

AOS Classification Committee – North and Middle America

Proposal Set 2019-A

18 September 2018

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Split Northern Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis* into two species**Background:**

The Northern Fulmar (*Fulmarus glacialis*) has very complex geographical variation. It occurs in two allopatric populations: a smaller-bodied and slimmer-billed [on average] Pacific population, which includes a greater range of light to dark morph plumages and higher concentrations of light morph birds in the north; and a larger-bodied Atlantic population, with bills that vary clinally and a greater concentration of light morph birds in the south. Bill and body size measurements overlap between the populations (Pyle 2008). The nominate subspecies occurs in the Atlantic, although the southern clinal variant is sometimes accepted as a separate subspecies (*F. g. auduboni*). The Pacific population currently is all regarded as *F. g. rodgersii*, which was formerly viewed as a separate species, but at that time the name referred only to the extreme light birds of the north Pacific (American Ornithologists' Union 1910).

Despite this complicated geographical variation, the difference between the Atlantic and Pacific populations is comparable to that observed between other procellariid species, which do tend to display limited plumage divergence. Notably in Northern Fulmars, tail feathers of Pacific birds are typically darker than the uppertail coverts, whereas Atlantic birds lack this contrast (Howell 2012, Sibley 2000). Bill color also varies, appearing greenish-gray in most Atlantic birds but lighter and pinkish in Pacific birds (Howell 2012). Using a suite of the aforementioned characteristics, most birds can be assigned morphologically to either the Atlantic or Pacific population. That these two populations could in fact represent two species has been suggested elsewhere (e.g., Howell 2012).

The two populations are completely allopatric and thus genetic divergence may offer good insight into species-level boundaries. However, the lineage divergence within the Northern Fulmar has limited points for comparison from closely allied species as it is a member of a clade comprised predominantly of monotypic genera (e.g. *Daption*, *Thalassarche*, and *Pagodroma*). The only exception is *Macronectes*, which includes a pair of subtly distinguishable sister species whose breeding is primarily separated by phenology (Bourne and Warham 1966).

The Northern Fulmar was one of fifteen species identified via a continental survey of DNA barcodes as harboring levels of mitochondrial genetic divergence on par with that typically observed between species (Kerr et al. 2007); however, the divergent Pacific population was represented in that study by only a single specimen. An earlier study examining cytochrome *b* in Procellariiformes yielded similar results, but only included single specimens from both the Atlantic and Pacific (Penhallurick and Wink 2004). In addition to issues with sample size, these collective data reflect only the mtDNA lineage, but still offered preliminary insight into genetic divergence within this species.

New Information:

Kerr and Dove (2013) published a more comprehensive survey of genetic variation in the Northern Fulmar, which included examination of 134 specimens in total (81 Atlantic specimens

and 53 Pacific specimens) and featured both mitochondrial and nuclear markers. The specimens included in the study covered a broad span of the Northern Fulmar's range and also included representatives from all but one of the members of the Fulmarine clade.

The mitochondrial lineages clearly and consistently separate into Atlantic and Pacific populations (Fig. 1), though they are closer to each other than either is to the sister taxon from the Southern Hemisphere, *F. glacialis* (Fig. 2). The degree of intraspecific mitochondrial divergence is unparalleled in other procellariid species examined to date. In contrast, the pair of *Macronectes* species are not very readily distinguishable genetically, even when using mitochondrial markers.

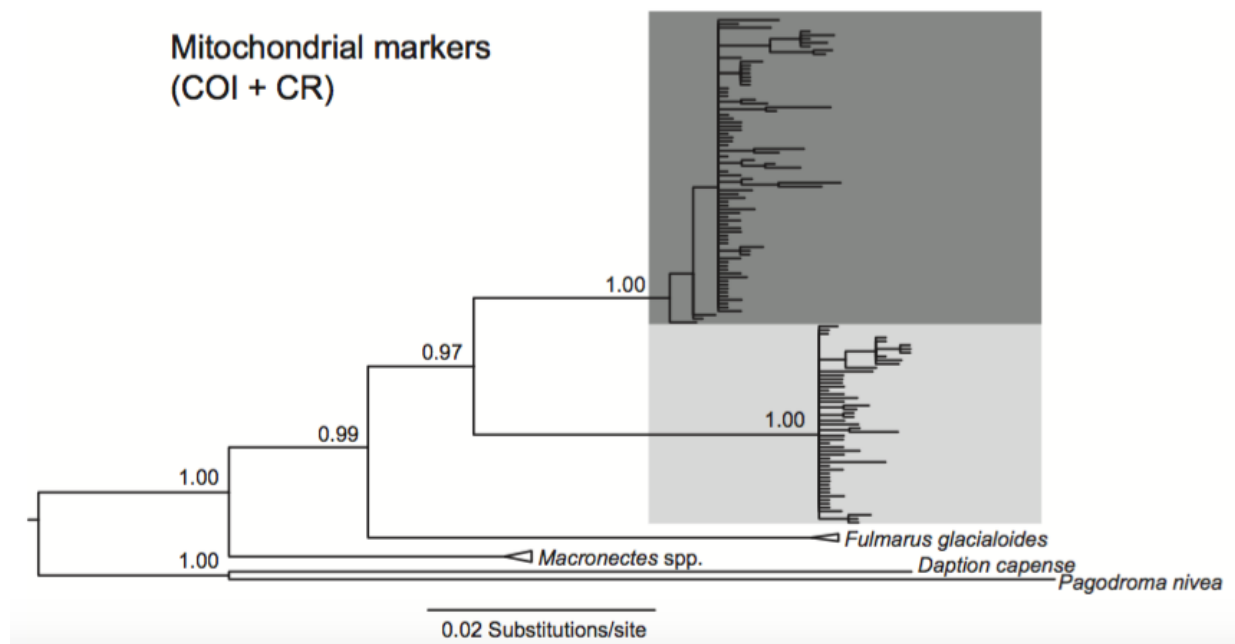


Fig. 1. Concatenated gene trees based on mitochondrial markers, estimated using MrBayes. Dark grey represents the Atlantic populations; light grey represents the Pacific population. From Kerr and Dove (2013).

The nuclear data expectedly were less definitive. The two neutral markers examined (MYOII and CHD1-Z) demonstrated reciprocal monophyly between *F. glacialis* and *F. glacialisoides*, but even these well-accepted taxa, which are thought to have diverged more than 3 million years ago, only differed by one or two characters (based on a very limited sample size for *F. glacialisoides*). CHD1-Z showed almost no variation at all within Northern Fulmar, whereas MYOII presented a pattern consistent with early divergence, wherein only the most common haplotype was shared between populations.

The current assignment of Atlantic and Pacific populations to a single species is inconsistent with other taxonomic assignments within the family. Similar lines of evidence to that summarized here have been accepted as support for species boundaries between other

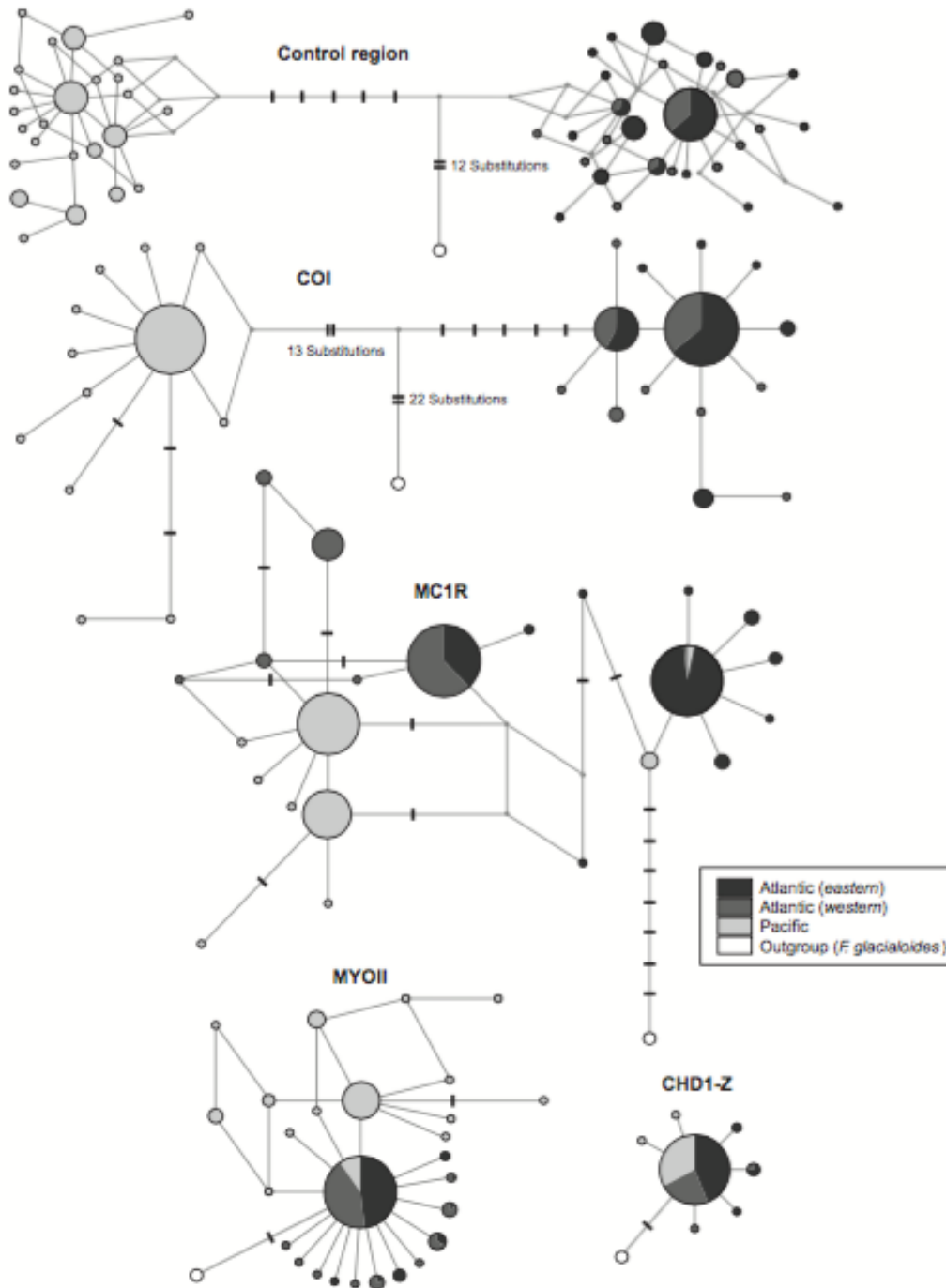


Fig. 2. Median-joining haplotype networks for each of the five markers included in this study. The size of the circle is proportional to the number of individuals (CR, COI, and CHD1-Z) or alleles (MC1R and MYOII) with that haplotype. Adjoining circles are separated by a single nucleotide substitution. Additional substitutions are indicated by either hatch marks or, for larger values, a double hatch mark and a number. Dots indicate an unobserved median vector. Shading indicates the specimen's region of origin (the Atlantic region is divided into areas east and west of Greenland, respectively). From Kerr and Dove (2013).

Procellariid taxa, such as *Pterodroma madeira* and *P. feae* (Zino et al. 2008) and *P. sandwichensis* and *P. phaeopygia* (Welch et al. 2011). Genetic divergence within the Northern Fulmar is greater than that observed between either of these species pairs. Bearing in mind that the Northern Fulmar is well-known for its exceptional longevity and that the rate of molecular evolution is inversely related to generation time, the time since divergence is significant. These parameters would also predict a very long time to reciprocal monophyly for nuclear markers, which explains their limited resolution, as discussed in Kerr and Dove (2013).

The species pairs mentioned above, as well as many other species groups within the family, are nearly indistinguishable morphologically. Variation between Atlantic and Pacific fulmars on the other hand has largely been overlooked due to the extensive variation within either population. The population differences described in the Background (i.e., tail and bill coloration) have often been neglected, and some contemporary field guides illustrate chimeric individuals, with features adopted from both populations, presumably in an attempt to capture an average appearance. This confusion over the variation within the Northern Fulmar has likely contributed to the underappreciation of taxonomic-level differences between the populations.

Their allopatric distribution understandably presents a challenge for the Biological Species Concept. Calls are not acknowledged to vary between the populations (Mallory et al. 2012), but this is likely less impactful to fulmars than it would be to other members of the Procellariidae, which typically have nocturnal habits at nest sites. Similarly, little variation between populations is acknowledged for their nuptial displays (Mallory et al. 2012), despite an apparently erroneous suggestion to the contrary in an older text (Dement'ev et al. 1969). Although their modern distribution offers no tests for assortative mating, additional support for the species status of the Atlantic and Pacific populations of the Northern Fulmar may be derived through comparative phylogeography. They share their modern distribution and habitat requirements with a number of alcid species and allospecies pairs (e.g. *Uria aalge*, *U. lomvia*, and *Fratercula arctica/corniculata*). The Atlantic/Pacific divergence estimates for these species are varied but estimated to be as recent as 56,000–226,000 years ago. Because they have shared habitat requirements, this could indicate that the fulmar populations have had repeated opportunities for migration since their initial separation yet have remained isolated and robust.

Recommendation:

We recommend splitting *Fulmarus glacialis* (Northern Fulmar, Fulmar boréal) into two species:

Atlantic population: *Fulmarus glacialis* (Atlantic Fulmar, Fulmar de l'Atlantique)

Pacific population: *Fulmarus rodgersii* (Pacific Fulmar, Fulmar du Pacifique)

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Submitted by: Kevin Kerr and Carla Dove

Date of Proposal: 30 April 2018

Elevate Harlan's Hawk *Buteo (jamaicensis) harlani* to species status**Background:**

Harlan's Hawk, described by Audubon in 1830, has been treated both as a species (*Buteo harlani*) (1830–1891 and 1944–1972) and as a subspecies of Red-tailed Hawk (*B. jamaicensis harlani*) (1891–1944 and 1973 to present). Both decisions making it a subspecies lacked taxonomic justification, whereas the 1944 decision to consider it a species again was supported by convincing arguments of Taverner (1936), and, although not cited in this decision, the differences in plumages described in Wood (1932). Peter's *Check-list* (1931) was also cited; presumably his reputation and personal correspondences may have had some influence in this decision. The three references cited in the 1972 decision (Brown & Amadon 1968, Godfrey 1966, and Van Tyne & Sutton 1937) offered no taxonomic justifications. Further, there was no rebuttal of the arguments for species status in Taverner (1936) and Wood (1932).

I have treated Harlan's Hawk separately from Red-tailed Hawk in my various raptor field guides (Clark and Wheeler 2001, Wheeler and Clark 1999, and Clark and Schmitt 2018) because they are so different. Liguori and Sullivan (2010) described how to identify Harlan's Hawk in the field, including a new field mark for many *harlani* adults not shown by (other) Red-tailed Hawks; they showed white spots ('headlights') where the forewings meet the body. Clark (2009) showed great differences in color and pattern of adult Harlan's Hawk tails.

The only paper to date to compare DNA between *harlani* and two other subspecies of *B. jamaicensis* indicated some gene flow between them but could not offer definitive guidance as to their taxonomic relationship (Hull *et al.* 2010), concluding only that their data do not support specific status for *harlani*. See Clark (2018) for a discussion why their results do not offer guidance on the species status of *harlani*.

New information:

I have found (Clark 2018) that Harlan's Hawk (taxon *harlani*) differs from Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*) in five areas. (1) color morph frequency; (2) plumages, especially adult tails; (3) neoteny in that adult and juvenile body plumages are similar; (4) extent of unfeathered tarsi; and (5) some behaviors.

Color morph frequency- Most *harlani* adult specimens examined were dark morph (392 of 503, 78%); however, a higher percentage of dark-morph adults were counted in Alaska (477 of 530, 90%). In contrast, few specimens (43 of 2442, 1.8%) of *B. j. calurus* were dark morph. The frequency of color morph of specimens of these taxa does not differ significantly (Chi-square = 1916.16, 1 df, $p < 0.0001$). No dark-morph individuals have been reported for other North American subspecies of *B. jamaicensis*.

Plumages- Adult *harlani* differed consistently in plumage from adults of all other subspecies of *B. jamaicensis*, especially *calurus*, by the traits listed in Table 1 and shown in Figure 1 for light morph and Figure 2 for dark morph (see also Wheeler & Clark 1995; Clark & Wheeler 2001; Liguori & Sullivan 2010a; Clark 2014a). Specimens of *harlani* from AK (47), YK (11), and BC

(26), covering the breeding range, showed the same variation in characters shown in Tables 1 and 2, with no characters limited to a part of this range.

Table 1. Comparison of traits of adults of *harlani* and *calurus*

Trait	<i>harlani</i>	<i>calurus</i>
Upper tails	Highly variable in color* and pattern	Rufous, regular
Under tails	White or whitish	Pink or pale rufous
Body & head feathers	Cold blackish, white bases	Warm brown, dark bases
Forehead & crown	Streaked white	Unstreaked dark brown
Breast (dark morph)	Variable*, white streaking	Uniformly dark
Breast & underwings (light morph)	White	Rufous-buff to creamy wash
Throat	Whitish, dark on some dark morphs	Usually dark
Superciliary (light morph)	Wide	Absent
Malar (light morph)	Narrow	Wide
Secondaries below	Often mottled or unmarked	Narrowly banded
Body plumage	Adult like juvenile	Adult differs from juvenile

*Including rufous

Table 2. Characters of 530 migrant adult Harlan's Hawks photographed, Gunsight Mt., Alaska, in 2008 and 2010.

Character	Variation
Color morph	Dark (n = 477) 90%, light (n = 53) 10%
Throat (dark morph)	White or streaked (n = 313) 66%; dark (n = 164) 34%
Breast (dark morph)	White markings (n = 377) 80%, all dark (n = 41) 9%, buff-rufous or brown-rufous (n = 51) 11%
Subterminal band	None (n = 47) 9%, dusky (n = 453) 88%, dark and crisp (n = 17) 3%
Secondaries	Any mottling (234 of 495) 47%, wide banding (11 of 495) 2%, banding same as adult Red-tailed Hawk (250 of 495) 51%
Outer primary tips	Barred or pale (327 of 529) 62%, dark (202 of 529) 38%

Adult *harlani* showed great variety in the color and pattern of their tails, with no two tails exactly alike in coloration and pattern (Figures 1, 2, 4) (Clark 2009, 2015). Adult *harlani* tails varied greatly in dorsal color, from white to pale gray to dark gray to gray-brown to pale to dark rufous, or in many tails, some mix of these colors. Almost all adult *harlani* tails, even those dorsally rufous, were whitish below rather than pinkish as in adult *B. jamaicensis* of all other subspecies. In contrast, upper tails of adult *B. jamaicensis* of other subspecies were completely rufous (Figure 3).



FIGURE 1. Dorsal comparison of light-morph adults: Harlan's Hawk (left) DMNH 5410) and adult light Western Red-tailed Hawk (right) (UWBM 68220). Adult light Harlan's show much whitish markings on the upperparts.



