

CORRIGENDUM

CALIFORNIA CHECKLIST NOMENCLATURE CHANGES

We are grateful to Eugene Eisenmann, Chairman, A.O.U. Committee on Classification and Nomenclature, for the following comments pertaining to the nomenclature used in "A Checklist of the Birds of California" (Calif. Birds 1: 4-28):

"I note that your California species list adopts a number of changes from the nomenclature of the last A.O.U. Check-list of North American Birds. May I point out a few others, involving purely nomenclatural (not taxonomic) considerations, worth bearing in mind? Your list overlooked a few corrections made by the last A.O.U. Check-list Committee shortly after the printing of the 1957 Check-list, which were embodied in the second printing and were published in *The Auk* 79 (3): 493-494, 1962. Those pertinent that you did not catch were the correction of the ending of the specific name of the Cape Petrel which should be *Daption capense* and of the Bohemian Waxwing which should be *Bombycilla garrulus*, and the correction of the English specific name by inclusion of a hyphen in Red-winged Blackbird. If one follows the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature the correct spelling of the specific name of the Wandering Tattler should be *Heteroscelus incanus*. Further, the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature has directed that the following changes in specific or generic names be made (despite priority of some other name): Eared Grebe - *Podiceps nigricollis*; Common Snipe - *Gallinago gallinago*; Cardinal - *Cardinalis cardinalis*.

"Let me say that I see no objection in local lists to following the A.O.U. Check-list (with the official 1962 corrections) as published, and indeed that may be the wisest course. But as long as your list deviated to a considerable degree, I thought that it would be well to call attention to other purely nomenclatural changes warranted by the International Code. In writing this let me make clear that the present A.O.U. Check-list Committee has made no rulings on these possible changes."

In addition, the family name "Ciconiidae" should be inserted between American Bittern and Wood Stork.

The changes in the spelling of the scientific names of Cape Petrel, Bohemian Waxwing and Wandering Tattler are required to make the specific names agree in gender with the generic names (*Daption* is neuter, *Bombycilla* is masculine and *Heteroscelus* is a compound name to be considered masculine under Declaration 39 of the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature). The changes in the scientific names of Eared Grebe, Common Snipe and Cardinal are in accordance with the following rulings of this Commission: Opinion 406 suppressing *caspicus* and validating *nigricollis*, Direction 39 validating *Gallinago* and rejecting *Capella*, and Opinion 784 validating *Cardinalis* and rejecting *Richmondena*.

All of the suggested changes should be made in the California Checklist. It should be stressed that these errors were an oversight on our part rather than an intentional deviation from International Commission rulings. As Sir Landsborough Thomson so aptly stated in *A New Dictionary of Birds*, "...to regard nomenclature as more than a means to an end is pedantry, and to take a minority course in a matter of convention is merely a nuisance."

While we are greatly indebted to Mr. Eisenmann for bringing these corrections to our attention, we cannot agree that local lists should continue to follow the A.O.U. Check-list strictly. To do so would be to ignore both taxonomic evidence brought to light in the last thirteen years and recently proposed species criteria as well. *Guy McCaskie, Pierre Devillers, Alan M. Craig, Clifford R. Lyons, Virginia P. Coughran, Jean T. Craig.*