N&MA Classification Committee: Proposals 2009-B

Split the Elepaio (*Chasiempis sandwichensis*) into three single-island endemic species

Description of the problem:

The Elepaio (*Chasiempis sandwichensis*) is a passerine bird in the Monarchidae (monarch flycatchers) and is endemic to the Hawaiian Islands of Kauai, Oahu, and Hawaii (VanderWerf 1998). Elepaio exhibit substantial morphological variation among and within islands (Pratt 1980, VanderWerf 1998). Body mass ranges from 13.0±0.4 g on Oahu to 16.9±0.5 g on Hawaii (VanderWerf 1998), and the predominant plumage color is gray on Kauai, brown on Oahu, and brown, grayish-brown, or white on Hawaii (Pratt et al. 1987, VanderWerf 1998). Elepaio are sexually monomorphic on Kauai, but on Oahu and Hawaii, Elepaio are sexually dichromatic in throat color (VanderWerf 1998). Elepaio on all islands are sexually mature and sometimes breed at one year of age but exhibit a two-year delay in plumage maturation in both sexes (VanderWerf 2001, VanderWerf and Freed 2003, VanderWerf 2004). These complex patterns of morphological variation haved caused considerable confusion about the systematics of Elepaio, and their classification has changed repeatedly. Each island form was originally described as a separate species: *C. sandwichensis* Gmelin 1789 on Hawaii, *C. sclateri* Ridgway 1882 on Kauai, and *C. ibidis* Stejneger 1887 (formerly *C. gayi* Wilson 1891) on Oahu. Subsequent authors have recognized from one to five or six species of Elepaio, with the subadult plumages sometimes regarded as different species or sexes (Sclater 1885, Newton 1892, Pratt 1980, Olson 1989). These taxa were later reclassified as subspecies by Bryan and Greenway (1944) without explanation, but some authors continue to treat them as species (Olson and James 1982, Conant et al. 1998). The American Ornithologists Union currently recognizes a single species of Elepaio with three subspecies (AOU 1998). Two additional subspecies, *C. s. ridgwayi* and *C. s. bryani*, are recognized within the island of Hawaii by some authors based on variation in plumage color (Henshaw 1902; Pratt 1979, 1980). A proposal was submitted previously to split the island forms into three species based primarily on morphological evidence (AOU 2000), but no information on molecular genetics of Elepaio was available at that time.

New information:

Since the previous proposal was submitted, additional behavioral and molecular evidence has been published that is directly relevant to the classification of Elepaio (VanderWerf 2007, VanderWerf et al. 2009). First, inter-island song playback experiments showed that Elepaio on each island responded most strongly to songs from their own island and less strongly to songs from other islands (VanderWerf 2007). The low level of foreign song recognition indicates song could inhibit interbreeding and serve as an isolating mechanism. Elepaio populations on different islands do not actually interbreed because they are isolated by water barriers, and their potential for interbreeding would be inhibited by lack of song recognition if they came into secondary contact.

Second, mtDNA evidence from VanderWerf et al. (2009) showed that Elepaio on each island form reciprocally monophyletic groups that do not share ND2 haplotypes with other islands. The sequence divergence of Elepaio among islands (2.21-3.02%) was similar to that between Kauai and Oahu Amakihi (3.7%; *Hemignathus kauaiensis* and *H. chloris*; Tarr and Fleischer 1993), species of *Pomarea* monarchs throughout eastern Polynesia (3.8±1.8%) and within the Marquesas (3.1±1.5%; Cibois et al. 2004), island and western scrub jays (3.14%; *Aphelocoma insularis* and *A. californica*; Delaney and Wayne 2005), and several other avian sibling species (Avise and Zink 1988). Relaxed molecular clock models indicated the Elepaio lineage colonized Kauai 2.33 million years ago (95% CI 0.92-3.87 myr), Oahu 0.69 (0.29-1.19) myr ago, and Hawaii 0.49 (0.21-0.84) myr ago. Molecular analyses also showed that ND2 haplotypes were shared broadly among putative Elepaio subspecies the island of Hawaii. There was significant variation in ND2 within Hawaii, but most variation in ND2 occurred within subspecies, not among them. Microsatellites showed no evidence of geographic population structure within the island of Hawaii.

Recommendation:

A combination of molecular, morphological, and behavioral evidence indicates the taxonomy of *Chasiempis* should be revised to make it congruent with phylogenetic units and biologically distinct populations. Elepaio should be split into three species, each endemic to a single island. The nomenclature of Elepaio on each island has already been established: *C. sclateri* Ridgway 1882 on Kauai, *C. ibidis* Stejneger 1887 (formerly *C. gayi* Wilson 1891) on Oahu, and *C. sandwichensis* Gmelin 1789 on Hawaii. Common names for these species would logically be the Kauai Elepaio, Oahu Elepaio, and Hawaii Elepaio, respectively. Molecular evidence does not support recognition of the subspecies *C. s. ridgwayi* and *C. s. bryani* within the island of Hawaii, or any divisions within Oahu or Kauai.

I would recommend the following wording for the checklist:

Family **MONARCHIDAE**: Monarchs

Genus ***CHASIEMPIS*** Cabanis

Chasiempis Cabanis, 1847, Arch. Naturgesch. 13: 207. Type, by monotypy, Muscicapa
Sandvichensis Latham = Muscicapa sandwichensis Gmelin.