FIGURE 2. Comparison of two dark-morph adult Harlan's Hawks (top—MVZ 44731, middle—MVZ 66417) and an adult dark-morph western Red-tailed Hawk (bottom—MVZ 99763). Ventral (left): Most dark adult Harlan's show many white markings on the undersides; adult dark Red-tailed Hawks show little, if any. Dorsal (right): Most dark adult Harlan's show lots of white markings on the head and upperparts; adult dark Red-tailed Hawks show few, if any, of these white markings.



FIGURE 3. Range of tail variation in adult *Buteo jamaicensis*.

Please look at the ppt on extreme tail variation (Clark 2015).

Neoteny- Body plumage differences by age. Adult and juvenile body, wing, and tail covert plumages of *harlani* are nearly identical, thus reflecting a degree of neoteny. However, adult and juvenile *harlani* differ in tail pattern and width of the subterminal band on the remiges. Most dark-morph adult and juvenile *harlani* have juvenile-like white bases to many body and head feathers and, as a result, show whitish markings on these (Figures 4a–b). This is shown by juvenile *B. jamaicensis* of subspecies other than *harlani*, but not by adults. Thus, body and covert plumages of all other subspecies of *B. jamaicensis* differ in coloration and markings

between adults and juveniles. Adult *B. jamaicensis* taxa except *harlani* have dark reddish-brown upperparts that have dark bases, whereas juveniles have dark brown upperparts with white bases. Underparts are buffy in adults, with dark barring and blobs, whereas juveniles have white to creamy underparts and dark brown blobs (Figures 5a–b).



FIGURE 4a. Two adult and two juvenile dark-morph Harlan's Hawks showing almost identical body plumage: (Bottom to top: adult—WFVZ 20583; juvenile—WFVZ 49744; adult—WFVZ 20586; juvenile—WFVZ 49743).



FIGURE 4b. Two adult and two juvenile light-morph Harlan's Hawks showing almost identical body plumage: (Bottom to top: adult—WFVZ 20596; juvenile—WFVZ 20598; adult—WFVZ 20582; juvenile—WFVZ 20553).



FIGURE 5a. Differences in body plumage by age of *B. jamaicensis calurus*, rufous morph: Juvenile (above—DMNS 14613) and adult (below—UWBM 37235).



FIGURE 5b. Differences in body plumage by age of *B. jamaicensis alascensis*: Juvenile above (UBC 4657) and adult below (UBC 917).

Difference in extent of unfeathered tarsus. All breeding season *harlani* (both live birds and specimens, $n = 107$) had significantly shorter unfeathered areas on the lower tarsi (25.7–35.7 mm, mean = 32.1 mm, sd = 2.33 mm) than did all breeding season *B. j. calurus* specimens and living birds ($n = 220$) (36.0–50.3 mm, mean = 41.4 mm, sd = 3.06 mm), with no overlap (Figure 6) (T-test: $p < 0.0001$, $t = 29.29$, $df = 228$). Mean length of unfeathered tarsi of 986 non-breeding season birds that showed plumage characters only of *harlani* was 31.9 mm (23.5–36.0 mm, sd = 2.39). Several specimens of *harlani* had feathering extending farther down the sides of the tarsi (e.g., adult male, PSM 17698 and juvenile male UWBM 36713). The extent of the unfeathered tarsus of two other subspecies of *B. jamaicensis* was also greater than for *harlani*, but with some overlap.

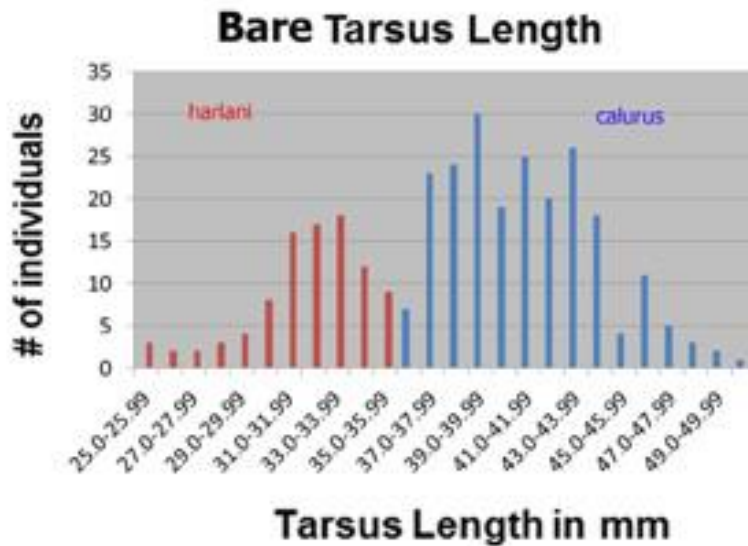


FIGURE 6. Differences in extent of unfeathered tarsi between Harlan's Hawk (red) and western Red-tailed Hawk (blue), from specimens collected during the breeding season. Excel files for both taxa are available as online supplementary files.

Behavioral differences. Lowe (1978) described a display flight of *harlani* that has not been described for other taxa of *B. jamaicensis* (Preston & Beane 1993). Flying adult males, with females nearby, would fold their wings back from the wrist, spread their tail, and fully extend their legs with widespread feet, then tilt from side to side while flying in circles. Lowe did not observe this type of courtship flight from pairs of resident Red-tailed Hawks in Oklahoma. Lowe (1978) also described another distinctive behavior: when agitated, dark-morph adult *harlani* would raise their breast feathers to show a white breast patch. I saw this as well in the Yukon in a screaming adult and another dark adult in Vancouver, BC, that was being harassed by other birds. Dark- and rufous-morph adult *B. j. calurus* have dark gray bases to breast feathers and cannot show this white patch; other North American subspecies lack dark and rufous morphs. Another behavioral difference between *harlani* and *B. jamaicensis* is that the former is warier and on average flushes at greater (often much greater) distances from vehicles and people compared to *B. jamaicensis*, which are typically much tamer.

I expound on these differences in my recent *Zootaxa* paper (Clark 2018).

Further information and photographs are in the four pdfs at the top of the list on my Global Raptor Information Network (GRIN) website at:

<http://www.globalraptors.org/grin/ResearcherResults.asp?lresID=155>

Three of them are cited below (Clark 2014a, Clark 2014b, Clark 2015).

Recommendation:

I recommend that *harlani* be treated again as a full species, Harlan's Hawk *Buteo harlani* (Audubon). Based on the lack of published taxonomic justification for considering *harlani* as a

subspecies of *B. jamaicensis* and its many diagnosable differences with *B. jamaicensis*, as discussed in Clark (2018).

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Submitted by: William S. Clark

Date of Proposal: 17 June 2018

Comment on Proposal 2019-A-2 (see separate document for figures)

On the status of Harlan's Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis harlani*) – A response to Clark (2018) and Clark's proposal to the AOS to elevate *B. j. harlani* to species status

The authors of this comment have a combined experience of more than 180 years studying raptors. We come from diverse backgrounds in science and fieldwork and have authored numerous books and articles on Red-tailed Hawk taxa including *B. j. harlani* (e.g., Lish and Burge 1995; Liguori 2001; Liguori 2004; Liguori and Sullivan 2010a; Crossley et al. 2013; Liguori and Sullivan 2014; Lish 2016). We provide this committee with a full suite of information on *harlani* based on current published works and unpublished information presented here. We hope this information helps in making a sound decision regarding the taxonomic status of *harlani*.

Introduction

It's important to state foremost that there is a significant lack of information from the breeding grounds of *harlani*, which makes much of what we know about this taxon tenuous. The limited work done on the breeding grounds so far concerns the farther south and eastern extremes of the range (western Canada), where there are many more mixed breeding pairs known than pairs of 'pure' *harlani*. The difficulty of finding and studying this taxon on its remote breeding grounds continues to hamper efforts to better understand it. Much of what we know, or assume, comes from observational and specimen data from migration and winter, when we cannot be positive about the geographic origins of any one individual. The lack of information from the breeding grounds is a significant deficiency in the work done so far around proposing *harlani* for species status.

Clark (2018) tells only part of the story of our current understanding of *harlani*. In recent years, new information has come to light that doesn't support the species theory, yet Clark chooses to dismiss these data or leave them out altogether. In this paper we provide a summary of the full state of current knowledge on *harlani* and rebut each of the arguments made for supporting its status as a species in Clark (2018) and in his proposal to the NACC.

Geographic variation in the Red-tailed Hawk is wildly complex, and we still lack knowledge about many described subspecies. Characters of any subspecies can be found in any other, and there are few hard geographic lines that separate the eight subspecies in North America. Few of these subspecies meet modern standards of diagnosability (*sensu* Remsen 2010), and perhaps should be subsumed into one broad-ranging, geographically variable taxon. But of these eight subspecies, *harlani* remains the most distinctive, and it may still satisfy modern standards for being recognized as a legitimate subspecies within Red-tailed Hawk.

Issue #1. Breeding range

Clark (2018) presented a breeding range for Harlan's based on traditional data sources, but then later goes on to describe 'breeding outside range' in Harlan's. Most of our breeding information on this taxon involves individuals that Clark would consider 'outside the range', in Alberta—a region that over the last decade has more confirmed *harlani* breeders than any other

part of the range. This is partly due to increased interest in the Canadian birding community around Red-tailed Hawk subspecies, and our uncovering of a relatively large range extension of *harlani* to the south and east. We now know that light morphs regularly breed south to the Calgary, AB, region, and even rarely as far south as North Dakota (Sullivan and Liguori 2010b). Summer records of adults are abundant from Alberta, and even extend east to around Regina, Saskatchewan, and more rarely into Manitoba (eBird, photos), where the influence changes mainly to *kriderii*. More study is needed to further clarify the true eastern and southern extent of *harlani*'s breeding range. In contrast to the range map given in Clark (2018), the author goes on to say that *harlani* does breed in western Canada, and hybridizes there with intergrades and pure Red-tailed Hawks. Why Clark does not recognize this region as part of the main *harlani* breeding range is unclear. What is clear is that breeding Harlan's have been documented far more often paired with non-*harlani* taxa in this region than other *harlani*, a fact that undercuts the argument for species status (see **Issue #2**).

Issue #2. Interbreeding

As described above, birds showing typical characters of *harlani* (including light, intermediate, and dark morphs) breed throughout the northern portions of western Canada and Alaska, with a relatively recently discovered range extension on the northern Great Plains extending south to the US-Canada border as far east as central North Dakota. Dark and intermediate morphs predominate in the western and northern portions of the range (Gunsight Mountain migration data, eBird data), whereas light morphs predominate on the Great Plains portion of the range (eBird data).

The only part of this massive breeding range that has been studied during the last 12 years is the Alberta portion. In this area, which comprises roughly 1/3 of the known current breeding range of *harlani*, much subspecific interbreeding occurs. Birds showing typical *harlani* characters have been documented interbreeding with *abieticola*, *borealis*, *calurus*, and *kriderii* types, in order of decreasing frequency. In this vast region, we know of zero breeding pairs where 2 ostensibly 'pure' *harlani* are involved (M. Borlé data). Instead, we have documentation showing 15 mixed pairs, with copulation directly observed and documented (Figs 1-5; supplemental files available on request). Clark's research in this region (2018) produced the following additional results: "These extralimital records consist of eight museum specimens, 13 nest records, 16 (14 adults and two juveniles) captured for banding, and 20 photographs of different adults. In two of these 13 nest records, both of a pair were *harlani*, three *harlani* were paired with hybrids, and six were paired with *B. jamaicensis*." Eleven of 13 nesting pairs involved something other than pure *harlani*. This degree of documented interbreeding between *harlani* and other Red-tailed Hawk taxa undermines the species status argument. We know little about the degree of intergradation throughout the remainder of Harlan's breeding range to the north and west, but even with very little information from these hard-to-access regions, we have documented mixed breeding pairs several times (Sullivan 2011; Figs 6-7), as well as dozens of non-*harlani* migrant individuals counted annually passing northwest into interior Alaska at Gunsight Mountain, ostensibly to breed in places where these taxa historically should not occur. Examples of spring migrant *B. j. abieticola* from central Alaska can be seen in Figs 8-10, and many more non-*harlani* migrants from Gunsight Mountain can be seen in supplemental files we can provide on request, most of which appear to be *abieticola* types. Given what we know concerning the interbreeding of *harlani* with these taxa where we can study them, it seems

logical to think that even the western portion of the *harlani* range includes these other taxa, and interbreeding there seems likely.

Clark's statement that many universally recognized species of *Buteo* have been reported to hybridize, so "occasional interbreeding" is not sufficient justification for considering *harlani* a subspecies of *B. jamaicensis* is misleading. Where we've been able to study and document breeding birds, interbreeding between *harlani* and other Red-tailed Hawk taxa appears to be a regular occurrence. Contrastingly, hybridization between other *Buteo* species in North America is exceptionally rare, having been documented only a handful of times (Clark and Witt 2006; Hull et al. 2007; Sullivan et al. 2011; Hull 2016; Paprocki et al. *in review*). More study is needed to determine the extent of interbreeding between *harlani* and other Red-tailed Hawk taxa in the western and northern reaches of its range before a truly informed taxonomic decision can be made.

Issue #3. Frequency of intergrades

To have an informed discussion about the taxonomic status of *harlani*, it is first critical that we agree on the basic concept of what the *B. j. harlani* phenotype is. One of the key problems with *harlani*, historically, is that no one has ever determined where the characters of the taxon definitively begin and end. Without agreeing on this, it's difficult to understand and agree upon the degree of intergradation happening with this taxon. The most distinctive feature on *harlani* is its unique tail: no two adult tails are alike, and because of this, it's very difficult to draw firm boundaries around these characters and say that any single tail type is indicative of 'pure' *harlani*. There are two ways to look at this: 1) if we take a very narrow view of what *harlani* is, as many have historically (e.g., Taverner 1927, 1936), we end up with a clearly defined taxon that we can identify with certainty most of the time in the field and in the museum, which occupies a distinct range, but unfortunately, *interbreeds extensively with at least 4 subspecies of Red-tailed Hawks across a good portion of its range*; 2) if we take a broader and more inclusive and highly variable view of the taxon, as some have (e.g., Clark 2018), we have a taxon that is not field identifiable with certainty much of the time, whose phenotypic characters completely overlap with several other Red-tailed Hawk taxa, and unfortunately, *still interbreeds with at least 4 subspecies of Red-tailed Hawks*. No matter how we define the taxon phenotypically, we know that birds with *harlani* characters interbreed across a substantial part of the range, which is a key factor to consider in any taxonomic assessment of *harlani*.

When looking narrowly at this taxon, we could define *harlani* adults based on the key phenotypic differences in the type specimen: (1) tail lacking significant red, instead being a mix of white, gray, and black with a mix of mottling, longitudinal streaking, odd freckling, or variably wavy, uneven banding and extremely smudgy, ill-defined subterminal band (these are distinct characters in the Red-tailed Hawk complex, differing from those typical of all other Red-tailed Hawk subspecies; Taverner 1936); (2) blackish body plumage; and (3) white-streaked breast (Fig 11). We can't see the flight feathers very well on the type specimen, but they appear to be mottled rather than banded, another key character of *harlani*. If we were to apply this strict definition to *harlani* and consider only birds that show this combination of four key characters as 'pure', then only a small fraction of the birds showing *harlani* characters in some way would fit these criteria satisfactorily. And even if we only consider these very typical birds as 'pure' *harlani*, then they are still interbreeding across the entire range of the taxon, with many more

intergrades than ‘pure’ birds being typical. In short, it’s fairly unusual for any one individual to show all four of these classic *harlani* characters.

If we take a broader view of the taxon and consider any bird with partial *harlani* traits to be ‘pure’, then birds with these characters can be found throughout the entire range of Red-tailed Hawk, albeit rarely (Figs 12-14). This approach leads to a subjective take on what a ‘pure’ *harlani* becomes, when the characters that define the taxon only need to be present in minute proportions. Second, the number of birds showing intermediate phenotypic characters between *harlani* and other Red-tailed Hawk taxa is staggering (Figs 15-19; supplemental files of more than 100 individuals available on request). If “hybridization is rare”, as Clark suggests, so should be intermediate birds. Clark dismisses these intermediate birds by including many as *harlani* extreme variants, but in some other cases he does consider them ‘hybrids’ (because the bare tarsi measurement falls outside of his *harlani* range). We, on the other hand, are less liberal in ascribing these birds to *harlani*, and instead we consider them to be outside the range of what is acceptable as ‘pure’ *harlani* (e.g., Fig 20). This difference of opinion as to what is considered to be *harlani*, is a major point of difference in the way we view this taxon. Until a sufficient breeding study is conducted, it remains unknown where the phenotypic characters of *harlani* begin and end.

Issue #4 Extent of bare tarsi

For reference, bare tarsi data below from Clark 2018:

harlani = (25.7–35.7 mm)
calurus = (36.0–50.3 mm)

Clark (2018) suggested that *harlani* averages shorter bare tarsi than other subspecies of Red-tailed Hawks and considers this to be a defining character of *harlani*. Any individual having short bare tarsi (<35.7mm) is at least part *harlani* in his estimation, yet he concedes overlap in this feature with *alascensis* and *borealis*; no comparison was done for *abieticola*, the taxon with which *harlani* most frequently interbreeds. Clark states: “Of the 135 measured *borealis*, 14 had unfeathered tarsus length <36 mm; six of these were from AB and MB and could reflect some hybridization with *harlani*, as could five from northern states (MN, ND, MI, and WI). The other three are from IA, AR, and NE.” These results suggest a high degree of overlap in this character with *borealis*; too much to be explained away by presumed hybridization. Clark based most of this study on a comparison between *harlani* and *calurus*, and claims no overlap between these taxa in this character—the two being separated by only 0.3 mm difference. But we demonstrate that the bare tarsi measurement is likely an average difference, and we show several *calurus* individuals with short bare tarsi (see below).

Clark stated “the means of unfeathered tarsus measurements by state and province do not show a clinal variation, but an abrupt change at the boundary of *harlani* and *B. j. calurus* (Figure 21).” We argue that they do show clinal variation, with the longest measurements in the south; the shortest in the far north, as you’d expect based on Allen’s Rule. Harlan’s shorter bare tarsi make sense on a subspecies level considering its northern range.

Liguori and D. Sandak conducted an experiment to test the bare tarsi hypothesis. To ensure the methodology for taking the measurement was identical to Clark's, Liguori got instructions directly from Clark on how to take the measurement, and applied this to a series of specimens at Brigham Young University Museum where Clark had previously measured birds. Liguori and Clark's measurements were accurate to within a millimeter. Liguori and Sandak then captured and measured migrant Red-tailed Hawks at the Goshutes Mountains in eastern Nevada in the fall of 2009. In this brief study, Liguori and Sandak found 6 adult and 4 juvenile *calurus* whose bare tarsi measurements fell well into the *harlani* range given by Clark, yet these individuals show clear *calurus* plumage phenotype with no *harlani* characters (Figs 22-24). In addition, Clark identified the bird pictured in Figure 25, captured during fall migration in Duluth, Minnesota, as having *harlani* traits based on its short bare tarsi measurement (*fide* Frank Nicoletti). If this individual has *harlani* traits, then we have no way of distinguishing *harlani* in the field from typical Red-tailed Hawks. We recognize this individual as a typical example of *B. j. abieticola*, or Northern Red-tailed Hawk, the common migrant subspecies in late fall at Duluth. Moreover, one juvenile *harlani* captured on 1 Nov 2009 in NV had a bare tarsi measurement that fell outside Clark's established range for this taxon (38mm) (Figure 26).

