

146) original publication the name *Pipromorpha* is attributed to Schiff 1854. Sclater (1888:111) and Ridgway (1907:452) showed that the name *Pipromorpha* ex Schiff MS dates from Bonaparte (1854:134), and Hellmayr (1927:497, footnote b, Field Mus. Nat. Hist. Zool. Ser. 13, 5) showed that at this point it was a *nomen nudum*, so that the name *Pipromorpha* then had to take its origin in Gray (1855). Bonaparte had simply gotten ahead of himself and published the subfamily name (a *nomen nudum*) before that of the genus (also a *nomen nudum*). Because Pipromorphinae Bonaparte 1853 was not based on any then-existing generic name, it is simply invalid as of that date, and would have to take the author and date of the next publication after Gray (1855) in which it was used, if there were one, which we cannot find out from Bock.

The preceding are among the more serious nomenclatural errors that I found. There are many others that I have not detailed and numberless others doubtless await detection. How are we to account for a work that is so unremittingly erroneous? It hardly seems possible that the mere concatenation of carelessness and ignorance, each of which is manifest, could produce such a treasury of blunders. The fact that this was not a labor of love, but was evidently undertaken grudgingly, to satisfy a requirement that Bock believed to be unnecessary in the first place, may explain the want of care that a different motivation might have mitigated. But this cannot explain the names that do not exist at all in the references cited.

Regardless, the result is that Bock's entire list must be condemned as worthless and unusable for any

purposes of nomenclature. Although Bock may have assembled the greater part of the literature that pertains to family-group names of birds, to generate an accurate list of these names would require going back through this literature and starting over from scratch. In the meantime, Bock's list should *never* be used by itself as a reference for family-group names of birds. Serious consideration should be given to formal suppression of this work for purposes of nomenclature, so that the many spurious names that have been inadvertently created here by Bock will be invalidated.

It would be difficult to imagine a greater folly than adopting Bock's publication as the basis for an official list—a new starting point—for avian family-group names. On the face of it, his effort ought to provide abundant ammunition for those who regard such official lists as anathema. The realization that the of job of producing "official lists" will most likely fall to those who are incompetent to the task, ought to provide a sobering thought for the members of the ICZN, who are now contemplating a drastic and unnecessary overhaul of the rules of nomenclature. On the other hand, those in favor of official lists may well argue that Bock's astonishing performance underscores the view that the level of scholarship necessary to comply with the present code is too difficult to attain. They might then even hold up the Bock debacle as a prime example of the need for change! *Mit der Dummheit kämpfen Götter selbst vergebens* (Schiller).—STORRS L. OLSON, Department of Vertebrate Zoology, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560, USA.



Announcement

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New Editor Selected.—Thomas E. Martin has been selected as the new Editor of the *Auk*. All new manuscripts should be sent to: Editorial Office, *The Auk*, Montana Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit, NS 205,

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