Chasiempis sandwichensis (Gmelin). Hawaii Elepaio.

Muscicapa sandwichensis Gmelin, 1789, Syst. Nat. 1(2): 945. Based on the "Sandwich Fly-catcher" Latham, Gen. Synop. Birds 2(1): 344. (in insulis Sandwich = Hawaii.)

Turdus sandwichensis Gmelin, 1789, Syst. Nat. 1(2): 813. Based on the "Sandwich Thrush" Latham, Gen. Synop. Birds 2(1): 39. Subjective synonym of *Muscicapa sandwichensis* Gmelin, 1789; see Olson (1989).

Habitat.—Lowland and montane wet, mesic, and dry forest, primarily in areas dominated by native plants.

Distribution.—*Resident* on the island of Hawaii in the Hawaiian Islands. Prior to arrival of humans probably occupied virtually all forested areas on the island. Distribution has been reduced since the arrival of humans, particularly at low elevations, due to loss of forest habitat, alien diseases carried by alien mosquitoes, and predation on nests by alien rodents. More numerous at higher elevations where mosquitoes are less numerous or absent, but also found in low elevation forest in some areas, such as Puna, Hamakua, and Manuka.

Notes.—Three subspecies are sometimes recognized on Hawaii, including the nominate *C. s. sandwichensis* Gmelin 1789 from leeward (western) parts of the island, *C. s. ridgwayi* Stejneger 1887 from windward (eastern) parts of the island, and *C. s. bryani* Pratt 1979 from upper slopes of western Mauna Kea. VanderWerf et al. (2009) showed that these subspecies are not genetically distinct.

Chasiempis sclateri (Ridgway). Kauai Elepaio.

Chasiempis sclateri Ridgway, 1882, Proceedings of the United States National Museum 4:337-338. (Kauai, Hawaiian Islands)

Habitat.—Montane wet and mesic forest, primarily in areas dominated by native plants.

Distribution.—*Resident* on the island of Kauai in the Hawaiian Islands. Prior to arrival of humans probably occupied virtually all forested areas on the island. Fossil remains found near sea level at Mahaulepu on the southern coast, but has disappeared from most lowland areas since the arrival of humans due to loss of forest habitat. Now found primarily above 800 m on the Alakai Plateau and in upper (eastern) Kokee. Less numerous in western Kokee, such as at Nualolo and Awaawapuhi; also occurs in some lower elevation areas such as upper Kalalau.

Chasiempis ibidis (Stejneger). Oahu Elepaio.

Chasiempis ibidis Stejneger, 1887, Proceedings of the United States National Museum 10:75-102. (Oahu, Hawaiian Islands)

Chasiempis gayi Wilson, 1891, Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London 1891:164-166. Synonym of *C. ibidis* Stejneger 1887; see Olson (1989).

Habitat.—Lowland and montane wet and mesic forest, often in areas dominated by alien plants.
Distribution.—*Resident* on the island of Oahu in the Hawaiian Islands. Prior to arrival of humans probably occupied virtually all forested areas on the island. Current distribution much reduced, comprising only 4% of presumed prehistoric distribution. The current range is highly fragmented, with remaining birds occurring in six populations split between the Koolau and Waianae Mountains, and small numbers scattered in several tiny remnants.
Notes.—Known for many years as *C. gayi* Wilson 1891 until Olson (1989) showed that that the holotype of *C. ibidis* Stejneger 1887 had actually been collected on Oahu and not on Hawaii, and thus that *C. ibidis* Stejneger 1887 had precedence over *C. gayi* Wilson 1891.

Literature cited:

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Newton A (1892) Ornithology of the Sandwich Islands. Nature 45:465-469.

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Olson SL, James HF (1982) Prodromus of the fossil avifauna of the Hawaiian Islands. Smithsonian Contributions to Zoology Number 365. Washington, DC.

Pratt HD (1979) A new subspecies of the Elepaio *Chasiempis sandwichensis*, from the island of Hawaii. Bulletin of the British Ornithologists Club 99:105-108.

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Ridgway R (1882) Description of a new fly-catcher and a supposed new petrel from the Sandwich Islands. Proceedings of the United States National Museum 4:337-338.

Sclater PL (1885) On the muscicapine genus *Chasiempis*. Ibis 3:17-19.

Stejneger L (1887) Birds of Kauai Island, Hawaiian Archipelago, collected by Mr. Valdemar Knudsen, with descriptions of new species. Proceedings of the United States National Museum 10:75-102.

Tarr CL, Fleischer RC (1993) Mitochondrial DNA variation and evolutionary relationships in the Amakihi complex. Auk 110:825–831

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VanderWerf EA (2001) Two-year delay in plumage maturation of male and female Elepaio. Condor 103:756-766.

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VanderWerf EA (2007) Biogeography of `Elepaio: evidence from inter-island song playbacks. Wilson Journal of Ornithology 119:325-333.

VanderWerf EA, Freed LA (2003) Elepaio subadult plumages reduce aggression through graded status signaling, not mimicry. Journal of Field Ornithology 74:406-415.