Using this measurement, Clark includes many birds in his sample of 'pure' *harlani* that have no other *harlani* phenotypic characters, including many birds we would not classify as typical *harlani*. The inclusion of these birds as 'pure' *harlani* means that some *harlani* become indistinguishable in appearance from other Red-tailed Hawk taxa. The assumption that any bird with a bare tarsi <36 mm is either *harlani* or a *harlani* 'hybrid' is a core disagreement between Clark and his peers. Subspecies routinely show average size differences. Even within Red-tailed Hawk, *calurus* averages longer wings than any other subspecies (Wheeler 2003). However, it is not considered a species based on this mensural difference.

Issue #5 Tail characters

The single best defining character for adult *harlani* is the wildly varied dorsal tail pattern, which can include white, gray, black, and red, as well as varied patterns ranging from longitudinal streaks, mottling, speckling, and irregular, often very wide banding. That *harlani* adults show varied tails is not open for debate; what is open for debate, however, is how similar these tails can be to other Red-tailed Hawk taxa. Figure 3 in Clark (2018) illustrates little variation in tails of the other subspecies of *B. jamaicensis*, greatly underestimating what we know of this variation. This statement is particularly problematic: "upper tails of adult *B. jamaicensis* of other subspecies were completely rufous", since a defining characteristic of *kriderii* adults is white in the tail (Figs 27-28), and some *calurus*, *abieticola*, and *borealis* can have grayish in the tail. Finally, the suggestion that extreme tail variation is unique to *harlani* is false. Adult Ferruginous Hawks (*Buteo regalis*), for example, can have nearly fully white, gray, or reddish tails, and Rough-legged Hawk (*Buteo lagopus*) tail pattern is incredibly varied. Another trait Clark considers unique to *harlani* is banding that is thicker at the base of the tail than towards the tip. While we agree that this appears to be more frequent on *harlani* (and especially on birds we consider *harlani* intergrades) than on other subspecies, we found many examples to the contrary (examples available on request). Examples of tails from other taxa that Clark includes in his *harlani* sample are shown in Figs 29-31.

Issue #6 Ventral body plumage

Clark places much emphasis on the degree of neoteny (similarity in ventral body plumage by age class) shown by *harlani*, and suggests that *harlani* differs in having a high degree of neoteny in which juveniles and adults share the same ventral body plumage, whereas other subspecies of Red-tailed Hawks do not. While it may be true that some *harlani* juveniles have body plumage similar to some *harlani* adults, Clark fails to prove this by picking specific examples of juveniles that look similar to unrelated adults, rather than following plumage change in individual birds as they age. We find many examples of dark-morph juvenile *calurus* that share similar body plumage to dark-morph adults, and even light morph *borealis* juveniles that share similar body plumage to light morph adult *borealis* (Figs 32-33). In the rare cases when we've been able to follow individual birds from juvenile to adult plumage, we found several examples of *harlani* in which the juvenile plumage does not closely match the adult plumage (Figs 34-35), and none in which they are identical. We also have many examples of adult Harlan's that exhibit ventral plumages that no juvenile resembles, and vice versa. Lastly, Liguori has distinguished the juvenile from adult *harlani* in Clark's study based on underbody plumage with 100% accuracy. Without further study of known individuals over time, the degree of neoteny in *harlani* cannot be fully assessed.

For ventral body plumage differences, Clark focused on distinguishing light-morph *harlani* from *calurus* (his Table 1), when the most problematic taxa to distinguish from *harlani* are *borealis*, *kriderii*, and *abieticola*. Adding the characters of these taxa to his table, the differences quickly become blurred. For dark morphs, he provides a cursory overview of differences between *harlani* and *calurus*, while failing to address the huge variation in both taxa, and the overlapping plumage traits across both. Interestingly, Clark does not include upperside, head, flight feather (including tail), or underwing plumage in his comparisons, which show great differences between juvenile and adult *harlani*.

Issue #7. Color morph frequency

Clark reported differences in frequency of color morphs between *harlani* and *calurus*. Although certainly true that about 85-90% of *harlani* are dark or intermediate, this kind of geographical shift in color morphs is not unprecedented within a taxon, even those without named subspecies. For example, in Swainson's Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*), more than half of the population in California's Central Valley is dark or intermediate morph, whereas elsewhere in the range dark or intermediate morphs comprise <10% of the population. In Broad-winged Hawk (*Buteo platypterus*) dark morphs only occupy the furthest north and west portions of the breeding range. In *B. j. calurus*, dark and intermediate morphs occur much more frequently in the humid Pacific Northwest than they do elsewhere in its range. The concept that differences in frequency of color morphs somehow indicate species status is without merit. Ratios of color morphs, and the existence of color morphs vary (see Eastern Screech-Owl geographic variation for distinct obvious differences). Finally, geographically restricted dark/rufous morphs are likely to occur in *abieticola*, a study of which is underway. This subspecies comes into contact more often than any other with *harlani*. It is worth restating that light-morph Harlan's make up almost the entire population of Harlan's from Alberta and south, a significant change in geographic distribution of color morph frequency within *harlani* itself.

Issue #8. Sample size

It is critical when looking at geographic variation in birds to work with information and samples from the breeding grounds. In raptors specifically, phenotypic geographic variation is expressed most clearly in adults. We extracted the supplemental data from Clark's Zootaxa article, which lists the specimens and captured birds used in his study. Clark reported 107 *harlani* from the breeding grounds, yet in the supplemental file provided we only found 97 individuals listed. He reported 54 adult *harlani* from the breeding grounds, whereas we found only 47 in the file provided. When we looked more closely at this sample of adults, we found a suite of birds that could not safely be assumed to be 'breeders' as the dates when these specimens were collected fall outside the safe window of breeding for *harlani*. We consider the period from 1 June through 31 August to be safe for assumed breeding; anything outside that could represent a migrant. When we filtered the adult specimens with these 'safe dates' applied, we could find only 33 individuals that could be safely assumed to be breeding. Dates for some specimens given as 'breeders' came from April, May, September, October, and December. The small sample size of 33 breeding adult *harlani* specimens underscores how more study is needed to make informed decisions on *harlani*'s taxonomic status.

Clark's heavy reliance on museum specimens is problematic in itself because of recent historical changes. Specimens may not reflect the current local population. For example, none of the museum specimens of resident adults from Oklahoma are of the light-breasted type as described by Sutton, yet Lish (2015) showed many images of light-breasted breeders from this region.

Issue #9. Behavioral differences

The behavioral differences proposed by Clark that set Harlan's apart from other Red-tailed Hawks lack verifiable evidence. The reported behavior of *harlani* 'flaring the white breast feathers' is difficult to assess; if truly a part of a courtship, all male *harlani* should have white breast patches—and many are solidly dark below. Sullivan has personally observed multiple courting Harlan's pairs on breeding grounds in Alaska and has not seen the differences in display behavior reported by Clark. More study is needed.

Different populations of taxa may display different behaviors (often based on their proximity to humans) but these are not species-level differences. For example, in our experience, Eastern Red-shouldered Hawks (*B. lineatus*) are wary and difficult to approach, whereas California and Florida Red-shouldered Hawks are relatively tame. Cooper's Hawks (*Accipiter cooperii*) in the East are incredibly wary, but in the West they breed in suburbia and are extremely tame; likewise for American Kestrels (*Falco sparverius*) across the West. Bald Eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) are exceptionally tame in Alaska, where they take handouts from humans, but wary elsewhere in the range. Harlan's are wary of people, as Clark stated, but so are other subspecies of Red-tailed Hawks in certain regions. Photographing wintering Red-tailed Hawks in the Great Plains or northeastern states is a challenge because of similar wary behavior, regardless of subspecies. Conversely, Red-tailed Hawks found in coastal California and the Intermountain West may allow closer approach. It is also worth noting that the western Canadian population of Red-tailed Hawks is as wary as Harlan's (M. Borlé pers. com), regardless of subspecies. Behavioral differences can easily manifest at the population level based on many factors, and these are not necessarily driven by evolution or sexual selection.

Issue #10 DNA analysis

Clark suggested that the DNA work done to date on *harlani* (Hull et al. 2010) doesn't provide 'definitive guidance' as to its taxonomic status; however, Hull et al. 2010 clearly stated that their data do not support species status for *harlani*. In that study, *harlani* is shown to be more closely related to *borealis* than either was to *B. j. calurus*. At the very least more study is needed to further elucidate these taxonomic relationships, particularly between *harlani* and *abieticola*, which was not included as part of the '*borealis*' sample in the Hull study.

Issue 11. Taxonomic precedent

Clark stated that the decision made by the AOU to make *harlani* a subspecies of the Red-tailed Hawk lacked justification. To overturn that decision now based on lack of justification at the time would itself be unjustified, because we have a suite of new evidence at hand to consider. We propose that the AOS consider the issue anew, rather than revisit taxonomic decisions made when information was lacking.

Conclusion -- what is *B. j. harlani*?

Harlani is certainly a perplexing taxon that doesn't fit neatly into any box. It has problems satisfying the 'occupies a distinct geographic range' requirement for subspecies status. It has a breeding range that overlaps with a suite of Red-tailed Hawk taxa, and it interbreeds with these other taxa when in contact. In the northern and western portions of its range it seems certainly the dominant form, but there are an increasing number of non-*harlani* records from these places, even with limited sampling. Our sense is that *harlani* is a taxon that is being subsumed by encroaching Red-tailed Hawk taxa, not diverging from these taxa as suggested by Clark (2018). The hypothesis that we favor suggests it might have evolved into a fairly distinctive form during the most recent glacial refugia, but secondary contact has resulted in an increased mixing of characters with other encroaching Red-tailed Hawk taxa. We propose that Red-tailed Hawk and its subspecies are rapidly changing due to anthropogenic alteration of the broad expanse of North America's landscape. Habitat regimes from around 8000 years ago map nicely to the broad geographic variation traditionally described as subspecies in Red-tailed Hawks, and it seems likely that many of these forms arose to meet those ancient environmental pressures. But over the last 200 years these habitats have been severely altered by humans, and those strong environmental pressures have since changed or disappeared, and with this so have some of the distinct subspecies formerly associated with the Red-tailed Hawk. Of these rapidly changing taxa, *harlani* and *kriderii* are the best examples (Liguori and Sullivan 2010).

See Appendix (attached as a separate document) for figures, mostly photographs of plumage.

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Change the English name of McCown's Longspur *Rhynchophanes mccownii***Background:**

McCown's Longspur, endemic to the 'big sky' country of the western plains, is not a high-profile bird, and at first the name seems innocuous. Not on the radar of many birders, much of the shortgrass prairies inhabited by the longspur are located in sparsely populated areas of North America (With 2010). The complaint about the name does not concern its accuracy. Choate (1985) cited Bent's Life Histories of North American Cardinals, Grosbeaks, Buntings, Towhees, Finches, Sparrows and their Allies (p. 1564), which quoted from the notes John Porter McCown wrote in 1851 upon collecting the first specimen of the longspur:

"I fired at a flock of Shore Larks, and found this bird among the killed."

When describing the species in 1851, George N. Lawrence named it after McCown, announcing:

"It gives me pleasure to bestow upon this species the name of my friend, Capt. J. P. McCown, U.S.A." (quoted in Choate 1985)

This name seems straightforward. John P. McCown did not intentionally collect the longspur, nor was he an ornithologist. However, these are by no means grounds for changing a common name, and other species, such as Kirtland's Warbler, commemorate individuals more distant to the natural history of the species (Choate 1985). However, McCown has the distinction of being the only individual who had a bird named in his honor and also served in the Confederate Army during the Civil War.

The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture, an online encyclopedia project run by the Butler Center for Arkansas Studies at the Central Arkansas Library System in Little Rock, offers a biography of John P. McCown that provided historical information described below (Polston 2017). Born on August 19th, 1815 in Sevierville, Tennessee, as a young man John P. McCown completed his education and enrolled at the military academy at West Point. The academy was the start of what would be an extensive military career. He led campaigns against Native tribes along the Canadian border before being moved to Texas to serve in the Mexican War. He later fought the Seminoles in Florida and served several other positions before the onset of the Civil War. It was during this time that he collected the longspur, and that Lawrence named the longspur in his honor.

On May 17th, 1861, John P. McCown resigned as a captain in the U.S. Artillery and joined the Confederate States Army. He served in many battles and was a prominent figure. On March 10th, 1862 he was appointed to high rank of major general. He fought in Kentucky (1861, 1862), Tennessee (1862), Mississippi (1862), Missouri (1862), and North Carolina (1865). In Missouri, he received criticism, and was relieved of his duties and transferred to the west, and in June 1862 gained command of the Army of the West, the Army of Mississippi, and the Army of Tennessee. He fought in the Battle of Stones River in 1862, and shortly thereafter was court-

martialed for disobeying orders. He was suspended for six months, and served only minor roles for the following two years of the war.

New Information:

Increasingly, the American Ornithological Society has taken strides to create an inclusive atmosphere and make the study of birds welcoming to aspiring minds from all backgrounds. The AOS offers two student research awards, the Herbert and Betty Carnes Award and the Margaret Morse Nice Award, to outstanding women researchers in ornithology. The AOS proudly holds a LGBTQA Social at its yearly conferences. This social has led by example, and the Wilson Ornithological Society and Association of Field Ornithologists will hold their first LGBTQA Social at their meeting this year in Chattanooga. Importantly, the AOS has a Diversity and Inclusion Committee. This committee helps the AOS do a better job reaching out to a broader range of researchers. The official Diversity Statement of the AOS, posted on the AOS website, was adopted by the Council in March of 2015 and reads as follows:

“The American Ornithological Society (AOS) greatest asset is the diversity of individuals representing the regions where they work, the disciplines that comprise their research, their individual viewpoints, and their generosity of knowledge and time in advancing a global perspective in ornithology. The mission of the AOS is best fulfilled when we embrace diversity as a value and a practice. We maintain that achieving diversity requires an enduring commitment to inclusion that must find full expression in the culture, values, norms and behaviors of the AOS. Throughout the AOS’s programs, events, publishing, and professional development activities, we will support diversity in the membership, leadership, volunteers and employees in all of its forms, encompassing but not limited to age, disability status, economic circumstance, ethnicity, gender, race, religion and sexual orientation. Leading by example, the AOS aspires to make diversity a core and abiding strength among our membership.”

John P. McCown, previously of the U.S. Army, joined the Confederacy and fought for the right of states to preserve slavery. He was not a minor participant in the war, but a mainstay; he participated in an array of campaigns and led men into battle. Although John P. McCown did not join the Confederacy until after his name was attached to the longspur, he likely held views of slavery consistent with his decision to join the Confederacy. With the United States general public increasingly embracing our diversity and confronting public displays of the Confederacy, such as flying Confederate flags, using Confederate general street names, and maintaining statues to Confederate soldiers, it is appropriate for the AOS to address its own piece of Confederate history, John P. McCown of McCown’s Longspur. The AOS once again has an opportunity to pioneer inclusion and lead the way by changing this English name.

Recommendation:

All races and ethnicities should be able to conduct future research on any bird without feeling excluded, uncomfortable, or shame when they hear or say the name of the bird. This longspur is named after a man who fought for years to maintain the right to keep slaves, and also fought against multiple Native tribes. I ask that the English name of *Rhynchophanes mccownii* be changed from McCown’s Longspur to a sensible name, or, if possible a name used by Native

tribes (although I was unable to find a tribal name). For relevant names with good rings to them, I suggest: Prairie Longspur, Belted Longspur (for the male's black breast), or Black-crowned Longspur. I am open to other suggestions if these do not work.

Thank you for your time.

Literature Cited:

Choate, E. A. (1985) The Dictionary of American Bird Names. Boston, MA: The Harvard Common Press.

Polston, M. (2017) John Porter McCown 1815-1879. Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture. <http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?entryID=9015>

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Submitted by: Robert Driver

Proposal Date: 23 May 2018

Elevate *Amazilia saucerottei hoffmanni* to species rank**Background:**

The Steely-vented Hummingbird *Amazilia saucerottei* occurs in xeric and seasonally humid forests of Central America and northern South America. Historically, this species has included one Central American subspecies, *A. s. hoffmanni*, found in western Nicaragua and Costa Rica, and three South American subspecies: (1) *A. s. saucerottei*, found in western and north-central Colombia; (2) *A. s. warscewiczii*, found in northeastern Colombia and northwestern Venezuela; and (3) *A. s. braccata*, found in western Venezuela (Weller and Bosemann 2018). Stiles and Skutch (1989) were the first to point out the distinctiveness of the Central American subspecies, noting that it differed from South American *A. saucerottei* in voice and behavior. This led them to suggest that it is probably a distinct species, *A. sophiae*.

New Information:

Recent genetic studies support the proposed treatment of Stiles and Skutch (1989), recovering *A. saucerottei sensu lato* as non-monophyletic. McGuire et al. (2014) employed a Bayesian analysis of a concatenated data set of 6 genes (5 loci) and recovered *A. s. hoffmanni* embedded within a clade of Central American *Amazilia*, which included *A. cyanocephala*, *A. cyanura*, and *A. beryllina*. *A. saucerottei* (locality information not provided by authors), was recovered as embedded within a clade that consisted of mostly South American *Amazilia*, which included *A. tobaci*, *A. viridigaster*, *A. castaneiventris*, and *A. edward*. Jimenez and Ornelas (2016) supported this finding, recovering *A. saucerottei* as non-monophyletic in a Bayesian analysis of three mtDNA genes (Figure 1). These results led Jimenez and Ornelas (2016) to suggest that *A. saucerottei hoffmanni* deserved recognition as a separate species, *Amazilia sophiae*, following the recommendation of Stiles and Skutch (1989). Stiles et al. (2017) subsequently recognized that this recommendation was erroneous, stating that *A. sophiae* had been previously been recognized by Hellmayr (1913) as a synonym of *A. saucerottei warscewiczii*, and that Hellmayr instead recognized the epithet *hoffmanni* (Cabanis and Heine 1860) for this taxon. Stiles et al. (2017) pointed out that *hoffmanni* was also recognized by Peters (1945). *A. saucerottei hoffmanni* is already recognized in some classifications as a distinct species, the Blue-vented Hummingbird *Amazilia hoffmanni* (Gill and Donsker 2018) but is retained as a subspecies of *Amazilia saucerottei* by others (Clements et al. 2017, Weller and Boesmann 2018).

Recommendation:

Currently, the NACC recognizes *A. s. hoffmanni* as part of the Steely-vented Hummingbird *Amazilia saucerottei*. Given that *Amazilia saucerottei* has been recognized as non-monophyletic by two independent studies, I recommend elevating *hoffmanni* to species rank. Stiles and Skutch (1989) recommended the English name Blue-vented Hummingbird for the split species, and this has been used by Gill and Donsker (2018).

