn M. Billerman, Cornell Lab of Ornithology

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