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Name and affiliation of submitter: Dr. Eric A. VanderWerf, Pacific Rim Conservation, 3038 Oahu Avenue, Honolulu, HI 96822, USA, ewerf@hawaii.rr.com

Date of proposal: 31 Jul 2009

Change the English name of *Puffinus (= Ardenna) gravis* from Greater Shearwater to Great Shearwater

I believe that everywhere else in the world this species is called simply Great Shearwater rather than Greater Shearwater. For example, obviously in all the European literature, including the Birdlife International conservation-oriented literature, and in Peter Harrison's *Seabirds of the World* books, Hadoram Shirihai's *Complete Guide to Antarctic Wildlife* (2007), Mark Beaman's *Checklist of Palearctic Birds* (1994), Howell and Webb's *Birds of Mexico and Northern Central America* (1995), the recent *Checklist of the Birds of Northern South America* (Rodner et al. 2000), the *Handbook of Australian, New Zealand, and Antarctic Birds* (Marchant and Higgins 2000), the Sibley and Monroe (1990) *Distribution and Taxonomy of Birds of the World*, the *Handbook of the Birds of the World*, *vol. 1* (del Hoyo et al. 1992), the IOC's *Birds of the World* (Gill and Wright 2006), Woods' *Guide to the Birds of the Falkland Islands* (1988) (where the species breeds), and even Alvaro Jaramillo's *Birds of Chile* (2003).

I am sure there are non-North American books that use Greater Shearwater but these are very much in the minority.

Adopting this small change would bring the AOU into accord with the rest of the world for what is, after all, a very wide-ranging species.

Other minor arguments that could be made include:

There is the grammatical point that greater and lesser should refer to two comparative entities (as in scaup, prairie-chickens, yellowlegs, etc.), and yes, I know there are lots of exceptions in the world of bird names. Nonetheless there isn't a Lesser Shearwater, and Great Shearwater isn't the biggest shearwater, but it's still a big shearwater, like Great Egret or Great Snipe, etc.

The scientific name *gravis* means "heavy" (or great in weight), which, I believe, is also not a relative term, as in it doesn't mean heaviest shearwater.

Besides being more accurate, Great Shearwater is a slightly shorter and "easier" name than Greater Shearwater (try saying it out loud).

As an added bonus, it doesn't require any changes to four-letter banding codes and will remain as GRSH.

Name and affiliation of submitter: Steve Howell, PO Box 423, Bolinas, CA 94924

Date of proposal: 4 Aug 2009

2009-B-03 N&MA Classification Committee pp. 534-537

Recognize the Parulid genus *Leiothlypis*

Sangster (2008) pointed out that "three independent molecular phylogenetic studies indicated that *Vermivora*, as presently constituted, is polyphyletic." The relevant studies, known to all of us, are Avise et al. 1980, Klein et al. 2004, and Lovette and Hochachka 2006. The division of the genus is also supported by vocal and skeletal characters (Webster 1997). Lovette (pers. comm.) says that his unpublished data support this and associated proposals.

The genus *Vermivora* now has as its type species *Certhia pinus* Linnaeus, the Blue-winged Warbler, and includes its sister species *chrysoptera*, the Golden-winged Warbler, and presumably *bachmani,* Bachman's Warbler, not included in the molecular studies. These three species continue to constitute *Vermivora* (but see Proposal 2009-B-06 on the name of *V. pinus)*.

The other species now in *Vermivora* form a closely related group and constitute a separate genus. No generic name has been based on any of these species, but Sangster now proposes *Leiothlypis*, with the type species *Sylvia peregrina* Wilson, the Tennessee Warbler. Acceptance of this work means that the included species will be listed as:

Leiothlypis peregrina (Wilson, 1811)
L. celata (Say, 1823)
L. ruficapilla (Wilson, 1811)
L. virginiae (Baird, 1860)
L. crissalis (Salvin and Godman, 1889) and
L. luciae (Cooper, 1861).

I recommend adoption of this new generic classification and the heading,

Genus ***Leiothlypis*** Sangster

Leiothlypis Sangster, 2008, Bull. Brit. Orn. Club 128: 210. Type, by original designation, *Sylvia peregrina* Wilson.

Literature cited:

Avise et al. 1980. J. Heredity 71:303-310. I have not seen this.

Klein et al. 2004. J. Carib. Ornithology

Lovette and Hochachka 2006. Ecology 87;S14-S28. Or this.

Sangster, G. 2008. A revision of *Vermivora* (Parulidae), with the description of a new genus. Bulletin of the British Ornithologists' Club 128:207-211.

Webster, J. D. 1997. In Phillips Festschrift.

Name and affiliation of submitter: Richard C. Banks, NACC

Date of proposal: 10 Nov 2009

2009-B-04 N&MA Classification Committee pp. 537-538

Recognize the Parulid genus *Oreothlypis*

In his paper on *Vermivora,* Sangster (2008) showed that the genus *Parula* is also polyphyletic. It is composed of two distinct groups of species, one of which is closest to one of the groups (the plain one, *Leiothlypis*) of *Vermivora*. This group includes the species *gutturalis* and *superciliosa*. This is based on molecular studies, vocalizations, and skeletal studies (Webster 1997).

The type species of *Parula* is *Parus americanus* Linnaeus, the Northern Parula. Its sister species and congener is *pitiayumi*, the Tropical Parula.