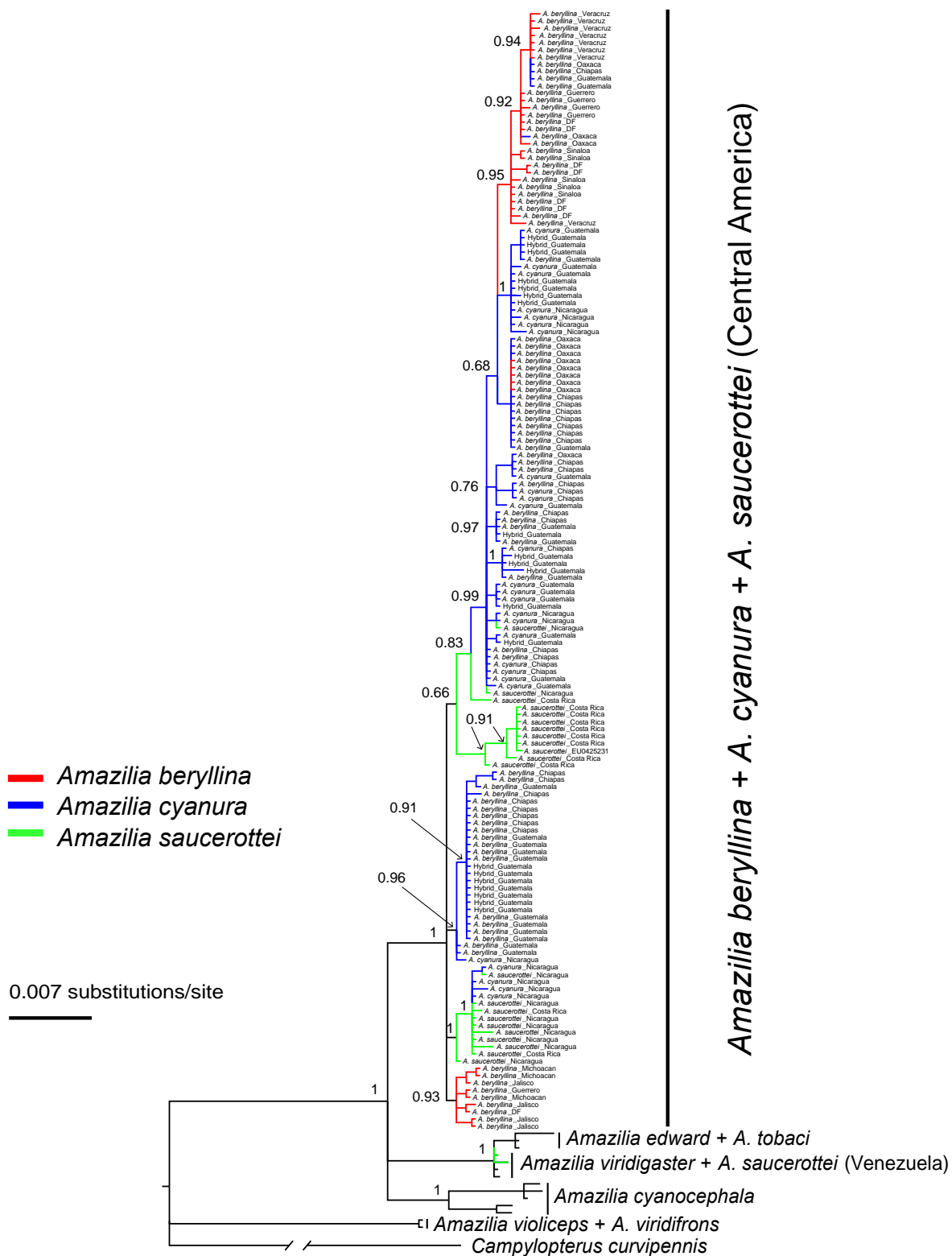


Figure 1. Jimenez and Ornelas 2016 tree, highlighting non-monophyly of *A. saucerottei*.

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- Weller, A.A. and Boesman, P. 2018. Steely-vented Hummingbird (*Amazilia saucerrottei*). In: del Hoyo, J., Elliott, A., Sargatal, J., Christie, D.A. & de Juana, E. (eds.). Handbook of the Birds of the World Alive. Lynx Edicions, Barcelona. (retrieved from <https://www.hbw.com/node/55506> on 2 July 2018).

Submitted by: Jack Hruska, Biodiversity Institute, University of Kansas

Date of proposal: 10 July 2018

Add White-winged Snowfinch *Montifringilla nivalis* to the Appendix**Background:**

The White-winged Snowfinch *Montifringilla nivalis* is a polytypic montane species native to the southern Europe, the Caucasus, Tien Shan, Altai, and mountains of SW China. It is mainly resident, with some altitudinal shifts to lower elevations in winter. It has some history of vagrancy, and has been found on Malta, Sicily, central Tunisia, and the Canary Islands (Summers-Smith 2009, eBird). The species has never reached the British Isles or other northern European countries. In Western Europe it is largely found in the highest mountains (above 2000m).

New Information:

Castaneda *et al.* (2017) documented a bird trapped in a ricefield 76 km west of Havana, Cuba, on 12 February 2014, and kept alive for two months until it died. They stated that the specimen is now in the private collection of the senior author. They stated that the specimen was in 'prebasic plumage when caught' but had molted into "definite basic plumage" when it died in April. They provided two photographs of the dead specimen (not yet prepared) in the paper. The identification seems to be correct, with the sandy brown back lightly streaked, mostly white secondaries and secondary coverts, white primary coverts, mostly black primaries, mostly white outer rectrices and blackish central rectrices. The yellowish bill indicates basic plumage. They do not make an effort to identify it to subspecies.

Recommendation:

Based on the species showing some capabilities for long-distance vagrancy (to the Canary Islands), Castaneda *et al.* (2017) stated that the bird probably arrived in Cuba through natural vagrancy. It is not widely kept in captivity. However, I see little reason to consider this species for the Main List. I cannot think of a single species with a high altitude, southern Europe/Asia Minor distribution that has made it to eastern North America as a vagrant. In addition, Cuba abounds with birds in captivity, and it seems much more likely that the bird made it to Cuba by being caught in Europe and smuggled to Cuba, where it escaped. The molt pattern and timing seem out of whack for a wild bird; the pre-basic molt should be in late fall for a north temperate zone passerine. Such a molt in March or so indicates that the bird was hatched in the middle of the winter. Recommendation is to add to Appendix.

Literature Cited:

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Submitted by: Andrew W. Kratter, Florida Museum of Natural History, University of Florida

Date of Proposal: 10 August 2018

Add European Storm-Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus* to the U.S. list**Background:**

The European Storm-Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus* is on the NACC Main List from a bird mist-netted and collected on Sable Island, Nova Scotia, on 10 August 1970 (McNeil and Burton 1971, AOU 1998). It breeds in northwestern Europe (*H. p. pelagicus*) and on islands in the Mediterranean (*H. p. melitensis*). The latter is mainly resident, whereas the former ranges at sea in winter to waters off western and southern Africa.

New Information:

Patteson et al. (2009) documented 12 occurrences of European Storm-Petrel in the Atlantic off of North Carolina. The first was found 27 May 2003, and multiple birds were found nearly every year from 2005-2008. Since that publication, European Storm-Petrels have been recorded nearly annually off North Carolina (Howell 2012, eBird) and the species has been accepted by the North Carolina Bird Records Committee (https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/brc/checklist_of_North_Carolina_birds.html). One was photographed in Florida on 29 May 2016, and accepted by the Florida Ornithological Society Records Committee (Kratter 2018). Identification is straightforward with decent views (Howell 2012). The photographs in Patteson (et al. 2009) and on eBird of the Florida bird show the diagnostic white lining of the underwing coverts, contrasting with the dark underwing, the near lack of a distinct pale carpal bar on the upperwings, the feet not projecting beyond the tail in flight, and slightly smaller size than Wilson's Storm-Petrel (*Oceanites oceanicus*).

Recommendation:

I recommend that the NACC accept records of European Storm-Petrel in waters off North Carolina and add this species to the list of birds recorded from the United States.

Literature Cited:

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Submitted by: Andrew W. Kratter, Florida Museum of Natural History, University of Florida\

Date of Proposal: 13 August 2018

Change the English name of Saltmarsh Sparrow *Ammospiza caudacuta* to Peterson's Sparrow

The Sharp-tailed Sparrow has undergone several name changes, including a species split in the recent past. The daughter species were originally named Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow and Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow. More recently the names were shortened to Saltmarsh Sparrow and Nelson's Sparrow.

My proposal is that the AOS make one last change, namely to change the English name of *Ammospiza caudacuta* from Saltmarsh Sparrow to Peterson's Sparrow.

Anyone on the NACC reading this proposal owes something to Roger Tory Peterson. He either introduced you to the amazing field of study you have pursued or simply helped to launch a lifetime hobby. Peterson's Field Guide to the Birds was first published in 1934. It has been subsequently revised and republished several times over the years to keep current with changes in taxonomy, name changes, and re-classification of North American birds. RTP was revolutionary in his approach. He created his own methodology, "The Peterson Identification System", which made birding accessible to the amateur bird watcher. Armed with a "Peterson" in hand and a pair of binoculars, millions of amateur birders were introduced to this hobby.

In addition to his field identification guide, Peterson was also an educator, an artist, and a visible advocate for bird conservation.

According to the American Birding Association, there are over 30 million birders in the United States. This bodes well for birds. Many have joined organizations and contribute financially to environmental entities such as Audubon Society, Nature Conservancy, Cornell Bird Lab, the ABA, and many local conservation groups. In addition, amateur birders are submitting data to apps such as eBird, which provides scientists with millions of field records.

I suggest changing the English name of the Saltmarsh Sparrow as a tribute to Peterson for three reasons:

1. He deserves to have a North American bird named after him.
2. It would be easy to do as no one would be offended by the change.
3. It would be consistent to use tribute names for the three "orange buff-faced" sparrows (LeConte's, Nelson's, Peterson's).

Thank you for considering my proposal. I am a Citizen Science volunteer and appreciate the opportunity the NACC has provided me to submit my proposal.

Submitted by: Chet Blazak, Celebration FL

Date of Proposal: 28 August 2018

Change the linear sequence of species in the genus *Charadrius*

Description of the problem and new information:

Molecular systematics studies have long suggested that the genus *Charadrius* as currently recognized is not monophyletic (Christian et al. 1992, Joseph et al. 1999, Barth et al. 2013). Prior work has not included all of the group's members, however, and different datasets yielded different results. A recent molecular study of the genus (Dos Remedios et al. 2015) provides the first reasonably well-resolved, multi-locus phylogeny of the group. They included 30 of 31 species, plus three additional species probably currently in the wrong genera (they considered a fourth but are still recognizing *Eudromias mornellus*, which we have considered a *Charadrius* for decades). The remaining questions of monophyly do not enter into our checklist area (the embedded genera are *Thinornis* and *Anarhynchus*), but that of linear sequence does: ours no longer reflects the recent phylogenetic data.

Two major clades are fairly well supported (Dos Remedios et al. 2015: fig. 1). The first, "CRD I," contains six species from our checklist area, and the second, "CRD II," contains the remaining seven.

The biggest problem with this situation is that none of the gene trees (their Fig. 2) matches the maximum clade credibility tree. For now, I propose we accept this majority rules approach. Although larger-scale genomic work will probably cause some of these relationships to change, further shifts are likely to be minor (e.g., within minor clades). The three of "our" species with most disagreement among the gene trees are *C. morinellus*, *C. wilsonia*, and *C. montanus* (Dos Remedios et al. 2015: Fig. 2).

Here is our current sequence of the subfamily Charadriinae without *Pluvialis* (*P. squatarola* was the outgroup for Dos Remedios et al. 2015):

subfamily: [Charadriinae...](#)

- genus: [Charadrius](#)
 - species: [Charadrius mongolus](#) (Lesser Sand-Plover, Pluvier de Mongolie) N
 - species: [Charadrius leschenaultii](#) (Greater Sand-Plover, Pluvier de Leschenault) A
 - species: [Charadrius collaris](#) (Collared Plover, Pluvier de d'Azara)
 - species: [Charadrius nivosus](#) (Snowy Plover, Pluvier neigeux)
 - species: [Charadrius wilsonia](#) (Wilson's Plover, Pluvier de Wilson)
 - species: [Charadrius hiaticula](#) (Common Ringed Plover, Pluvier grand-gravelot)
 - species: [Charadrius semipalmatus](#) (Semipalmated Plover, Pluvier semipalmé)
 - species: [Charadrius melodus](#) (Piping Plover, Pluvier siffleur)
 - species: [Charadrius dubius](#) (Little Ringed Plover, Pluvier petit-gravelot) A
 - species: [Charadrius vociferus](#) (Killdeer, Pluvier kildir)
 - species: [Charadrius veredus](#) (Oriental Plover, Pluvier oriental) A
 - species: [Charadrius montanus](#) (Mountain Plover, Pluvier montagnard)
 - species: [Charadrius morinellus](#) (Eurasian Dotterel, Pluvier guignard)

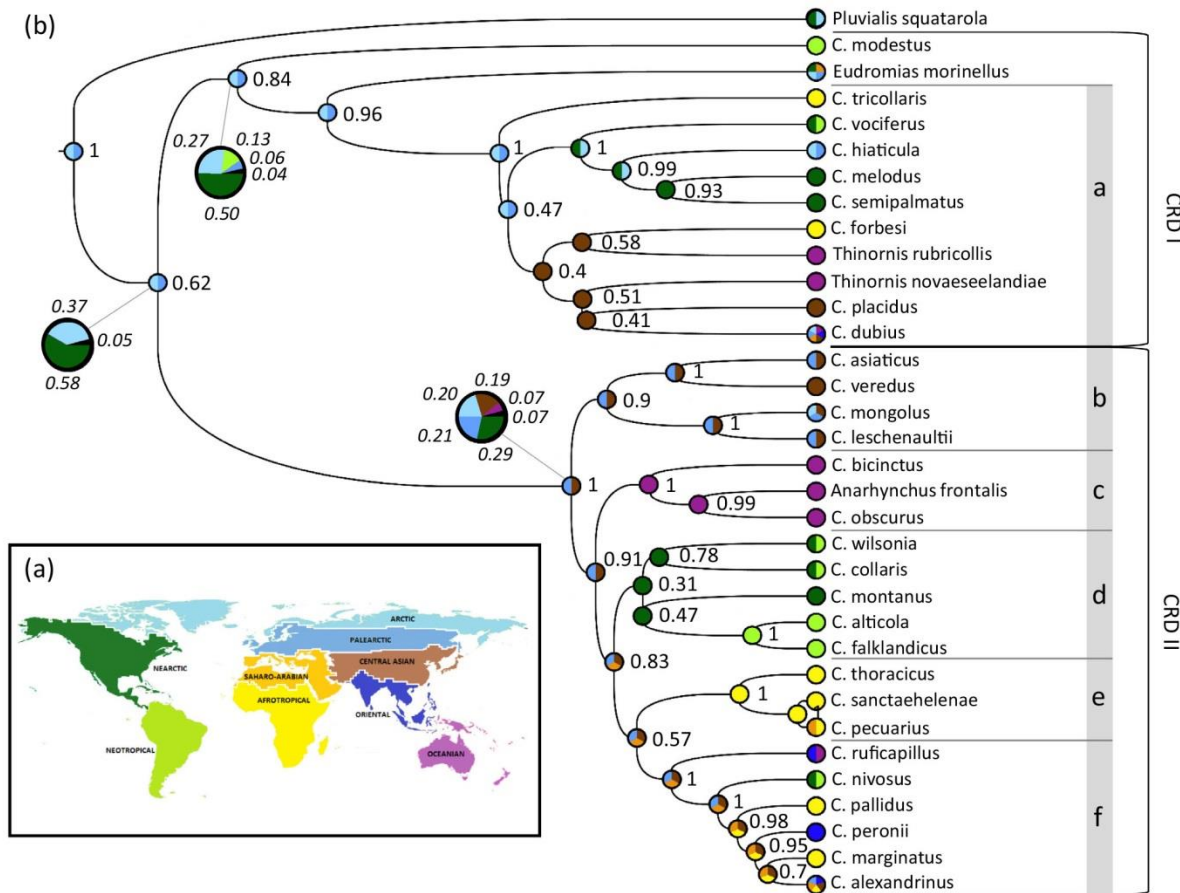


Fig. 1. (a) Biogeographic regions (revised from [Holt et al., 2013](#)) used to define current breeding distributions for each species. (b) The maximum clade credibility tree for 29 *Charadrius* and five species currently assigned to different genera. Results of parsimony ancestral area analysis are shown for all nodes (pie chart colours by region) and Bayesian binary Markov chain Monte Carlo (BBM) results with probability distributions are added for the three basal *Charadrius* nodes (larger pie charts). Minor clades within CRD I and CRD II are labelled a–f. Posterior probabilities are indicated at each node.

As you can see, our current sequence does not come close to reflecting the evolutionary relationships in the group. I propose that we change it to the following to conform to our conventions for linear sequencing:

- genus: [Charadrius](#)
 - species: [Charadrius morinellus](#) (Eurasian Dotterel, Pluvier guignard)
 - species: [Charadrius vociferus](#) (Killdeer, Pluvier kildir)
 - species: [Charadrius hiaticula](#) (Common Ringed Plover, Pluvier grand-gravelot)
 - species: [Charadrius melodus](#) (Piping Plover, Pluvier siffleur)
 - species: [Charadrius semipalmatus](#) (Semipalmated Plover, Pluvier semipalmé)
 - species: [Charadrius dubius](#) (Little Ringed Plover, Pluvier petit-gravelot) A
 - species: [Charadrius mongolus](#) (Lesser Sand-Plover, Pluvier de Mongolie) N
 - species: [Charadrius leschenaultii](#) (Greater Sand-Plover, Pluvier de Leschenault) A
 - species: [Charadrius veredus](#) (Oriental Plover, Pluvier oriental) A
 - species: [Charadrius wilsonia](#) (Wilson's Plover, Pluvier de Wilson)
 - species: [Charadrius collaris](#) (Collared Plover, Pluvier de d'Azara)
 - species: [Charadrius montanus](#) (Mountain Plover, Pluvier montagnard)
 - species: [Charadrius nivosus](#) (Snowy Plover, Pluvier neigeux)

Recommendation: I think it is reasonable to rearrange the sequence as above now, even though I think we will be doing it again in a more minor way when genomic-scale results have been analyzed.

Literature Cited:

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- Dos Remedios, N., P. L. M. Lee, T. Burke, T. Székely, and C. Küpper. 2015. North or south? phylogenetic and biogeographic origins of a globally distributed avian clade. Molecular Phylogenetics and Evolution 89:151–59. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ympev.2015.04.010>.
- Joseph, L., E. P. Lessa, and L. Christidis. 1999. Phylogeny and biogeography in the evolution of migration: shorebirds of the *Charadrius* complex. Journal of Biogeography 26:329-342.

