**A note on Eastern Koel v. Pacific Koel in July 2025**

A convenient starting point is Christidis & Boles (1994) which considered proposals for revision of the koel group, but for the time being gave a single species –

*E. scolopacea* – Common Koel

In 2006, Gill & Wright was published, giving suggested ‘international English names’. This recognized three species, including -

*E. orientalis* – Pacific Koel

In Christidis & Boles (2008), the same three species were recognized. However, ‘Eastern Koel’ was preferred to ‘Pacific Koel’ as the new English name because the species occurred ‘throughout eastern Indonesia, the Moluccas, New Guinea, northern Melanesia and Australia’.

In 2012, soon after merger of Birds Australia and BOCA the new organization (BLA), in view of its partnership with BirdLife International (BLI), decided to follow the taxonomy used by BLI. That taxonomy recognized only two species –

*E. scolopaceus* – Western Koel

*E. orientalis –* Eastern Koel

For its purposes, the new BLA adopted its own list (WLAB) which followed the BLI taxonomy but used its chosen ‘Australian’ English names, originally those in C&B (2008), hence –

*E. orientalis* – Eastern Koel

*E. scolopaceus* – Asian Koel (Christmas Island; vagrant to mainland Australia)

Meanwhile, eBird, managed by Cornell Lab and using the Clements taxonomy, offered different versions of English names. It was possible to select ‘English (Australia’). Those names generally, but not always, followed the English names in BLA’s WLAB.

However, on the eBird website because of the slight taxonomic difference, ‘Eastern Koel’ would return ‘No matches’, so you needed to use ‘Pacific Koel’ (or E. orientalis).

Now we have AviList. This gives the three koel species, as in Christidis & Boles (2008), Clements and the IOC list (descended from Gill & Wright). The English name for *orientalis* is ‘Pacific Koel’, with no alternative noted, because the BLI species arrangement had ‘different taxonomic limits’.

Now it seems that BLA, while adopting the AviList taxonomy, will stay with the familiar WLAB English names, at least for the time being. Thus, in the new online HANZAB ‘Eastern Koel’ is used for *orientalis* as in the unified taxonomy. <https://hanzab.birdlife.org.au/species/eastern-koel/> This is in line with the use of that English name in Christidis & Boles (2008) and in the *Australian Bird Guide* (Menkhorst et al.) but is a different English-name approach from the global lists, at least at present.