The species *gutturalis* is the type species of *Oreothlypis* Ridgway. That generic name should be used for *gutturalis* (Cabanis, 1861) and *superciliosa* Hartlaub, 1844). The generic citation will be:

Genus ***Oreothlypis*** Ridgway

The citation is already in the synonymy of *Parula*.

I recommend adoption of this generic split.

Literature as in *Leiothlypis* proposal.

Name and affiliation of submitter: Richard C. Banks, NACC

Date of proposal: 18 Nov 2009

Recognize the Parulid genus *Parkesia*

The currently recognized parulid genus *Seiurus* (type species *aurocapilla*) includes, as well as the Ovenbird, the two species of Waterthrushes, Northern (*noveboracensis)* and Louisiana (*motacilla*).

Several genetic studies have shown that the species *noveboracensis* and *aurocapilla* are not closely related, but that *aurocapilla* is basal to other parulids. Klein et al. (2004) showed that *motacilla* is not closely related to *aurocapilla*. Finally, Lovette and Hochachka (2006) included all three species in a mitochondrial DNA study and found that *motacilla* and *noveboracensis* are in fact sister species but not close to the basal *aurocapilla*. On the basis of this, Sangster 2008) proposed the generic name *Parkesia* for the waterthrushes. The type species is *noveboracensis*.

I recommend that we adopt this generic revision and list the generic heading and species as:

Genus ***Parkesia*** Sangster

Parkesia Sangster, 2008, Bull. Brit. Orn. Club 128: 213. Type, by original designation, *Motacilla noveboracensis* Gmelin.

Parkesia noveboracensis (Gmelin, 1789) Northern Waterthrush

Parkesia motacilla (Vieillot, 1809) Louisiana Waterthrush.

The ovenbird will continue to be listed as *Seiurus aurocapilla* (Linnaeus, 1766). Eventually this genus and species should be listed first in the Parulidae but that changes should await a full revision of the family.

Literature cited:

Sangster, G. 2008. A new genus for the waterthrushes (Parulidae). Bulletin of the British Ornithologists' Club 128:212-215.

Other Lit. as in *Leiothlypis* proposal.

Name and affiliation of submitter: Richard C. Banks, NACC

Date of proposal: 18 Nov 2009

2009-B-06 N&MA Classification Committee pp. 533-534

Recognize a new scientific name for the Blue-winged Warbler

Olson and Reveal (2009) have shown that the Linnaean name *Certhia pinus* is a composite name, based on illustrations of birds of two different warbler species, the Pine Warbler, now known as *Dendroica pinus*, illustrated by Catesby, and the Blue-winged Warbler, now *Vermivora pinus*, illustrated by Edwards.

Wilson was aware of the problem and essentially restricted the name to what we now call the Pine Warbler. He, and later Bonaparte, in effect lectotypified *Certhia pinus* as Catesby's plate. Wilson described as new the Blue-winged Warbler, as *Sylvia solitaria*. Wilson used the name *pinus* for the Pine Warbler.

Baird (1858), however, used *pinus* of Linnaeus for the Blue-winged Warbler, and gave Wilson credit for the name *Sylvia* (now *Dendroica*) *pinus*, incorrectly regarding Wilson's use of that name as a new name. Stejneger (1885) realized the latter was wrong and used the name *Sylvia vigorsii* for the Pine Warbler. Stone (1921) argued again that Wilson was giving a name to Catesby's illustration as *pinus*, and that name, attributed to Wilson, has been used by AOU since 1931. But Wilson was merely mentioning the name as used by Latham. Even if he intended it as new it would have been a junior homonym, and unavailable.

Wilson's and Bonaparte's actions clearly made Linnaeus's name *Certhia pinus* the name for the Pine Warbler, and thus Wilson's *Sylvia solitaria* is the name for the Blue-winged Warbler, Unfortunately, that name is preoccupied by *Sylvia solitaria* Lewin, 1808 and no other name is available. Olson and Reveal proposed the name *Vermivora cyanoptera*.

I propose that we accept this new name and the other consequences of this study. The Blue-winged Warbler and its citation must be listed as:

Vermivora cyanoptera Olson and Reveal. Blue-winged Warbler.
Vermivora cyanoptera Olson and Reveal, 2009. Wilson Journ. Ornithol. 121:620. (eastern Pennsylvania.)

We should add to the account: Notes: Formerly *Vermivora pinus* Linnaeus.

The Pine Warbler should be listed as *Dendroica pinus* (Linnaeus, 1769) rather than *D. pinus* (Wilson) and its citation should be:

Certhia Pinus Linnaeus, 1769, Syst. Nat. (ed. 12) 1:187. Based largely on “The Pine Creeper” of Catesby, Nat. Hist. Carolina, Florida, and the Bahama Islands, vol. 1, part 4, pl. and text 61 (in America septentrionali = South Carolina.)

In addition the citation for the genus *Vermivora* must be changed slightly to read: Type, by monotypy, *Sylvia solitaria* Wilson = *Vermivora cyanoptera* Olson and Reveal.

Literature cited:

Olson, S. L., and J. L. Reveal. 2009. Nomenclatural history and a new name for the Blue-winged Warbler (Aves: Parulidae). Wilson Journal of Ornithology 121:618-620.