Submitted by: Kevin Winker

Date of Proposal: 3 September 2018

Discontinue use of the possessive (“apostrophe–s”) in patronymic bird names**Introduction**

Abert’s Towhee, Botteri’s Sparrow, Couch’s Kingbird, and so forth and so on, all the way to Zeledon’s Antbird—a great many birds in North America are named after people.

In almost all instances, the English patronym is denoted by the possessive form, *i.e.*, an apostrophe and the letter *s*. Thus, we don’t write Abert Towhee or Zeledon Antbird. The few exceptions, *e.g.*, Montezuma Oropendola and Zenaida Dove (as opposed to Montezuma’s Oropendola and Zenaida’s Dove, respectively), are historically significant and require fresh examination.

In this proposal, I first demonstrate that the possessive form for avian patronymics is a peculiar outlier in modern English (§1). Next I show that it is the result of a historical error (§2). Then I review recent precedent for nomenclatorial revision of the sort proposed here (§3.1) and briefly examine how the proposed change would benefit American ornithology (§3.2).

§1—The possessive form is a bizarre outlier.

Patronymic (also “honorific,” or “eponymous”) names abound in modern American English. Here are some examples:

§1.1. Places named after people, *e.g.*, Lincoln Township, Jefferson Borough, Washington County.

§1.2. Structures named after people, *e.g.*, Guggenheim Museum, Shea Stadium, Trump Tower.

§1.3. Thoroughfares named after people, *e.g.*, Martin Luther King Boulevard, Roberto Clemente Drive, Jerry Tarkanian Way.

§1.4. Media outlets named after people, *e.g.*, Disney Channel, Johnny Carson Show, Breitbart News.

§1.5. Legal actions and entities named after people, *e.g.*, Rehnquist court, Miranda rights, Dred Scott decision.

§1.6. Scientific instruments named after people, *e.g.*, Erlenmeyer flask, Bunsen burner, Hubbell telescope.

§1.7. Physical phenomena named after people, *e.g.*, Higgs boson, Fujita scale, Doppler effect.

§1.8. Medical tests and treatments named after people, *e.g.*, Heimlich maneuver, Salk vaccine, Apgar score.

§1.9. Trees named after people, *e.g.*, Engelmann spruce, Jeffrey pine, Gambel oak.

And, now, the kicker:

§1.10. Various things in ornithology named after people, e.g., Brewster Medal, Nuttall Ornithological Club, *Wilson Journal of Ornithology*.

We don't refer to, say, Brewster's Medal, Nuttall's Ornithological Club, and Wilson's *Journal of Ornithology*. And yet we do refer to Brewster's Warbler, Nuttall's Woodpecker, and Wilson's Storm-Petrel. That is very odd—and quite out of keeping with the conventions of contemporary English. The practice reminds one of the possessive form for sacred patronyms, e.g., St. Peter's Basilica, and I believe that a convergence between religious and ornithological hagiographies is not coincidental. At the very least, the possessive form for avian honorifics is a bizarre outlier in modern American English.

§2—The possessive form is a historical error.

In modern written English, the idea of possession is signaled by the combination of an apostrophe and the letter *s* at the end of the word. Thus: Audubon's shotgun, Peterson's field glasses, Mayfield's notebooks—things belonging to Audubon, Peterson, and Mayfield, respectively. Distinct from possession is the idea of association: the Audubon Society, the Peterson System, the Mayfield Method—things named for, but not in the possession of, Audubon, Peterson, and Mayfield, respectively.

In classical Latin, which forms the basis for zoological nomenclature, the situation is different. The idea of possession is denoted by the *genitive* case, which may be simplistically and misleadingly termed the “possessive” case. But that is not the extent of it. The genitive case in Latin also governs the broader idea of association. In Latin, then, we would be correct in writing *societas auduboni*, *systema petersoni*, and *methodus mayfieldi*. The *-i* at the end of each name is functionally equivalent to apostrophe-*s* in English, but it denotes something else: The Latin genitive accommodates a great many situations in modern English that involve the preposition *of*.

A useful analogy is the Spanish preposition *de*, which is applied in a very general way to denote association—and which also corresponds broadly with English-language *of*. In some instances, the one-to-one correspondence between Spanish *de* and English *of* is satisfactory; but in many other instances, the skilled translator has to devise with a workaround. A few examples will suffice. Spanish *Canto de la Tierra* and *Rio de Luz* translate perfectly to *Song of the Earth* and *River of Light*, respectively. Now consider the case of Spanish *Evangelio de Juan*; the literal translation, *Gospel of John*, is acceptable, but so is the alternative *John's Gospel*. However, a Spanish phrase like *el libro de Juan* translates to *Juan's book*; a more literal rendering, *the book of Juan*, isn't good English. Consider also the Spanish *muchacha de ocho años*, which translates cleanly to *eight-year-old girl*; the precisely literal translation, *girl of eight years*, is, except in certain poetical formulations, wanting. And only a truly incompetent translator would render *Salida de Emergencia* as *Exit of Emergency*; the correct idiom is, of course, *Emergency Exit*.

Which brings us back to Latin. *Cooper's Hawk* for *Accipiter cooperii* is "correct" in the same way that *Exit of Emergency* is "correct" for *Salida de Emergencia*. The problem, historically, has to do with the old tradition of trying to "Latinize" English. The taxonomists of yesteryear may well have been fine Latinists, but they weren't necessarily competent translators. In their zeal to preserve Latin grammar and idiom, they violated the guiding principle of the skilled translator, namely, to get the point across in a different language—with or without regard for the literal wording of the original text.

A construction like *Cooper's Hawk* does, in some formal sense, preserve the "original" "Latin." (To the extent that *cooperii* is, in any sense, original or Latin!) But it is, quite plainly, the wrong translation. The proper, and properly understood, English should be *Cooper*, as in *Cooper Hawk*, the bird associated with William Cooper, but not in Cooper's possession. The hawk is no more *Cooper's Hawk* than the ornithological society is *Cooper's Ornithological Society*. And the society is named for a different Cooper, *viz.*, James Graham Cooper, but I digress.

§3—Just do it.

§3.1—Recent precedent and emerging trends.

It is illuminating to review recent changes to English-language nomenclature for diseases and disorders. Conditions formerly known as, say, Down's syndrome, Hodgkin's lymphoma, and Sever's disease are now more commonly referred to as Down syndrome, Hodgkin lymphoma, and Sever disease, respectively. In contrast, Lou Gehrig's disease retains the possessive form. The distinction is clear: Gehrig actually had ("possessed") the disease, whereas Down, Hodgkin, and Sever did not. The North American medical community's abandonment of the possessive form for patronymic diseases is discussed in a 1975 report in the English-language journal *Lancet*, which recommends that "The possessive use of an eponym should be discontinued, since the author neither had nor owned the disorder."

Medicine is not the only scientific field that has come around to the view that it is incorrect to apply the possessive form to patronyms. So has ornithology! Journals and monographs published in the mid-20th century by the Cooper Ornithological Society discontinued the possessive for patronyms, a practice that was in force for decades. The American Ornithologists' Union declined to follow suit, but not without objection. No less an authority than Joseph Grinnell protested, "We are disappointed to observe that the useless possessive is retained in personal names." But Grinnell was overruled by the arch-pedant and anti-Darwinist Waldo Lee McAtee, who wrongly countered that "the English possessive is equivalent to the Latin genitive." The matter has, quite simply, never been satisfactorily resolved.

Yet one senses that the original wisdom of Grinnell will carry the day; one senses that change is in the air again. A forthcoming field guide to the sparrows, published by the influential publisher Houghton Mifflin Harcourt and written by the widely lauded ornithological historian Rick Wright, will observe the modern convention of no possessive for patronyms. Explaining that "[t]here is considerable reason to abandon the false possessive in English names," Wright notes in his introduction that "this guide returns to the tradition of presenting English patronyms without the possessive 's.'"

Change is good. The North American medical community is in the process of updating nomenclature for patronyms. Ornithologists in the 20th century did it, and ornithologists in the 21st century are doing it. As the late Stephen Hawking said, “Intelligence is the ability to adapt to change.” By the way, the astrophysical phenomenon named after the great physicist is Hawking radiation. Not Hawking’s radiation. I’m just saying.

§3.2—*For the good of American ornithology.*

Aside from the fact that it would be correct to discontinue the use of the possessive, it would be good for American ornithology to do so. The faux possessive for patronymic bird names is antiquated and affected, a turnoff, one should think, to folks who might otherwise be sympathetic to the aims and aspirations of the American Ornithological Society. Don’t we want ornithology to appeal broadly? Then let’s signal our intent by revising ornithological nomenclature so as to reflect the spirit of the age—and, while we’re at it, so as to correct a historico-linguistical error from yesteryear.

According to its mission statement, the newly constituted American Ornithological Society pledges to meet the “ever-changing needs of ornithology and ornithologists.” That’s wonderful. “Be the change you wish to see in the world,” said Mahatma Gandhi. And consider the alternative, laid out by Max Planck: “A new scientific truth does not triumph by convincing its opponents and making them see the light, but rather because its opponents eventually die, and a new generation grows up that is familiar with it.”

I am persuaded that, in the long run, nomenclatorial commonsense and courtesy will prevail. But let’s not await around for this to happen after we die. Let’s advance the cause of progress right now; let’s not be left behind; let’s blaze forward. The ornithologists of tomorrow will appreciate us and admire us for doing so.

A final thought. The Planck length, one of the most celebrated numbers in all of physics, is approximately 1.62×10^{-35} meters, but Max Planck’s length was approximately 1.78 meters. Q. E. D.

Submitted by: Ted Floyd

Date of Proposal: 5 September 2018

Comment on Proposal 2019-A-9

Rebuttal of Proposal 2019-A-9 - Discontinue use of the possessive (“apostrophe-s”) in patronymic bird names

The following is a section by section rebuttal of the proposal to remove the apostrophe-s from the patronyms in eponymous avian taxa.

Section 1. On the proposition that the possessive form for patronyms occurring in common names of eponymous avian taxa represents an outlier in scientific naming conventions.

This claim is supported in the proposal with a list of examples that do not use the possessive construction. That is, however, poorly constructed proof that the possessive construction is not used in other disciplines. Non-avian examples of possessive patronyms in scientific disciplines:

Physics:

Einstein’s Theory of Relativity, Maxwell’s Equations, Faraday’s Law, Coulomb’s Law, D’Alembert’s Principle, Hamilton’s Principle, Hamilton’s Equations, Schrodinger’s Cat, Avogadro’s Number

Mathematics:

Green’s Theorem, Archimedes’ Principle, Euler’s Number, Euler’s Theorem, Abel’s Theorem

Mammology:

Abbot’s Duiker, Abe’s Whiskered Bat, Agricola’s Gracile Opossum, Humboldt’s Flying Squirrel, Przewalski’s Horse

Medicine:

Alzheimer’s Disease, Crohn’s Disease, Broca’s Area, Cowper’s Gland

Engineering:

Young’s Modulus, Manning’s n, Terzaghi’s bearing capacity

Philosophy and History of Science:

Occam’s Razor

In *The Eponym Dictionary of Mammals* (2009), 117 eponymous taxa are listed with common names beginning with the letter A. While the majority include patronyms in the common name, 33 of these taxa are only eponymous in the Latin binomial (e.g., Admiralty cuscus, *Spilocuscus kraemer*). Of the remaining 84 taxa, fully 75 use the English possessive construction for the patronym in the common name. Taking this as a pseudo-random sample, the possessive construction for mammalian common names seems nearer the rule than the exception.

In addition, while both patronymic patterns (with and without the apostrophe s) appear throughout the sciences and should be understood as being equally correct renderings of the Latin genitive (see below), numerous examples from other disciplines demonstrate that the use of the English possessive construction is at least not uncommon. Thus the possessive construction for avian eponymous taxa cannot be considered, in any typical sense of the term, an outlier among the sciences.

Section 2. On the proposition that the English possessive is a mistaken translation of the Latin genitive.

The Latin genitive case is used to show a number of different relationships including, but certainly not limited to, possession. The author of the proposal claims that it is a mistranslation of the Latin to use the English possessive to represent these other (non-possessive) relations. This claim is not so much about the details of Latin (of which I know little) as it is a claim about usage in English (with which I have much greater experience). There are two flaws in the author's claim that the possessive English construction of common names for eponymous taxa is a translation error:

First, the claim that the English construction is a translation error would seem to require historical investigation into the linguistic knowledge, sophistication, and reasoning of those scientists responsible for the constructions. Indeed, working knowledge of Latin was much more widespread during the time that many of these common names were applied. Yet the author of the proposal gives no such historical demonstration that the scientists' linguistic intentions were mistaken.

Second, the author of the proposal seems to conflate the "possessive" label for the apostrophe-s construction in English with a complete circumscription of its valid usage, as though to translate the Latin genitive using this construction must be to translate the Latin meaning as that of possession. In fact, reflection on the usage of the English possessive will demonstrate that the apostrophe-s construction labeled "possessive" in English actually conveys many relationships. Take for example this limited but instructive list:

- Have you read **Ted's** new book?
- You have your **father's** eyes.
- May I have a **dollar's** worth of candy please?
- She has a **mother's** intuition.
- **England's** queen speaks only the **Queen's** English.
- **Love's** Labor's Lost is one of the few Shakesperean plays I have not read, but the title is suddenly very interesting.

By "Ted's new book" one would expect to be understood generally to mean "the book newly authored by Ted" rather than "the book Ted just obtained," thus clearly intending attribution of Ted's authorship. If we interpret "father's eyes" in the strict possessive, it becomes rather

gruesome. A “dollar’s worth of candy” expresses quantity rather than possession. And so on. The apostrophe-s construction, while termed the “possessive,” cannot in any way be adequately circumscribed by strictly possessive interpretation. Neither can translation of the Latin genitive using the English possessive be classed as an erroneous limitation of the senses conveyed by the Latin genitive.

Further, there are examples in English of specifically honorific patronyms that are not based on translations of Latin. Consider:

- Halley’s Comet
- Nelson’s Column
- Martha’s Vineyard
- Clark’s Mountain
- Murphy’s Law
- Pikes Peak [a special case in which the apostrophe was removed, but the sense is the same]

Therefore, the claim that the translation of the Latin genitive by the English possessive is a mistake is not supported by historical evidence of those doing the naming, is based on a limited understanding of English usage of the possessive construction to express relations such as origin and attribution, and belies the existence of possessive honorific patronyms that are native to English (i.e., not translations of Latin).

Section 3. The proposal would have us follow the same mistakes made by the medical community where it cites a 1975 report in *Lancet* stating, “The possessive use of an eponym should be discontinued, since the author neither had nor owned the disorder.” The medical community clearly made the same linguistic mistake outlined above in interpreting the breadth of usage of the English possessive. The medical community would not be wrong to change the name to Down syndrome, but they would be wrong in their reasoning for doing so.

Regarding the new guide to sparrows mentioned in the proposal, it is rather irksome that Mr. Wright’s new sparrow guide anticipates the change in nomenclature. His reasoning seems to be the same as that in the proposal and refers to dropping the “false possessive,” again mistaking the description of the construction with the limits of its usage. One hopes that a second edition of the guide will right the error.

Section 3.2 We really get to the nonsense here. I can only say that if there is concern about avian naming schemes being a “turn off” to contemporary audiences, one might consider that the apostrophe-s has less to do with patriarchy, privilege, and racial bias than, say, PATRONYMS overwhelmingly from white men.

And, yes, the proposal is correct that Max Planck's length was approximately 1.78 meters. But I wonder if there is equal awareness that *Planck's constant* is approximately $6.626 \times 10^{-34} \text{ m}^2 \text{ kg/s}$?

Conclusion:

Within ornithology I find no abounding confusion over the construction "Cooper's Hawk" meaning "the hawk named for Cooper." Why remove this linguistic trait of ornithology when it is neither wrong nor ambiguous? It is part of the richness of the science and the language. In short, I find the proposal incorrect in the basis of its claims and a diminution of language in favor of a uniformity for uniformity's sake. Such linguistic simplification is, and should remain, within the domain of bureaucrats rather than in the study and appreciation of birds.

Recommendation:

Continue use of the possessive ("apostrophe-s") in patronymic bird names.

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Submitted by: J. R. Rigby

Date of Comment: 13 April 2019

Change the specific/subspecific/morphological group name of the Red-shafted Flicker from *cafer* to *lathamii*

Background:

In the first five editions of the AOU Check-List, Yellow-shafted and Red-shafted Flickers held separate species status as *Colaptes auratus* (Linnaeus, 1758) and *Colaptes cafer* (Gmelin, 1788), respectively (AOU 1886, 1895, 1910, 1931, 1957). These birds were lumped in 1982 as the Northern Flicker (*Colaptes auratus*) due to the extensive interbreeding where the two forms meet in a broad hybrid zone in the middle of North America (AOU 1982; Short 1965; Wiebe and Moore 2017). Despite strong evidence for extensive hybridization, outside of this zone the two flicker taxa remain highly diagnosable based on a suite of independent plumage characters (Wiebe and Moore 2017). Moreover, they are still often described using their original specific epithets as separate named “morphological groups” in scientific publications (e.g. Aguillon et al. 2018; Manthey et al. 2017; Hudon et al. 2017; Hudon et al. 2015) and various checklists (Avibase 2018; Sullivan et al. 2009), including the most recent AOS Check-list and its supplements (AOU 1998; Figure 1). Some checklists have even begun to list them again as separate named species (del Hoyo and Collar 2014).

The focus of this proposal is on the use of *cafer* as the specific/subspecific/morphological group designation of the Red-shafted Flicker. This name is directly derived from “kaffir,” a word that is an extremely offensive ethnic slur against Black South Africans. To avoid using this slur again in this proposal, we will henceforth refer to it as “the k-word.” In this proposal, we will explain (1) that *cafer* was chosen as a scientific epithet specifically due to the k-word’s use as a description of a group of people and describe the extreme offensiveness of the k-word; (2) outline precedents related to this proposal and how other societies have dealt with the k-word; and (3) propose an alternative name with historical precedent.

New Information:

The reason that this North American bird has a name derived from a slur against an African people is due to a historical mistake. In 1782, John Latham described the type specimen of the Red-shafted Flicker as a variety of the Yellow-shafted Flicker (the then Gold-winged Woodpecker; Palmer 1916). Johann Gmelin in 1788 used Latham’s description to designate the Red-shafted Flicker as a separate species, *cafer* (Palmer suggests that Gmelin did not provide credit to Latham either “due to inadvertence or to the fact that Latham gave no distinctive name or number to the Red-shafted Flicker”). In his description, Latham mistakenly described the specimen locality as the “Cape of Good Hope” of South Africa rather than the “Bay of Good Hope” (as designated by Captain James Cook) in Nootka Sound, British Columbia (Palmer 1916). It is unclear if this was a result of transposed labels or a simple typographical error, but the outcome is that Gmelin used South Africa’s Cape of Good Hope as the locality of the Red-shafted Flicker type specimen. Consequently, he named the Red-shafted Flicker after the Xhosa people, then known to Europeans as the K-word people (other alternative spellings included Cafri and Cafar).