Name and affiliation of submitter: Richard C. Banks, NACC

Date of proposal: 20 Nov 2009

Recognize *Icterus northropi, Icterus melanopsis, Icterus dominicensis,* and *Icterus portoricensis* as full species (first of two proposals on this topic)

Description of the problem:

In the 42nd supplement to the AOU Checklist of North American Birds, *Icterus dominicensis* was recognized as a species distinct from *Icterus prosthemelas*. In the paper prompting this reevaluation, Omland et al. (1999) found a substantial genetic distance (4-6%) separating *I. d. portoricensis* from both *I. d. northropi* and *I. d. melanopsis*. At the time, the suggestion by Omland et al. (1999) that *I. dominicensis* might consist of up to four species (Omland et al. 1999) was unable to be confirmed due to a lack of genetic information on *I. d. dominicensis* and a lack of plumage and vocal analysis.

New information:

Sturge et al. (2009) analyzed the missing *I. d. dominicensis* ND2 sequences, and recommended elevation of all four allopatric taxa to full species based on polyphyly. Though *I. d. northropi* and *I. d. melanopsis* differ by only 0.7% (Omland et al. 1999), differences in song, morphometrics (Garrido et al. 2005), and plumage (Omland and Lanyon 2000, Price and Hayes 2009) provide strong support for recognizing these as distinct species. A recent plumage paper (Price and Hayes 2009) demonstrated diagnosability equivalent to sympatric continental species.

Recommendation:

(As stated in Garrido et al. 2005, but updated for *I. northropi* on Abaco):

Icterus northropi Allen, 1890 (Bahamas Oriole)
Islands of Andros and Abaco (believed extirpated on the latter, White 1998).

Icterus melanopsis (Wagler), 1929 (Cuban Oriole)
Cuba, Isla de Pinos, and some northern keys (cayos Guillermo, Coco, Paredon Grande).

Icterus dominicensis (Linnaeus), 1766 (Hispaniolan Oriole)
Hispaniola, including Ile de la Gonave, Ile de la Tortue, Ile-a-Vache, and Isla Saona.

Icterus portoricensis (Bryant), 1866 (Puerto Rican Oriole)
Puerto Rico

Literature cited:

Garrido, O. H., J. W. Wiley, and A. Kirkconnell. 2005. The genus *Icterus* in the West Indies. Ornitologia Neotropical 16:449-470.

Omland, K. E., S. M. Lanyon, and S. J. Fritz. 1999. A molecular phylogeny of the New World orioles (*Icterus*): the importance of dense taxon sampling. Molecular Phylogenetics and Evolution 12:224-239.

Price, M. R., and W. K. Hayes. 2009. Conservation taxonomy of the Greater Antillean Oriole (*Icterus dominicensis*): diagnosable plumage variation among allopatric populations supports species status. Journal of Caribbean Ornithology 22:19-25).

Sturge, R. J., F. Jacobsen, B. B. Rosensteel, R. J. Neale, and K. E. Omland. 2009. Colonization of South America from Caribbean islands confirmed by molecular phylogeny with increased taxon sampling. Condor 111(3):575-579.

White, J. W. 1998. A birder’s guide to the Bahama Islands (including Turks and Caicos). American Birding Association, Inc., Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Name and affiliation of submitter: Melissa R. Price, Department of Earth and Biological Sciences, Loma Linda University

Date of proposal: 3 Dec 2009

Recognize *Icterus northropi, Icterus melanopsis, Icterus dominicensis,* and *Icterus portoricensis* as full species (second of two proposals on this topic)

Effect on AOU-CL: This proposal would split *Icterus dominicensis* into as many as four different species.

Description of the problem:

On 17 Dec. 1999 I submitted a proposal to the Committee to split *Icterus dominicensis* based especially on genetic work of Omland et al. (1999), who sequenced cytochrome-b and ND2, which suggested that a split into as many as 5 different species may be warranted. At that time, the Committee (AOU 2000) decided to split *Icterus dominicensis* into two species, a mainland one (*I. prosthemelas* - the Black-cowled Oriole), and Greater Antillean one (*I. dominicensis* - the Greater Antillean Oriole, which consisted of four subspecies, *I. d. dominicensis* - Hispaniolan Oriole, *I. d. portoricensis* - Puerto Rican Oriole, *I. d. northropi* - Bahaman Oriole, and *I. d. melanopsis* - the Cuban Oriole). They wrote (AOU 2000: 853) "...further study is needed to clarify their relationships." In 2006, I submitted a new proposal based on Garrido et al. (2006). Although I saw little new of use to us in this paper, their results were consistent with Lovette et al. (1999, which I had not seen at that time) as well as Omland et al. (1999). Unfortunately, at that time we did not have complete sequence data for *I. d. dominicensis* or *I. auricapillus*. Sturge et al. (2009) now have published complete sequence data for mitochondrial cytochrome *b* and ND2 for these two taxa. [Note that these papers seem to run on a 10-year cycle: 1999,2009, …. Will we be back here in 2019?] For our purposes these data support the earlier proposals.

New Information:

Sturge et al. (2009) support the distinctiveness of *I. d. dominicensis*, and clearly indicate that *I. auricapillus* is a member of this clade. *I. d. dominicensis* appears to be paraphyletic. Price and Hayes (2009) looked at 9 plumage characters of 156 male *Icterus* in the *I. dominicensis* group and found them to be 100% diagnosable. Earlier Garrido, Wiley, and Kirkconnell (2005) examined specimens of *Icterus* from the West Indies, as well as specimens of *I. prosthemelas* and *I. p. praecox* (Caribbean slopes of Costa Rica and Panama), *I. banana* (Martinique), *I. oberi* (Montserrat), and *I. laudabilis* (St. Lucia). They looked at morphological (study skin) variation for which they had reasonable sample sizes for most (total of 526 adult specimens), including all of the subspecies of *I. dominicensis*, as well as information on their natural history and vocalizations.

- Study skins: Their cluster analysis of Garrido et al. (2005), based on skin measurements, split the *I. dominicensis* group from the *I. prosthemelas* group (including *I. p. praecox*), and male *I. northropi* from the other *I.*

dominicensis (they seem to be larger). Using linear discriminant analysis to "...classify specimens into groups ("Island"; Bahamas, Cuba, Hispaniola, and Puerto Rico [using skin measurements]. For males, the analysis produced a true group classification proportion of 1.00 for Bahama [*northropi*] specimens, 0.731 for Cuban specimens, 0.667 for Hispaniolan specimens, and 0.706 for Puerto Rico individuals... (2005: 460)." I assume that this means that they used an *a posteriori* classification (using their DF scores) and identified 100% of the Bahamian orioles correctly, on the basis of their multivariate analysis, etc.

- Plumage pattern and coloration: Garrido et al. (2005:453) note that *I. northropi*, though (perhaps) closer in measurements to the Greater Antillean group, "...more closely resembles the Central American *I. prosthemelas* in plumage color and pattern." Further, they (2005:453) write: "Plumage differences between *northropi* and *prosthemelas* include: young and immature *prosthemelas* have the entire upperparts greenish and have a black forehead, face, and white throat bib, whereas *northropi* lacks the black on the throat (although some individuals may have black on the chin) and the upperparts are olive-gray, with more yellowish on the head. In adult *northropi*, the rump is dull yellow with a tinge of greenish, not vivid yellow with a shade of orange as in *prosthemelas*. On the other hand, *prosthemelas* and *praecox* are quite similar in adult plumage, but juveniles of *praecox* have much more extensive black on the throat, extending to the lower breast." They elaborate on some other differences in plumage among these taxa. Price and Hayes (2009) support this.

- Natural History: *I. dominicensis* generally occurs at low elevations, but Puerto Rican and Hispaniolan *I. dominicensis* are common at higher elevations, up to 1100 m in the Dominican Republic and 1000 m in Puerto Rico, in appropriate habitat. They are often found in palms, but also occur in pine forests in the Bahamas, as well as in broadleaf forests, farmlands, parks, and dry desert scrub forests. Nests are similar on all of the islands as is the feeding ecology (they feed on fruit, nectar, flowers, and insects).

- Vocalizations: Differences among islands and populations in vocalizations are said to be "obvious" and Garrido et al. (2005) found little within-population variation in song among island populations.

Garrido et al. (2005) recommend that *I. dominicensis* (as currently delimited by the AOU) be divided into 4 species. The molecular data support this.

I. melanopsis - Cuban Oriole
I. dominicensis - Hispaniolan Oriole
I. portoricensis - Puerto Rican Oriole
I. northropi - Bahamas Oriole - on Andros and Abaco, currently rare on the latter

Recommendation:

Skin measurements: This may sound strange coming from someone who has spent much of his life analyzing interpopulational differences in size and shape, but I think that these tell us little about phylogeny - about historical relationships. About local adaptation, yes. Phylogenetic history, no. If we recognized every island population that was significantly larger or smaller, etc., we could no doubt recognize every island population as a distinct species.

Natural history: Again, we would expect that these things would vary from island to island, depending on the mix of potentially-competing non-conspecifics, and ecological opportunities. Lots of birds do "funny things" on islands. I would suspect that these features are adaptively labile and could evolve very quickly - if indeed they have evolved at all.

Vocalizations: these orioles are oscines. They learn their songs. I don't think that song tells us much about relationships in oscines. If, in sympatry, they ignored each other, that is one thing - but these are a bunch of allopatric populations of closely-related birds. The analysis of song is not strong in any event.

Plumage patterns: These are well-marked populations. The differences are hard to visualize, but the figures in Jaramillo and Burke (1999) help. Again, plumage features can evolve rapidly in evolutionary time, as these no doubt have. Nonetheless, the population from the different islands are distinctive, perhaps especially in juvenile and immature plumages (Garrido et al. 2005: 455).

Recommendation:

I don't think that any of the evidence presented by Garrido et al. (2005) or Price and Hayes (2009) compels us to change anything. Having said that, it does all add up to a pattern - a bit like the individual studies of the duck/chicken relationship. On the basis of the molecular work, I proposed in 1999 that we recognize all of these as separate species, and the additional sequence data and Lovette et al. (1999) add to that. Also, I think that the Greater Antillean birds are at least as distinctive as are those from Martinique, Montserrat, and St. Lucia, which are generally accepted as separate species (even in the AOU Check-list), as is the Orange-crowned Oriole (*I. auricapillus*). All of the populations are allopatric, so we can know nothing about propensities to interbreed, but I am sure that gene flow among the populations is approximately nil. As well, we know that oriole "species" that are not particularly closely related (e.g. Baltimore and Bullock's) will hybridize – so what? The molecular data from Sturge et al. (2009) provide a missing piece.