Although the k-word was originally widely used by Europeans (although still in a pejorative sense), the term has now become universally regarded as an extreme ethnic slur and the absolute height of offensiveness (Pérez-Peña 2018). Particularly during the apartheid era, the k-word was used by White South Africans to degrade Black South Africans. A statement made during a 2008 South African Parliament sitting describes how its use is viewed today: “We should take care not to use derogatory words that were used to demean black persons in this country. Words such as ‘Kaffir,’ ‘coolie,’ ‘Boesman,’ ‘hotnot’ and many others have negative connotations and remain offensive as they were used to degrade, undermine and strip South Africans of their humanity and dignity” (GCIS 2008). The k-word is now considered so egregious in South Africa that it is typically referred to only as “the k-word,” and there are substantial legal penalties (including jail time) for its usage (Pérez-Peña 2018). The evolution in usage of this word is directly comparable (including the present-day severity of the slur and the avoidance of speaking it) to the n-word, which in North America we treat as fundamentally unacceptable in any context.

Does a precedent exist for this kind of proposal?

The official protocols for how to handle this sort of circumstance are not entirely clear, as it is (fortunately) a rare issue. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature’s Code of Ethics states, “no author should propose a name that, to his or her knowledge or reasonable belief, would be likely to give offence on any grounds” (ICZN 2012), but it does not prescribe a specific protocol for addressing existing offensive names. Below we outline two concerns that arise from this issue that should not influence consideration of the proposal: (1) this is a subspecies level issue, and (2) mistaken locality information is involved. Finally, we discuss how other ornithological societies have dealt with similar naming issues.

Although the North American Classification Committee typically does not deal with issues at the subspecies level, the case of the Red-shafted Flicker is unusual and likely within the scope of appropriate oversight by the Committee. As described in the Background, Red-shafted Flickers were once classified as a separate species (*Colaptes cafer*) and although they have since been lumped with Yellow-shafted Flickers into the Northern Flicker, the “morphological group” still retains the original specific epithet and is widely used (e.g. Aguillon et al. 2018; Manthey et al. 2017; Hudon et al. 2017; Hudon et al. 2015; Avibase 2018; Sullivan et al. 2009), even in the current Check-List of North American Birds (AOU 1998; Figure 1). Some checklists have even begun to again classify them separately as *Colaptes cafer* (del Hoyo and Collar 2014). Thus, it seems appropriate for the Committee to provide oversight in this unusual situation.

An important part of the flicker’s taxonomic history involves the mistaken locality of the type specimen used by Latham and Gmelin in their description and designation of *cafer*. This geographic mistake in naming is no reason in itself to suggest an official name change and is not the focus of our proposal (there are many similar examples in ornithological nomenclature, including for example the familiar *Buteo jamaicensis* that has never occurred in Jamaica).

Because there are no clear protocols for how to deal with this situation, we can look to how it has been dealt with by other societies. In 2015, Sweden’s Ornithological Society undertook the massive task of translating the 10,000+ bird species names into Swedish (The Local 2015). In this process, they changed the names for several species due to concerns that they were

offensive. Anders Wirdheim from the society stated, “while we were [creating the translated list] we decided to change the names of any birds that could have stirred up a debate” (The Local 2015). Related to this proposal, swifts are no longer called “kaffer” in Swedish (alternative spellings include “the k-word” and “caffer”), but they also changed “neger” (“negro” in Swedish) to “svart” (“black” in Swedish) in four species names and renamed a duck formerly named “Hottentot” and the Hoatzin, formerly “Zigenarfågel” (“gypsy bird” in Swedish). Although a non-bird example, there have also been moves to change the name of the “k-word lime,” even in the United States (Denn 2014), with the Oxford Companion to Food suggesting the alternative “makrut lime” (Vannithone 1999).

Discussion:

We are not the first to write about the naming of the Red-shafted Flicker. In the early 20th century, Elliott Coues included an illuminating passage in his book *Key to North American Birds* (1903):

With every disposition to follow the dogma and ritual of the A.O.U., I cannot bring myself to call this bird *C. cafer*, for no better reason than because *Picus cafer* Gm. 1788 was mistaken for a bird of the Cape of Good Hope! Say what we please in our canons, there *is* something in a name after all, and “the letter of the law killeth” when wrenched from its spirit, in defiance of science and common sense. Individually I cannot incur the penalty of deliberately using for a North American bird a name only applicable to one from South Africa. The fact that “*Cafer*” is a sort of Latin for Caffraria or Cafrarian makes its use in this connection as bad as “Hottentot Woodpecker” or “Zulu Flicker” would be; and how would such a combination sound in plain English? [emphasis in original]

Although Coues emphasizes the mistaken geography (which we note is not an accepted rationale for re-naming), we agree that “there *is* something in a name after all” and we believe it is beyond the bounds of appropriate behavior to use a racial or ethnic slur as a scientific name. In effect, the use of *cafer* for the Red-shafted Flicker places everyone who knows about its derivation from the k-word in the position of perpetuating a very offensive ethnic slur. As the AOS is currently focused on becoming a more diverse and inclusive professional society, we feel it is incumbent on us to make good-faith efforts to rectify past exclusionary mistakes, particularly those of this severity.

We suggest that it is no more appropriate to continue to use a word derived directly from the k-word as the scientific name than it would be to use a name derived from the n-word. In considering whether or not to change the name of the Red-shafted Flicker, it may be useful to engage in the following thought experiment: how would the North American ornithological community feel about an African bird named “the n-word” (with two g’s) after the 18th-century Black residents of our own communities? The simple fact that the k-word is unfamiliar to most people from the Americas does not make its use acceptable.

We therefore propose that the current scientific name of the Red-shafted Flicker be replaced by the scientific name *lathamii*. This change was proposed in 1827 by Wagler “as a substitute for Gmelin’s inappropriate name *cafer*” (Palmer 1916).

Recommendation:

Change the specific/subspecific/morphological group name *cafer* Gmelin 1788 of the Red-shafted Flicker to *lathamii* Wagler 1827 (**see Note below**).

[Note from the Chair: The International Code of Zoological Nomenclature allows scientific nomenclature to be changed only under certain conditions. Therefore, a YES vote on this proposal means not that we will change the scientific name, but instead that we will consult the ICZN on the issue. The name *cafer* and its variants (e.g., *caffer*, *caffra*) are used for a number of species of African birds as well as for single species in southern Asia and in Polynesia, and undoubtedly occur in the names of many more organisms in other taxonomic groups, placing the broader issue largely outside of our area, both geographically and taxonomically.]

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Submitted by: Stephanie M. Aguillon and Irby J. Lovette, Cornell Lab of Ornithology

Date of Proposal: 7 September 2018

Habitat.—River-edge Forest, Secondary Forest, Mangrove Forest (0–1500 m; Tropical Zone).

Distribution.—*Resident* in Panama (locally on the Pacific slope from eastern Panamá province east to Darién), and in South America from northern Colombia, Venezuela, and the Guianas south, east of the Andes, to central Bolivia, and western and central Amazonian Brazil.

Notes.—*Chrysoptilus punctigula* and the South American *C. melanochloros* (Gmelin, 1788) may constitute a superspecies (Short 1982). This species is often placed in the genus *Chrysoptilus*.

***Colaptes auratus* (Linnaeus). Northern Flicker.**

Cuculus auratus Linnaeus, 1758, Syst. Nat. (ed. 10) 1: 112. Based on “The Golden-winged Wood-pecker” Catesby, Nat. Hist. Carolina 1: 18, pl. 18. (in Carolina = South Carolina.)

Habitat.—Open woodland, both deciduous and coniferous, open situations with scattered trees and snags, riparian woodland, pine-oak association, and parks (Subtropical and Temperate zones).

Distribution.—Breeds [*auratus* group] from western and central Alaska, northern Yukon, northwestern and southern Mackenzie, northern Manitoba, northern Ontario, north-central Quebec, south-central Labrador, and Newfoundland south through central and eastern British Columbia, west-central and southwestern Alberta, eastern Montana, and eastern North America (east of the Rocky Mountains) to central and eastern Texas, the Gulf coast, and southern Florida (including the upper Florida Keys); and [*cafer* group] from southeastern Alaska, coastal and southern British Columbia (including the Queen Charlotte and Vancouver islands), west-central and southern Alberta, and southwestern Saskatchewan south (from the western edge of the Great Plains westward) to northern Baja California (formerly also on Guadalupe Island), southern Arizona, southern New Mexico, and western Texas, and in the interior highlands of Mexico to west-central Veracruz and Oaxaca (west of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec).

Winters [*auratus* group] from southern Canada (rarely to the northern limits of the breeding range) south through the remainder of the breeding range to southern Texas, the Gulf coast, and southern Florida (including the Florida Keys), rarely to the Pacific states from Washington south to California, Arizona, and New Mexico; and [*cafer* group] generally throughout the breeding range and east to eastern Kansas, eastern Oklahoma, and eastern and southern Texas, the northern populations being largely migratory.

Resident [*chrysocaulosus* group] on Cuba (including Cayo Coco and Cayo Romano), the Isle of Pines, and Cayman Islands (Grand Cayman); and [*mexicanoides* group] in the highlands of Middle America from Chiapas south through Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras to north-central Nicaragua.

Casual [*auratus* group] north to the Arctic and Bering coasts of Alaska, islands in the Bering Sea (St. George in the Pribilofs, and Nunivak), and northern Quebec, and south to northern Mexico; and [*cafer* group] east to northern Alberta, southern Keewatin, Manitoba, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, and Arkansas. Accidental [*auratus* group] in the British Isles and Denmark; and [*cafer* group] in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Florida.

Notes.—Also known as Common Flicker. The two northern groups were formerly treated as separate species, *C. auratus* [Yellow-shafted Flicker] and *C. cafer* [Red-shafted Flicker] (Short 1965a, 1965b, 1982, Johnson 1969, Bock 1971, Moore and Buchanan 1985, Moore and Koenig 1986, Grudzien et al. 1987, Moore 1987, Moore et al. 1991, Moore and Price 1993); the other two groups, which are isolates, have usually been treated as races of one of the preceding, *mexicanoides* [Guatemalan Flicker] and *chrysocaulosus* [Cuban Flicker] (Short 1965b) in *C. cafer* and *C. auratus*, respectively (Short 1967a). See comments under *C. chrysoides*.

***Colaptes chrysoides* (Malherbe). Gilded Flicker.**

Geopicus (Colaptes) chrysoides Malherbe, 1852, Rev. et Mag. Zool., ser 2, 4, p. 553. (l'Amérique; restricted to Cape San Lucas, Baja California, by Anthony, 1895, Auk, 12, p. 347.)

Figure 1. Page 344 from the 7th Edition of the Check-List of North American Birds (1998) demonstrating the separate treatment of *auratus* and *cafer* morphological groups in the Northern Flicker (*Colaptes auratus*).

Treat Resplendent Quetzal *Pharomachrus mocinno* as two species**Background:**

The Resplendent Quetzal (*Pharomachrus mocinno*) is traditionally and widely treated as consisting of two allopatric subspecies, the nominate form of s. Mexico to n. Nicaragua and the subspecies *costaricensis* of the highlands of Costa Rica and w. Panama (Ridgway 1911, Dickinson & Remsen 2013). Ridgway provided the diagnosis of *costaricensis* as follows:

“Similar to *P. m. mocinno*, but smaller, and the adult male with elongated supracaudal plumes much narrower and averaging decidedly shorter, their color usually much less golden green.”

New information:

Solórzano & Oyama (2010) analyzed eight morphometric variables of 41 specimens and mtDNA sequence data from blood samples of 26 individuals over 5 countries and 8 localities. Here is their Abstract – just let me know if you want a pdf:

Abstract: The resplendent Quetzal (*Pharomachrus mocinno*) is an endemic Mesoamerican bird species of conservation concern. Within this species, the subspecies *P. m. costaricensis* and *P. m. mocinno*, have been recognized by apparent morphometric differences; however, presently there is no sufficient data for confirmation. We analyzed eight morphometric attributes of the body from 41 quetzals: body length, tarsus and cord wing, as well as the length, wide and depth of the bill, body weight; and in the case of the males, the length of the long upper-tail cover feathers. We used multivariate analyses to discriminate morphometric differences between subspecies and contrasted each morphometric attribute between and within subspecies with paired non-parametric Wilcoxon test. In order to review the intraspecific taxonomic status of this bird, we added phylogenetic analysis, and genetic divergence and differentiation based on nucleotide variations in four sequences of mtDNA. The nucleotide variation was estimated in control region, subunit NDH6, and tRNAGlu and tRNAPhe in 26 quetzals from eight localities distributed in five countries. We estimated the genetic divergence and differentiation between subspecies according to a mutation-drift equilibrium model. We obtained the best mutation nucleotide model following the procedure implemented in model test program. We constructed the phylogenetic relationships between subspecies by maximum parsimony and maximum likelihood using PAUP, as well as with Bayesian statistics. The multivariate analyses showed two different morphometric groups, and individuals clustered according to the subspecies that they belong. The paired comparisons between subspecies showed strong differences in most of the attributes analyzed. Along the four mtDNA sequences, we identified 32 nucleotide positions that have a particular nucleotide according to the quetzals subspecies. The genetic divergence and the differentiation was strong and markedly showed two groups within *P. mocinno* that corresponded to the quetzals subspecies. The model selected for our data was TvM+G. The three phylogenetic methods here used recovered two clear

monophyletic clades corresponding to each subspecies, and evidenced a significant and true partition of *P. mocinno* species into two different genetic, morphometric and ecologic groups. Additionally, according to our calculations, the gene flow between subspecies is interrupted at least from three million years ago. Thus we propose that *P. mocinno* be divided in two independent species: *P. mocinno* (Northern species, from Mexico to Nicaragua) and in *P. costaricensis* (Southern species, Costa Rica and Panama). This new taxonomic classification of the quetzal subspecies allows us to get well conservation achievements because the evaluation about the kind and magnitude of the threats could be more precise.

Their morphometric data showed statistically significant differences between the two populations in most variables; however, the authors did not emphasize that their data reveal diagnostic differences between the two as follows (from their Appendix 1): (1) wing length of males, (2) body weight of males, (3) body length of males, and (4) uppertail covert length (called “long feather covers”). Thus, they basically corroborated Ridgway’s statements, although Ridgway (1911) is not cited. However, it’s not clear from their morphological analyses whether there is any geographic trend within the two populations. Although their analyses found no evidence for groupings within each subspecies, I would like to have seen an analysis by latitude to see if there is a cline in nominate birds in the direction of *costaricensis*.

Their genetic data (only 600 bp plus haplotype data) showed that the two subspecies were monophyletic with respect to mtDNA sequences and that the degree of differentiation suggests a separation of 3 mya.

This is a valuable data set that quantifies differences between the two populations. Unfortunately, the editors and reviewers did a terrible job of helping these authors whose first language is clearly not English with explaining their rationale or in removing the advocacy tones in the Discussion. Grammatical and wording errors are numerous. The authors did a great job of getting the manuscript into English (much much better than I could do in Spanish), but the editors of *Revista de Biología Tropical* and reviewers let them down badly. Just one quick pass through the manuscript by an English-first speaker would have made a huge difference in clarity. Also, better editing would have corrected problems such as equating geographic isolation to reproductive isolation. The primary argument for species rank in the Discussion is comparative genetic distance metrics, citing Avise and Hebert papers and the usual 2% threshold; however, their data (Table 2) show a genetic distance of 1.9%, slightly below the threshold.

Schulz and Eisermann (2017) followed up with measurements of the uppertail coverts of the two populations. Their Abstract is below – if anyone wants the full pdf, just let me know:

Summary.—Resplendent Quetzal *Pharomachrus mocinno* is endemic to montane cloud forests of Middle America. Disjunct populations in the highlands north (southern Mexico and northern Central America) and south of the lowlands of Nicaragua (Costa Rica and Panama) have been recognised subspecifically by several authorities (e.g. Ridgway 1911, Cory 1919, Dickinson & Remsen 2013, Gill & Donsker 2017), but have also been suggested to merit species status (Solórzano & Oyama 2010). We present morphometric differences in the elongated uppertail- coverts of adult males. We

analysed width and length of the uppertail-coverts of 73 adult male specimens in European ornithological collections. Mean width and mean length of the uppertail-coverts were significantly greater in northern *P. m. mocinno* compared to southern *P. m. costaricensis*. Our data support a previously published proposal to treat the two taxa as species based on molecular and other morphological data.

Schulz and Eisermann's (2017) contribution is to validate statistically Ridgway's diagnosis. Their box plots of the width measurements shows that the two taxa overlap at the extremes; however, my sense is that their data would pass the Patten-Unitt test of diagnosability, although reviewers and editors evidently did not suggest that they do the test.

Although the data in both papers are solid, application to species limits is questionable. What was needed is explicit reference to what species concept they were using. They seem to be using a diagnosability-based PSC, although the subspecies rank of the BSC is also based on diagnosability (Remsen 2010). The Solórzano & Oyama paper refers to reproductive isolation but makes the now-epidemic-level mistake of treating geographic isolation as "reproductive isolation". Both papers have the tone that genetic differences between the populations are somehow surprising and are cause to re-evaluate the current taxonomy when in fact the blockbuster result would be finding no genetic differences between two allopatric populations described as subspecies; even in that case, there is no direct reason why variation in the neutral loci assessed with these techniques should or should not be related to known phenotypic variation, which is presumably under selection. The assumption, right or wrong, is that the phenotypic variation has a genetic basis, which is not directly related to variation in the neutral portion of the genome.

Recommendation:

I recommend a NO vote on this proposal. Both papers make a contribution in showing that the two allotaxa are morphologically diagnosable, i.e. valid subspecies under the BSC or species under the PSC and GLC. What is not known, under a BSC framework, is whether these differences represent comparable levels of divergence to other taxa treated as species under the BSC. The critical taxon is *P. antisianus* of the Andes, treated as conspecific with *mocinno* by Peters (1945) and Zimmer (1948), likely in part because it represents a continuation of the geographic trend in uppertail covert size southward. Again, this is where editors and reviewers let the authors down IMO – why not compare their morphometric data to that of *P. antisianus*?

Species limits in quetzals in general are controversial. Andean *P. auriceps* has also been considered conspecific with Amazonian *P. pavoninus*. What is needed is a comprehensive analysis of variation in the genus. Given the conservation concerns over the Middle American taxa, what is needed is quantification of vocal and display differences between the two taxa to assess whether they have likely diverged to the "point of no return" in terms of gene flow. To do that would also greatly benefit from, if not require, similar analyses of the South American taxa, among which the subspecies *P. auriceps heliactin* and *P. fulgidus festatus* have historically also been treated as separate species (just to give you an idea of the extent of potential species limits problems in the genus, which is typically treated now as having 5 species).