In short, although there is not a smoking gun here (in my opinion), I think that there is added support for a split, and I support it. Dick (10 years ago?) wanted to call *I. northropi* "Northrop's Oriole" as opposed to "Bahamas Oriole." I have no problem with that, but I do think that there is a certain consistency about naming them all from the place where they are from (e.g. Puerto, Cuba, Puerto, Hispaniola), and also that is helpful to students of Caribbean birds.

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Sturge, R. J., F. Jacobsen, B. B. Rosensteel, R. J. Neale, and K. E. Omland. 2009. Colonization of South America from Caribbean islands confirmed by molecular phylogeny with increased taxon sampling. Condor 111: 575-579.

Name and affiliation of submitter: Jim Rising, NACC

Date of proposal: 14 Dec 2009

Separate *Melanitta americana* from *M. nigra*

Below is a proposal from 2006, which was not accepted then. New information is at the end.

Description of the problem:

The New World Black Scoter *Melanitta americana* was named as a species distinct from the Old World species*, M. nigra*, 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 although their breeding ranges approach in the Lena River area of Russia. The situation has nicely been set forth by Collinson et al. (2006), from which details of this proposal have been taken.

Adult males are distinguishable on the basis of bill color pattern and shape – long known. The bill of adult male *nigra* is largely black, with a swollen black basal knob on the maxilla. Yellow color is normally restricted to a small area around the nostrils and along the culmen ridge. In a*mericana*, there is a swollen fully yellow base to the bill. The nostrils are more elongated and closer to the bill tip, and the bill is shorter in *americana*. These characters are not fully expressed until the end of the second year. Adult females may also be distinguished, especially in bill length, but there is a high amount of individual variation and that situation has not been quantified. The bill is assumed to be a sexual display character, considering the lack of other characters in the species.

There appear to be no diagnostic differences in size or weight. Collinson et al. (2006) cite an “in press” report of diagnostic differences in the display calls, but that paper (supposedly for Wilson Bull.) was apparently withdrawn after review.

BOU species concept states that allopatric taxa may be treated as species if at least one character is fully diagnostic and the level of divergence is equivalent to that of the most closely related sympatric species. Diagnosability is said to be 100% here for adult males. But there really aren’t closely related sympatric species, except other scoters.

New Information:

The paper referred to above has now been published (Sangster 2009) and the results show that the courtship calls of the two forms are different. The call of *nigra* is a single short note (about 0.1 sec.) repeated quickly. The call of *americana* is also a repeated single note but it is longer, about 0.7 sec. They look quite different on sonograms. It is suggested that the notes play a role in courtship, when several males call around a female. There is essentially no variation within the range of either taxon. Most courting and mating apparently takes place on the winter grounds. As noted, breeding grounds are allopatric. According to Johnsgard (in Peters vol. 1 revised, 1979) winter ranges are also distinct. It is suggested that this newly described acoustic difference supports bill difference as a species-level character.

I suggest acceptance of this split.

BOU uses Common Scoter for *nigra*, Black Scoter for *americana*. If we split, I recommend we go along.

Literature cited:

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.

Sangster, G. 2009. Acoustic differences between the scoters *Melanitta nigra nigra* and *M. n. americana*. Wilson Journal of Ornithology 121:696-702.

Name and affiliation of submitter: Richard C. Banks, NACC

Date of proposal: 29 Sep 2006; revised 27 Dec 2009

2009-B-09 N&MA Classification Committee

Transfer Swinhoe's Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma monorhis*) from the Appendix to the Main List

Description of the problem:

The species was added to our Appendix (AOU 2000) on the basis of a bird photographed east of Hatteras, North Carolina, on 8 August 1998 (O'Brien et al. 1999) and its possible presence on previous occasions (Brinkley 1995). It had been previously reported from the eastern North Atlantic (Cubitt 1995). The Committee indicated that the species was not well known, and further rendered the opinion that identification of this species "from photographs is considered tenuous (AOU 2000)."

New information:

The situation in the eastern Atlantic has been clarified somewhat since the first sighting of Swinhoe's Storm-Petrel in 1983. Confirmation of these birds was based on morphometrics and purr calls (Bretangnolle et al. 1991) as well as by DNA comparisons of the Atlantic birds with birds from the northwest Pacific (Cubitt et al. 1992, Dawson 1992, Cubitt 1995, Dawson et al. 1995). By the end of 2008, 24 individuals had been recorded from a variety of locations in the North Atlantic -- Madeira, Spain, Portugal, France, Norway, United Kingdom, and Italy, as well as off North Carolina (Flood 2009). Flood provides a definitive summary of the records as well as convincing grounds as to why these pertain to Swinhoe's Storm-Petrel and not to any other 'dark-rumped' storm-petrel species, including a dark rumped Leach's Storm-petrel (*O. leucorrhoa*). Robb et al (2008) provide extensive background details of some of the eastern North Atlantic records as well as results of an expedition to study them on Chibaldo Island, South Korea (includes sonograms and recordings). Their account includes the remarkable information that the first Atlantic record, a bird caught and ringed on 8 July 1983 on Selvagem Grande in the Selvagens, was recaptured at the same location 21 August 2007. It was at least 25 years old.

After the sightings off North Carolina cited above, one was superbly seen and very well photographed some 65 km ESE of Cape Hatteras, North Carolina on 2 June 2008. Details of this sighting, including convincing photographs, were published by Howell and Patteson (2008) and Patteson et al. (2009). Howell and Patteson (2008) provided a thorough analysis as to why all other 'dark-rumped' storm-petrels are eliminated and provide full frame photos of the other species.

An additional bird was poorly photographed off Kodiak Island, Alaska, on 5 August 2003. After review, it was added to their unsubstantiated list by the Alaska Checklist Committee (D. D. Gibson in lit.)

Recommendation:

I recommend that we transfer the species from the Appendix to the Main List. The evidence for many of the east Atlantic records being Swinhoe's, especially those handled, is overwhelming. Flood (2009) indicates that there are basically no records of totally dark-rumped Leach's Storm-Petrels for the Atlantic. The recent record of *O. monorhis* from off North Carolina is also convincing due to the full frame photos (published in Howell and Patteson 2008 and Patteson et al. 2009) and the thorough discussion in Howell and Patteson (2008) which eliminates dark-rumped Leach's as well as all other dark-rumped Pacific species.

English name: Swinhoe's Storm-Petrel is widely accepted.

Position and effect on Check-list: Dickinson places *O. monorhis* between *O. castro* and *O. leucorrhoa*. Their linear sequence (*O. microsoma*, *O. tethys*, *O. monorhis, O. leucorrhoa, O. macrodactyla, O. markhami, O. tristrami, O. melania, O. matsudairae, O. homochroa, O. hornbyi, and O. furcata*) of *Oceanodroma* is nearly the opposite of ours. Dawson (1992), using DNA studies, states "that it is clear that Swinhoe's and Leach's Petrels are closely related," but adds that "It is intended to study more taxa so that the taxonomic position of Swinhoe's Petrel can be more fully understood." Cubit (1995) indicated that the technique used was analysis of cytochrome-b mitochondrial DNA sequences. He repeats the results showing that Swinhoe's DNA from the North Pacific and that from trapped birds were basically identical. The sequence used in del Hoyo et al. (1992) for *Oceanodroma* is *O. tethys, O. castro, O. monorhis, O. leucorrhoa, O. markhami, O. tristrami, O. melania, O. matsudairae, O. homochroa, O. hornbyi, and O. furcata.* Least Storm-Petrel is placed in its own genus, *Halocyptena,* and is listed proximal to *Oceanodroma.* Unless there is more recent genetic analysis, it would seem that Swinhoe's should follow Leach's Storm-Petrel *O. leucorrhoa*.

p. 688 remove account of *Oceanodroma monorhis* from the Appendix and replace with new account in the Main List on p. 24 preceding the account for *Oceanodroma leucorrhoa.*

Oceanodroma monorhis (Swinhoe). Swinhoe's Storm-Petrel

Thalassidroma monorhis Swinhoe, 1867, Ibis, p. 386. (near Amoy, China)

Habitat. – Pelagic waters; nests in burrows on islands primarily surrounded by shallow seas.

Distribution. – *Breeds* on islands of the North Pacific from the Verhovsky Islands off southern Kamchatka, Russian Far East, south on islands rather close to the Asian continent to include those in the Yellow and South China Seas and around the Sea of Japan south to islands off China (Shandong) and Taiwan.

Winters in the northern Indian Ocean and possibly the western Pacific.

Very rare or casual (mainly in summer) at sea and on islands in the North Atlantic, the North Sea, and in the western Mediterranean, some involving returning birds; also casual to the Gulf of Aqaba.

Casual off Hatteras, North Carolina, where photographed on 8 August 1998 (O'Brien et al. 1999) and on 2 June 2008 (Howell and Patteson 2008, Patteson et al. 2009). Another was seen off Oregon Inlet, North Carolina, on 20 August 1993 (Brinkley 1995). Video of a 'dark-rumped' storm-petrel thought to be this species was taken off Kodiak, Alaska, on 5 August 2003; after review by the Alaska Checklist Committee it was added to their unsubstantiated list (D. D. Gibson in lit.).

Notes. – Formerly placed in the Appendix (AOU 2000) on the basis of the 1998 record. More recent clarification of the status of this species in the eastern North Atlantic (Flood 2009) as well as the excellent photographic documentation of the 2008 individual warrants adding the species to the main list. Palmer (1962) treated *O. monorhis* as a subspecies of *O. leucorrhoa* and its relationship to other 'dark-rumped' storm-petrels is a matter of conjecture (Dawson 1992).

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Patteson, J. B., S. N. G. Howell, and K. Sutherland. 2009. Swinhoe's Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma monorhis*) off North Carolina. North American Birds 62:518-520.

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Name and affiliation of submitter: Jon Dunn, NACC

Date of proposal: 8 Jan 2010