Main References:

- Schulz, U. & K. Eisermann. 2017. Morphometric differentiation between subspecies of Resplendent Quetzal (*Pharomachrus mocinno mocinno* and *P. m. costaricensis*) based on male uppertail-coverts. Bull. Brit. Orn. Club 137: 287-291.
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Submitted by: Van Remsen

Date of Proposal: 8 September 2018

Remove hyphens from the English names of species currently called “Ground-Dove”**Background:**

NACC/SACC policy is to hyphenate group names only when they refer to monophyletic groups. SACC has changed the hyphenated group name “Ground-Dove” to “Ground Dove” for species in the genera *Columbina*, *Metriopelia*, *Claravis*, and *Uropelia*, but we have yet to follow suit. This is relevant because our Inca Dove *Columbina inca* and the South American Scaled Dove *Columbina squammata* are not called “Something Ground-Dove.” Therefore, either the hyphens must be removed, or we need to change Inca Dove and Scaled Dove to Inca Ground-Dove and Scaled Ground-Dove, which would be unnecessarily disruptive. Five species of *Columbina* and *Claravis* occur in our area, and adoption of this proposal would result in the following modified English names:

Columbina passerina (Common Ground Dove)
Columbina minuta (Plain-breasted Ground Dove)
Columbina talpacoti (Ruddy Ground Dove)
Claravis pretiosa (Blue Ground Dove)
Claravis mondetoura (Maroon-chested Ground Dove)

Recommendation:

We recommend that the committee change the English names of these five species as proposed.

Submitted by: Van Remsen and Terry Chesser

Date of Proposal: 11 Sept. 2018

Revise the linear sequence of species in the Fregatidae

Background:

Our current sequence of frigatebirds, which follows a traditional sequence of uncertain origin, is:

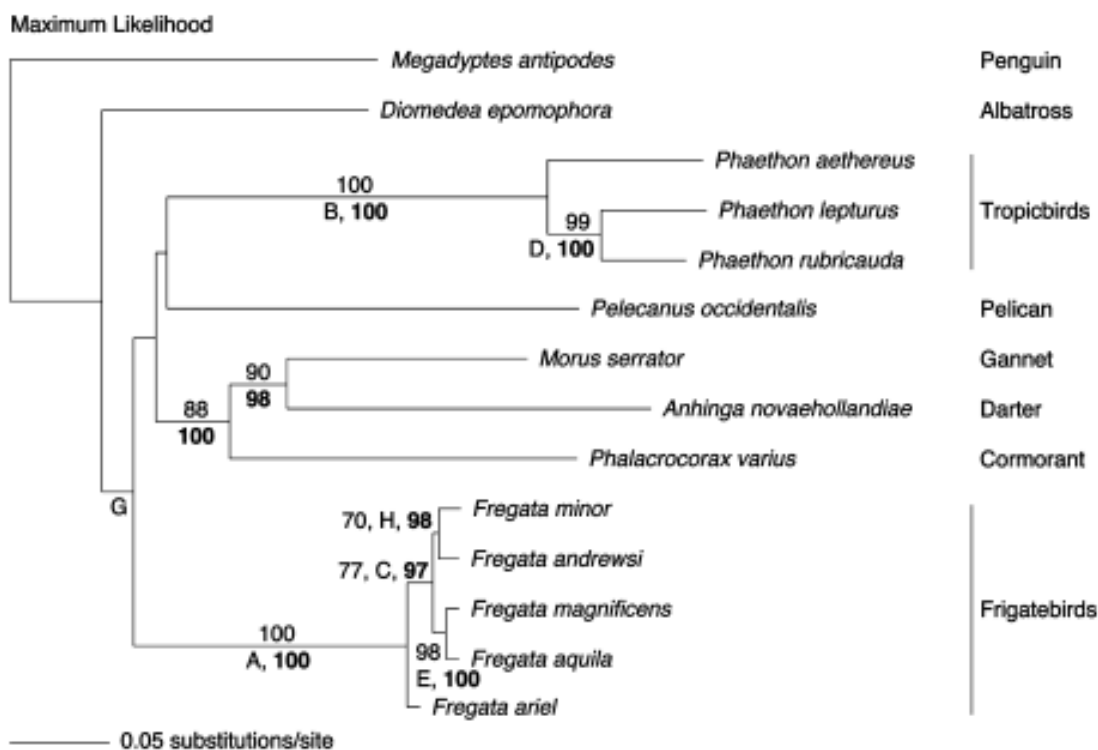
Fregata magnificens (Magnificent Frigatebird)

Fregata minor (Great Frigatebird)

Fregata ariel (Lesser Frigatebird)

New information:

Kennedy and Spencer (2004) sequenced ca. 1750 bp of mtDNA (4 loci) to produce the following tree. As you can see in this likelihood tree (their parsimony analyses had the same topology), *F. ariel* is sister to all other *Fregata*, with strong support:



To follow standard conventions of linear sequencing, we need to move *F. ariel* to the beginning of the sequence. This would result in the following new sequence:

Fregata ariel (Lesser Frigatebird)

Fregata magnificens (Magnificent Frigatebird)
Fregata minor (Great Frigatebird)

Recommendation:

This change would make our linear sequence correspond to the only solid phylogenetic data that I'm aware of for the family, so in the interests of proper bookkeeping, I recommend a YES.

References:

Kennedy, M., and H. G. Spencer. 2004. Phylogenies of the Frigatebirds (Fregatidae) and Tropicbirds (Phaethontidae), two divergent groups of the traditional order Pelecaniformes, inferred from mitochondrial DNA sequences. *Molecular Phylogenetics and Evolution* 31: 31-38.

Submitted by: Van Remsen

Date of Proposal: 11 September 2018

Revise the linear sequence of subfamilies in the Cuculidae**Background:**

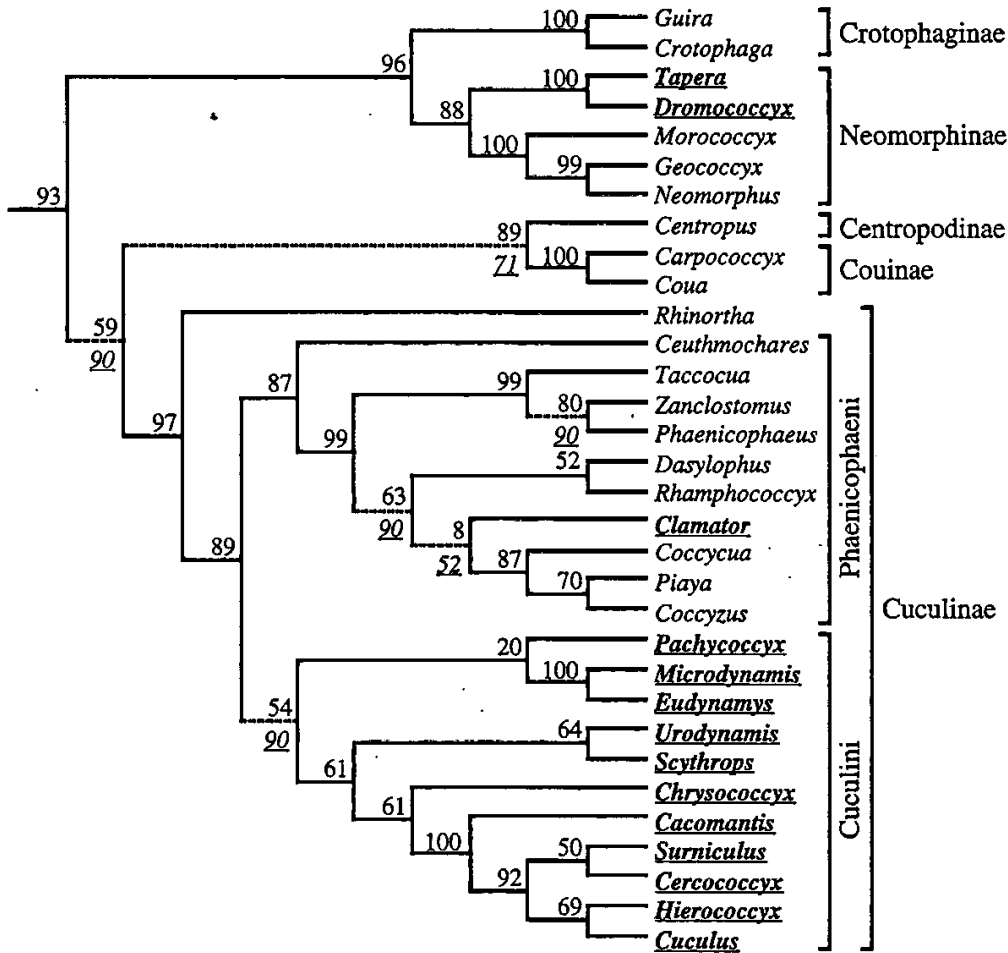
Cuckoos are geographically widespread and are highly diverse in size, morphology, and in life history (most notably in reproductive biology). For reviews of the classification of cuckoos, see Sibley and Ahlquist (1990) and Sorenson and Payne (2005). Although cuckoos are monophyletic, this diversity has been expressed taxonomically in recent years by classifying cuckoos in a diversity of families (Sibley and Ahlquist 1990, Sibley and Monroe 1990) or subfamilies (Sorenson and Payne 2005, Dickinson and Remsen 2013). The NACC currently recognizes three subfamilies of New World cuckoos, which are listed in the sequence:

Cuculinae*Cuculus**Coccyzua**Piaya**Coccyzus***Neomorphinae***Tapera**Dromococcyx**Morococcyx**Geococcyx**Neomorphus***Crotophaginae***Crotophaga*

The historical basis for this sequence is unclear. The sequence adopted in the 20th century varied somewhat from author to author, but a common pattern was listing the genera *Cuculus*, *Coccyzus* (including *Saurothera*), *Coccyzua*, and *Piaya* before the neomorphine and crotophagine genera, consistent with the current NACC arrangement (e.g., Ridgway 1916, Cory 1919, Peters 1940, Meyer de Schauensee 1966).

New information:

Sorenson and Payne (2005) provided the most comprehensive phylogenetic survey of cuckoos, based on DNA sequence data from 202 individuals of 140 species. They resolved the crotophagine taxa (*Crotophaga* and the extralimital *Guira*) as sister to the neomorphine taxa (*Tapera*, *Dromococcyx*, *Morococcyx*, *Geococcyx*, and *Neomorphus*); and collectively Crotophaginae + Neomorphinae are sister to all other cuckoos. The Sorenson and Payne phylogeny of cuckoos is remarkably complete, but is based entirely on mtDNA (ND2 and 12S).



More recent phylogenetic studies provide independent support, however, for the outlines of the Sorenson and Payne phylogeny. Hackett et al. (2008) sampled seven genera of cuckoos. Consistent with Sorenson and Payne, Hackett et al. recovered *Crotophaga* as sister to *Geococcyx*, and these two as sister to all other cuckoos. Using a slightly more expansive data set, Burleigh et al. (2015) reported the same result.

Therefore, the basal node in Cuculidae is that separating Crotophaginae + Neomorhinae from all other cuckoos. Using the standard conventions for translating a branching phylogeny into a linear sequence (i.e., that the branch that includes the smaller number of taxa is listed first), and considering global patterns of cuckoo diversity, then these two subfamilies should be listed first, not last. Using the same rationale, Crotophaginae should be listed before Neomorhinae.

The resulting revised linear sequence of cuckoos would be:

Crotophaginae

Crotophaga

Neomorphinae

Tapera

Dromococcyx

Morococcyx
Geococcyx
Neomorphus
Cuculinae
Coccyzua
Piaya
Coccyzus

Recommendation: NACC should adopt the revised sequence, to better reflect the available evidence for the phylogeny of cuckoos.

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Submitted by: Tom Schulenberg and Terry Chesser

Date of Proposal: 12 September 2018

Transfer Erckel's Francolin from *Francolinus* to *Pternistis*

Description of the problem:

The Afro-Asian francolins and spurfowls were long treated as a single genus, *Francolinus*, with about 40 species (e.g., Hall 1963, Morony et al. 1975, Bock & Farrand 1980), although Wolters (1975) divided *Francolinus* into several genera. Milstein & Wolff (1987 in Bloomer & Crowe 1998) suggested that two major clades of francolins should be recognized based on plumage and behavior, and Crowe et al. (1992), using multiple lines of evidence including analyses of mtDNA, strongly rejected the monophyly of *Francolinus*. This finding was further affirmed by the analyses of Bloomer & Crowe (1998).

Erckel's Francolin *Francolinus erckelii* (Rüppell, 1835) of NE Africa (Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea) is one of three francolin species successfully introduced into Hawaii. The other francolins still surviving in Hawaii are Black Francolin *Francolinus francolinus* (Linnaeus, 1766), and Gray Francolin *F. pondicerianus* (Gmelin, 1789), of western and southern Asian origin.

New information:

Several more recent studies, using syringeal morphology, sexual signaling traits, vocalizations, and DNA, have further corroborated the basic dichotomy between the two major clades [Crowe et al. 2006a, b, Kimball et al. 2011, Mandiwana-Neudani et al. 2011, 2014, 2018 (preprint)]. A phylogeny of the group based on chick plumage was largely unresolved (van Niekerk and Mandiwana-Neudani 2018), but this can be attributed to symplesiomorphy and convergence. The two main clades consistently recognized are typically termed the francolins and the spurfowls, with some of the former francolins remaining in *Francolinus* (among other genera) and the latter in *Pternistis* (formerly often spelled *Pternistes*, but *Pternistis* is the original spelling by Wagler, 1832). The spurfowl clade includes several other well-marked and universally recognized genera such as *Coturnix* quails and *Alectoris* partridges, and *Francolinus sensu stricto* is sister to this clade. In all analyses, Black and Gray francolins unambiguously belong to the *Francolinus* group, whereas Erckel's Francolin unambiguously belongs to the spurfowl clade.

Subsequent treatments:

All global avian checklist authorities now acknowledge the non-monophyly of *Francolinus sensu lato* by recognizing *Pternistis* for *erckelii* and related species (Lepage 2018): IOC World Bird Names since Gill & Wright (2006), Howard & Moore since the 4th edition (Dickinson & Remsen 2013), Clements (2015), and del Hoyo & Collar (2014).

Effect on AOU-CLC area:

Acceptance of this proposal would add a new genus, *Pternistis*, to the AOS-NACC area, with *Francolinus erckelii* becoming known as *Pternistis erckelii*. This would bring the AOS-NACC into agreement in this case with nearly all other taxonomies as well as in concordance with

phylogenetic studies. The other two NACC-area introduced francolin species, *F. francolinus* and *F. pondicerianus*, would be unaffected, although some sources, e.g. Mandiwana-Neudani et al. 2014) recognize *Ortygornis* for some species, including *pondicerianus*.

Although the former *Francolinus* has been divided into francolins and spurfowl, there has not been a corresponding move away from the use of Francolin for the English names of the species now in spurfowl.

Recommendation:

I strongly recommend acceptance of this proposal. I further recommend that, whether this proposal is successful or not, we continue to use the English name Erckel's Francolin, as do other authorities, especially since this species and genus is marginal to the NACC area.

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Submitted by: Pamela C. Rasmussen, Michigan State University

Date of Proposal: 15 September 2018

Split White-winged Scoter *Melanitta fusca* into two or three species

Background:

In 2006 the NACC considered a motion by Richard Banks to recognize *Melanitta fusca* as a species distinct from North American White-winged Scoter *M. deglandi*, which would also have included *M. d. stejnegeri* as a subspecies (see Appendix 1). Banks based his motion in part on Collinson et al. (2006), in which they stated (summarized with edits from Dunn et al. 2012) that it is "reasonable to suggest that *deglandi* and *fusca* should be treated as separate species under criterion 4.1 of Helbig et al. (2002), as allopatric taxa that are 'fully diagnosable in each of several discrete or continuously varying characters, related to different functional contexts.' Slightly more problematic is...whether to retain *stejnegeri* as conspecific with *deglandi*: *stejnegeri* is similar to *deglandi* in many respects and is the taxon for which there is...[least information]. On the basis of what is known – diagnosability on the basis of male bill shape and colour (a potentially reproductively important character), facial feathering (perhaps trivial), and male flank colour (perhaps trivial) – the argument for splitting *deglandi* and *stejnegeri* may appear to be almost as good as for splitting *nigra* and *americana*. Given the lack of published information on *stejnegeri*, however...further research into vocalizations, and genetics is required, hence we provisionally retain *stejnegeri* as a subspecies of *M. deglandi*."

The treatment of these three taxa has a long and varied history going back well over a hundred years. Many (Phillips 1926, Delacour 1954, Vaurie 1965, Palmer 1976, Madge and Burn 1988, Sibley and Monroe 1990, del Hoyo et al. 1992, Brown and Fredrickson 1997, Dickinson 2003, Dickinson and Remsen 2013) have maintained the White-winged Scoter as a single polytypic species, but others have separated *M. fusca* from *M. deglandi* (e.g., Hellmayr and Conover 1948, Koblik et al. 2006, Clements 2018, Gill and Donsker 2018), including *stejnegeri* as a subspecies of *M. deglandi*, or considered the three taxa as separate species (del Hoyo and Collar 2018). Livezey (1995) considered *M. fusca* and *M. deglandi* to be sister species and included *stejnegeri* with the latter. In editions 1-5 of *The Check-list of North American Birds*, the AOU (1886, 1895, 1910, 1931, 1957) maintained *Melanitta fusca* and *M. deglandi* as separate species. More recently, however, the AOU (1983, 1998) downgraded *deglandi* to a subspecies of *M. fusca* and noted (AOU 1983:92) that "some authors regard the two groups as separate species...the latter [*deglandi*] also including the eastern Asiatic form *M. f. stejnegeri* whose relationships appear to be with *deglandi* but whose status is uncertain."

Identification:

Adult males and older immature males of the three taxa are easily separable in the field if seen reasonably well. These were discussed in detail by Garner et al. (2004) and Dunn et al. (2012). Garner et al. (2004) discussed slight head and feathering shape differences around the bill among the three taxa. That publication includes a splendid plate of adult males and females. Both Garner et al. (2004) and Dunn et al. (2012) also include color photos, including a photo of an adult male *stejnegeri* from Gambell, St. Lawrence Island, Alaska in June 2002 (photo by Gary H. Rosenberg). In addition to the readily visible features of adult males, Miller (1926) detailed and illustrated structural tracheal differences between *fusca* and *deglandi*. Johnsgard

(1961) investigated the significance of tracheal anatomy in the Anatidae and found it useful tool, although its value differed from group to group. The tracheal differences in these scoters may be responsible for the described vocal differences between *fusca* and *deglandi*: the courtship call of *fusca* is a higher pitched double *skryck* rather than the whistled *whurer* of *deglandi* (Collinson 2002), but there has been some confusion of vocalizations with sounds made by wing movement, and some intensive studies have detected no vocalizations by the male during courtship (Myres 1959, Brown and Fredrickson 1997). Dunn et al. (2012) maintained that White-winged Scoters are utterly silent on their breeding grounds. Phillips (1926) quoted Brooks as stating that White-winged Scoters are “the most silent of all ducks.” One wonders about the role of tracheal differences in reproductive isolation if they stay silent! The silence of White-winged Scoters is particularly interesting, because Black and Common Scoters are vocal much of the time, even on their wintering grounds.

Distribution:

The three taxa breed allopatrically: *fusca* in Scandinavia and northwestern Russia; *stejnegeri* in Siberia and the Russian Far East (also Mongolia) east to Anadyrland, Koryakland, and Kamchatka; and *deglandi* in North America as far west as the forested parts of the Seward Peninsula. Subspecies *fusca* and *stejnegeri* are nearly parapatric with one another in western Siberia. In the Bering Sea region, the largely tundra landscape is unsuitable for the taiga breeding *stejnegeri* and *deglandi*. Interestingly, at Gambell, St. Lawrence Island, Alaska, White-winged Scoters are quite regular, with day counts sometime registering in double digits. Although many more distant birds remained unidentified to subspecies, many can be identified and have been documented with photos. Counts of adult male *stejnegeri* have reached about a half dozen individuals in a single flock. Many of these adult males are paired with adult females of unknown identity. The Alaska records through 2012 were detailed by Dunn et al. (2012). These (both *stejnegeri* and *deglandi*) are presumably migrants headed elsewhere. To date we have never seen an adult male with mixed characters of *stejnegeri* and *deglandi*. We believe that the majority of the birds present, particularly in some years, are *deglandi*. Adult male *stejnegeri* have also been documented in Alaska from the Seward Peninsula (Safety Sound area near Nome) and I believe from the Pribilof Islands. There is also a well documented record of an adult male from Santa Cruz, CA. Interestingly, *stejnegeri* has not yet been documented from the Aleutians, even though the type specimens were taken not far away from the Commander Islands, Russian Far East. European *fusca* has been documented from Greenland, where *deglandi* has also been recorded (Boertmann 1994).

Discussion:

Ridgway (1887) described *stejnegeri* as a separate species and that treatment appears to have been followed **until** Hartert (1920) lumped the three taxa into a single species. While *fusca* continued to be recognized as a separate species from *deglandi* by many (see citations above), *stejnegeri* was universally treated as a subspecies of *deglandi*. The question is why Hartert lumped them. A birding friend, Angie Geiger (fluent in German and works there part of the year), translated the White-winged Scoter accounts in Hartert (1920), and although the accounts included much information about appearance and distribution, there was no rationale for merging the three taxa (see Appendix 2). The decision was done strictly by fiat and then followed by nearly all since. An analogous situation exists with the Northern Harrier *Circus*

cyaneus, in which Hartert lumped North American *hudsonius* with the Old World birds (nominate *cyaneus*). If I remember Pam's motion correctly, this was also done with no explanation.

Although it could be argued that *fusca* is more distinct than the other two taxa, and *stejnegeri* and *deglandi* are more similar to one another, adult males of all three taxa are readily diagnosable. Characters separating *stejnegeri* from *deglandi* include the black rather than brown flanks (*deglandi* also has brown tinged scapulars), a more obvious hook "nose" on *stejnegeri*, a longer white post-ocular mark on *stejnegeri*, and different bill coloration.

Recommendation:

I recommend that Richard Banks' original proposal be reconsidered but with the extra option of splitting *stejnegeri* as a separate species. The rationale of Collinson et al. (2006) for not splitting *stejnegeri* was based in part from a lack of study (e.g., genetic differences, vocal differences, if any, assuming that they even vocalize!). Although the breeding ranges of *fusca* and *stejnegeri*, are not far apart, it is worth noting that hybrids are not known. This would likely not be the case if they were not reproductively isolated. Although their ranges are farther apart, no hybrids are known between *stejnegeri* and *deglandi*, and at least at Gambell, both taxa occur at the same location as migrants, often in the same mixed flocks. There the adult males are studied carefully, if possible. If *stejnegeri* is to be treated as a subspecies of *deglandi*, I can't think of any other situation in which an American species' breeding range extends to northwestern Asia, although Pectoral Sandpiper breeds west to about the Taimyr Region, Black Scoter breeds west to about the River Lena, and the newly constituted Northern Shrike breeds west to about the River Ob.

Because Hartert (1920) offered no rationale for the lumping of these taxa, I believe that his conclusion does not need to be refuted. I acknowledge that more information, especially genetic, is needed, but viewing the overall history of *stejnegeri*, it appears to have suffered from ornithologists by benign neglect.

English names:

Velvet Scoter is well-established for the European taxon, and White-winged Scoter has always been used for the North American taxon. Stejneger's Scoter seems widely used for the Asian subspecies. It acknowledges the many accomplishments of Leonhard Stejneger, the Norwegian-born American natural historian whose discoveries and writings provided seminal information on the ornithology of northeastern Asia. An alternative English name would be a direct translation of the Russian name, *Gorbonosii turpan* = Hook-nosed Scoter. This prominent field mark, especially well-developed on some adult males, is striking in the field and is arguably the best field mark in separating *stejnegeri*, especially at a distance, from *deglandi*.

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Submitted by: Jon Dunn

Date of Proposal: 17 September 2018

Appendix 1 to Proposal 2018-A-16 (2006 proposal to split *M. fusca*)

2006-B-02

Check-list Proposal

p. 80

Separate *Melanitta deglandi* (incl. *stejnegeri*) from *M. fusca*

The New World White-winged Scoter *Melanitta deglandi* was named as a species distinct from the Old World species, *M. fusca*, which is not surprising considering the early times. They were merged early (apparently by Phillips in 1926), also not surprising, because of their morphological (plumage) similarity. They differ from one another, and from all other species in the genus, in the color, form, and/or feathering of the bill in the adult male and in most cases adult females. BOU and Dutch check-list committees have split them back into two species under the species concept that they use. The two forms are allopatric. The situation has nicely been set forth by Collinson et al. (2006), from which details of this proposal have been taken.

The bill of *fusca* (adult male) is yellow to yellow-orange bordered by black along the small knob and lower edges of the nostrils, with a pinkish-orange nail. That of *deglandi* is a richer orange becoming reddish laterally. The knob above the nostrils is on average larger in *deglandi*, and *deglandi* has more rounded nostrils. *Stejnegeri* differs from *deglandi* but is more like it than like *fusca*. Females and immatures may also be identifiable by bill shape.

In *deglandi* and *stejnegeri*, feathering of the bill closely borders the proximal margins of the nostrils, surrounding the bill with a roughly square patch of feathering. In *fusca* the feathering stops 6-8 mm from the nostrils. This is a reliable feature in all age and sex classes. Feathers extend onto the culmen of *deglandi* but not *stejnegeri*.

The white subocular crescent is larger in *deglandi* and *stejnegeri* than in *fusca*, with perhaps slight overlap. In both breeding and non-breeding plumages, male *deglandi* has brown flank feathers tipped with buff, which contrast with the rest of the black underparts. In breeding plumage, *fusca* and *stejnegeri* have glossy black flanks.

Fusca and *deglandi* differ in positioning of the tracheal bullae. Hellmayr (1948) used this one character to separate the two as species. There are no overall size differences. Courtship vocalizations are reported to differ in *fusca* and *deglandi* but are poorly documented.

On the basis of this suite of character differences, the BOU has split *deglandi* from *fusca*, tentatively leaving *stejnegeri* with *deglandi*, although it may actually be distinct. They did not mention the Alaskan race *dixonii* of *deglandi*, which Hellmayr (1948) says is not valid. This situation is more clear cut than the *nigra-americana* one, but somewhat muddled by *stejnegeri*, which Hellmayr (1948) does not mention.

Collinson, M., D. T. Parkin, A. G. Knox, G. Sangster, and A. J. Helbig. 2006. Species limits within the genus *Melanitta*, the scoters. *British Birds* 99:183-201.

Richard C. Banks 30 Sept. 2006

Appendix 2 to Proposal 2018-A-16 (relevant section of Hartert 1920, translation by Angie Geiger)

1718. *Oidemia fusca fusca* (L.)

[citation and synonyms]

Flight-feathers 14. (1) First (fully-formed) Primary feather (P1) is a little longer than the second (P2) or, at least, never shorter, the inner Vane of the feather never noticeably narrower. Nares are small. – Adult male in winter and alternate plumage - all upper parts, i.e. head, neck, throat, wings and tail black, head and neck have a light purple or green sheen, breast and lower body more brown-black, all feathers brown at the base; directly below the eye a small crescent-shaped white spot; secondaries and tips of the greater coverts are pure white. Iris white. Bill orange-yellow. Bill tip (nail) bone-yellow. Upper Mandible from the base to above and slightly beyond the nares, outermost base of the lower Mandible and the outside edges and two thin lines from the nostrils to the sides of the Nail are black. Feet red, webs matt black. Wings 270-293, tail 80-88, leg about 45-52, beak 45-50mm. – Adult female: head and neck dark brown, more or less noticeable lighter patches on head at auricular and lores which may be entirely absent; wings and tail dark brown, rest of body feathers lighter brown, with indistinct lighter edges; secondaries and tips of the greater coverts are pure white. Underside dark brown, occasionally plain, but more frequently showing white spotting at the breast, because feathers there are edged with white or off-white.

[continuing from page 1355]

Whether the all-brown females are older, or whether lighter and darker plumages are simply individual variations, has not yet been determined. Iris dark brown, bill dark slate-colored, feet dull orange-yellow. Wings 260-265mm. – Juv.: similar to the adults, but on the lore and around the auriculars there are white or whitish patches, the undersides (breast and front part of the lower body) always with dull white edging on the feather. In the very first plumage (Juvenile plumage) the sexes do not seem to differ, although the male is a bit larger. After the first molt the lighter patches on the head of the males become smaller, the upper body darker. – Adult male in alternate plumage: There is apparently no molt of the upper body feathers, however, the head, neck and underside appear to molt, and the underside becomes brown as described in dark-plumaged females above, head and neck become darker, almost black, per Millais (British Diving Ducks II, p. 66) light brown patches are seen at the lores and auriculars, similar to the whitish spots of females and young (?). – Chicks: upper body dark brown, likewise a broad breastband, a small white spot at the lores, throat, sides of the head, sides of the neck are white, rest of body greyish-white.

Breeding birds from southern Norway to east Finnmarken [?], from Skane and Blekinge (now part of Sweden) to the Russian border, on Öland and Gotland [Swedish islands], in Finland and Lapland; to Buturlin in Estonia, in the Pinsk swamps, at the Onega Sea, at the lower Petschora and Archangelsk, in the region of Simbirsk and in a small number on Nowaja Semlja, even at the trans Caucasian seas Tabisyschur and "Gokscha"; east of the Urals from Perm and Tobolsk up to Jenissei. – In Migration from the North and Baltic Seas to Spain, Morocco, the Mediterranean Sea, Egypt, North Persia, Turkestan. Occasionally on the Faroe Islands, once in Greenland.

Lives mostly on the open sea outside the breeding season, where they almost exclusively feed on mollusks, which they gather from the ocean floor. The voice is a deep Kraaa kraaa. Breeding at inland lakes and ponds. The nest is a feather-lined indentation on the ground where there are 6 to 10 or more eggs, found after the second half of June. The eggs are oval,

smooth and fine, cream colored, in fresh condition with a touch of apricot, which fades. 130 eggs (56 Jourdain, 42 Goebel, 32 Rey) had an average size of 71.12x48.23, max. 77x48.5 and 71.2x51.5, min. 64.3x46.9 and 68.3x44.8mm. Weight per Rey 5.92-9.05 gr., average weight 6.977g, but variability seems high.

1719. ***Oidemia fusca stejnegeri*** Ridgw.

[citation]

Adult male: nares wide, almost round. Plumage coloration like *Oi. fusca fusca*, except the white spot under the eye is longer and in good preparation extends in a somewhat upwardly pointing sharp angle. Bill notably shorter, at the base a high knob, the front of which is almost always concave. Knob and base of upper and lower mandible black, nail and middle of the upper Mandible between thin black lines bright yellow, sides bright orange. Nare wide and round. Wings of 10 males 278-286mm. Bill (as in all ducks, customarily

[continuing from page 1356]

measured with calipers from where the feathers meet the bill to the tip) 45-50mm. – female: similar to the dark-morph female of *O. fusca fusca*, but distinguished with a little shorter bill, on which the feathering on the sides almost extends to under the nares, and by higher nares.

East Siberia from Anadyr, the Commander Islands and Kamtschatka to Altai and Minussink, in winter south of the Japanese islands and China to Shanghai and occasionally Futschau.

1720. ***Oidemia fusca deglandi*** Bp.

[citation and synonyms]

Adult male: Similar to *Oi. Fusca stejnegeri*, nares identical, but knob at the base of the bill much less prominent, not concave in front, the bill overall somewhat wider, sides of the body not black, but dark brown, scapulars with brownish streaking (or tingeing). Female and young birds seem to be distinguishable from the *O. fusca stejnegeri* by the lighter brown flanks, also the feathers above the bill come down at an angle to the upper Mandible, whereas the feathering on the sides of the bill reach to below the nares, which are as in *O. f. stejnegeri* broader and more open.

North America. Breeding from North Ungava (Quebec?) to British Columbia, Alberta, North Dakota and South Quebec. Winter at the Great Lakes, Louisiana (occasionally and rarely) and in Florida. Occasionally on the Commandeur Islands. (About Alaska see *dixonii*.)

? ***Oidemia fusca dixonii*** Brooks.

[citation]

Specimens from Alaska were to some extent counted as *stejnegeri* to date, but more recently to *deglandi*. Brooks separates them as above in that he states that *O. f. deglandi* are similar, with the exception of the bill, which is shorter and wider for *dixonii* and blunter at the tip. He also presents a sketch of the two bill shapes, however, I compared specimens from parts of Massachusetts (that is, typically *deglandi*), which bills appeared to me to be more similar to the picture of *dixonii*. If *dixonii* are to be distinguished from *deglandi*, then breeding birds from Northern Mackenzie must belong to them and of course those birds that hibernate on the West Coast south to lower California, overwintering birds as well as the rarely occurring birds on Commandeur Islands, where *stejnegeri* is, of course, more common, should be included too – but in my opinion, *dixonii* will no longer be a synonym for *deglandi*!

Add Pallas's Rosefinch *Carpodacus roseus* to the Main List**Background:**

From 20-24 September 2015 an immature male Pallas's Rosefinch *Carpodacus roseus* was present at St. Paul Island, Pribilofs, Alaska. The record was accepted by the Alaska Checklist Committee (Gibson et al. 2018) and was also accepted by the ABA CLC (Pranty et al. 2016, photo included). Additional photos are on file with the Alaska Checklist Committee.

The identification of this individual was non-controversial. Although some records in the Palearctic are controversial on origin issues (e.g. Hong Kong, northwestern Europe), this should not affect the Alaska record. Haas et al. (2013) analyzed all European records and believe that five from European Russia, along with three from the Ukraine and one from Hungary, are acceptable, while other published records from the Ukraine (1), European Russia (7), and the Czech Republic (1) are insufficiently documented. The record from Hungary involved a long extant specimen from Budapest collected on 1 December 1850, from which a color painting was made. Sadly the Hungarian Natural History Museum burned during the Hungarian Revolution in 1956 and the specimen was lost. In addition, records from Sweden (1), Norway (1), Germany (1), France (1), Britain (10), Denmark (3), and the Faeroes (1) were not accepted because of origin issues. Many of these records are from the late spring/summer period and the authors believe the best chance for genuine vagrants is in the late fall/winter. Many also involve adult males, an unlikely age class for vagrants, but perhaps the most likely age and sex class to be kept in captivity. Haas et al. compared the situation of escapes of this species in Europe to those of Long-tailed Rosefinch *C. sibiricus*, another species represented by more than a handful of records. However, this species is not rare in captivity and no western Palearctic records have been accepted. It is worth stressing that *C. roseus* is migratory: most of the population in northeast Asia withdraws farther south in the winter, and it winters south and west to the Tomsk area of European Russia and northeastern Kazakhstan. Records of strays are therefore not unexpected. In any event, origin issues should not be a consideration with the bird on the Pribilofs, given the remote location and the relative proximity of a naturally occurring population.

Recommendation:

I recommend that *C. roseus* be added to the Main List of the Checklist, and placed after *C. erythrurus* in the linear sequence.

English Name:

I believe the only English name used today is Pallas's Rosefinch.

Literature Cited:

Gibson, D. D., L. H. DeCicco, R. E. Gill, Jr., S. C. Heinl, A. J. Lang, T. G. Tobish, Jr., J. J. Withrow. Fourth Report of the Alaska Checklist Committee, 2013-2017. *Western Birds* 49:174-191.

Haas, M., P.-A. Crochet, G. G. Koerkamp, V. Y. Arkhipov, and V. M. Losket. 2013. Occurrence of Pallas's Rosefinch in the Western Palearctic. *Dutch Birding* 35:169-179.

Pranty, B., J. Barry, M. Gustafson, T. Johnson, K. L. Garrett, A. Lang, M. W. Lockwood, R. Pittaway, P. Pyle, and D. Sibley. 2016. 27th Report of the ABA Checklist Committee. *Birding* 48:30-36.

Draft wording for the Checklist:

Carpodacus roseus (Pallas). Pallas's Rosefinch.

Fringilla rosea Pallas, 1776, *Reise versch. Prov. Russ. Reichs.* 3: 699. (Uda and Selenga Rivers, Transbaicalia.)

Habitat.—Northern taiga zone in conifer and birch and cedar forest, alpine meadows, up to ca. 3000 meters; in winter in deciduous woods or thickets, often around farmlands, aspens near water.

Distribution.—*Breeds* from south-central Siberia from the Yenisei basin and the southeast Altai northeast through the Lena and Yana Rivers to about 68 degrees north, and east to the Kolyma River and to the Sea of Okhotsk, south through the Sayan ranges to the Tamu-Ola Mountains, and northern Mongolia, northwest through the Stanov range, northern Hopeh, China (possibly), northern Amurland, and Sakhalin.

Winters in the southern part of the breeding range and south to northern China (to about the Yangtze River), southeast Mongolia, and central Honshu, Japan. Rare west to the Tomsk region of Russia and south to northeast Kazakhstan.

Casual in the western Palearctic. Accepted records include European Russia, Ukraine and Hungary; numerous other records from northwestern Europe are treated as suspect on origin (Haas et al. 2013). A record from Hong Kong has also been questioned on origin.

Accidental from western Alaska (St. Paul Island, Pribilofs, 20-24 September 2015; immature male; photo; Pranty et al. 2016, Tobish 2017, Gibson et al. 2018).

Literature to be cited in the Checklist:

Gibson, D. D., L. H. DeCicco, R. E. Gill, Jr., S. C. Heinl, A. J. Lang, T. G. Tobish, Jr., J. J. Withrow. Fourth Report of the Alaska Checklist Committee, 2013-2017. *Western Birds* 49:174-191.

Haas, M., P.-A. Crochet, G. G. Koerkamp, V. Y. Arkhipov, and V. M. Losket. 2013. Occurrence of Pallas's Rosefinch in the Western Palearctic. *Dutch Birding* 35:169-179.

Pranty, B., J. Barry, M. Gustafson, T. Johnson, K. L. Garrett, A. Lang, M. W. Lockwood, R. Pittaway, P. Pyle, and D. Sibley. 2016. 27th Report of the ABA Checklist Committee. *Birding* 48:30-36.

Tobish, T. G., Jr. 2017. Alaska region (fall 2015). *North American Birds* 70:99-103.

Submitted by: Jon Dunn

Date of Proposal: 6 March 2017 [but overlooked by the committee chair until recently]; revised
18 September 2018