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Bronze-cuckoo or Bronze-Cuckoo or Bronze Cuckoo?

DIVERGENT POLICIES ON THE FORM OF ENGLISH BIRD NAMES, AND THE PROPOSED INTRODUCTION OF 'INTERNATIONAL NAMES' TO PROMOTE UNIFORMITY

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'The construction of English names for bird species around the world is fraught with challenges.' – (Beehler and Pratt 2016), writing about the problem of finding English names for New Guinea birds.

Abstract: *The subject here is the English names we use for birds when we write about them, and what has become confusing variation in those names. The variation is often in the nouns used, some invented or chosen in accordance with a policy that might or might not be explained. The noun might be a compound word, sometimes hyphened or sometimes not, or, in accordance with the policy adopted by the author of the relevant compilation, the noun might be replaced by two words. This note outlines the background to the present state of affairs. It discusses examples of this significant problem in reaching the goal of a uniform international approach to bird names in the English language. A related issue is that, between different authorities, policies vary on whether the English names should reflect the taxonomic status of the species. Some comments on that issue are included in an appendix.*

Introduction

These comments are directed mainly to bird name issues we face in Australia, but they necessarily refer to what is happening at the international level. Today, compared to 20 years ago, many more people use a list of bird names for one reason or other, such as keeping a record of personal observations. The list is quite likely to be of the digital kind, subject to periodic updating by the originator. Many more species lists are now available, some of global scope for the travelling bird-interested person. Apart from some variation in taxonomy, variations in English names are evident, in particular in the noun part of the name. In 2024, the foreshadowing of further revisions of the English names of birds make this an appropriate time to offer this note on the background to the present names.

This contribution draws on several years' involvement with the English Names Committee of BirdLife Australia. It is about a subject that, it must be said, will not interest everyone. However, to understand what has happened it must be accepted that the subject has been, and is, of great interest and importance to some people. For those people, 'passions about bird names run high', as Gill and Wright remarked in 2006. It is only too obvious that viewpoints differ, and will continue to do so. 'It would be impossible to present a list based on a set of principles with which all agree,' observed Stephen Davies, RAOU President, introducing the 1978 recommendations (RAOU 1978).

There is disagreement even on the question of what to call non-scientific names. As recognised in most publications on the subject, the term 'English name', although disliked by BirdLife Australia, is appropriate to describe a bird name in the English language. Sometimes

'common' or 'vernacular' is used to refer to bird names that are not the scientific names. However, there will be many common (or vernacular) names, written or unwritten, in languages other than English. For some species, those will be more used than the English name.

The issue of name formation discussed here is only one reason for variations in names. Some lists are showing a preference for scientific names as English names, with, for example, 'Myzomela' and 'Melidectes' put forward, as common names, for some honeyeaters. Those who like user-friendly self-explanatory names will have a different preference. The eponymous names battlefield is another area of contention, but one not dealt with further here.

The listed English names of a few bird species are a single word, for example 'Galah', 'Whimbrel', 'Hardhead' and 'Brolga'. However, most names brought into existence for written communication consist of one or more adjectives and a noun. Where the noun is shared by a group of related birds it is sometimes referred to as a 'group name'. The challenging quest for a suitable group name, where there is no obvious one to hand, is the core of the problem outlined in the following narrative.

Milestones along a road: English bird names in Australia: 1926, 1978, 1994, 2014

The story begins with Australian ornithologists knee-deep in hyphens. Odd though it seems now, the 1926 Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union *Checklist* gave, in its uppercase style, 'KING-PENGUIN' and 'STUBBLE-QUAIL'. Those eventually became 'King Penguin' and 'Stubble Quail', following recommendations of a committee about excessive use of hyphens (Condon 1975). The two names mentioned are not group names because they refer to single species. However, they illustrate the continuing issue of appropriate (or inappropriate) use of hyphens in compound names. (Following RAOU 1926, 'Stubble-quail' was used in the hyphen-rich early editions of *What Bird Is That?*, the popular Neville Cayley field guide, along with 'Honey-eater', 'Swamp-harrier', 'Diamond-dove', 'Fig-bird', 'Marsh-sandpiper, etc.)

In 1978, another committee (RAOU 1978) produced revised bird names for the RAOU. The authors thought it would be a good idea to make use of two distinct sets of hyphened names. This recommendation followed the American Ornithologists' Union (AOU) (Parkes 1978). In one set a capital initial followed the hyphen, *e.g.* 'Sea-Eagle', because that bird was an eagle. In the other set a small initial followed the hyphen, *e.g.* 'Scrub-robin', because that bird was not a true robin. Some might point out that the species is a true 'Australo-Papuan robin', so specifying a correct relationship creates the opportunity for yet another difference of opinion. A better example might be the long-standing 'Magpie-lark', definitely not a true lark. The 1978 names were adopted in the multi-volume HANZAB, with the following explanation:

> The official attitude of the RAOU to the use of English names is set out in the Supplement to *Emu* 1977, Vol. 77 ('*Recommended English Names for Australian Birds*'). It favours an international rather than a parochial or insular approach to the matter and we have done so throughout (Marchant & Higgins 1990).

The 1978 names came to be followed widely in Australia. Having, with a few exceptions, survived plebiscites within the RAOU membership, they were adopted in the taxonomic lists proposed by Les Christidis and Walter Boles (C&B) in 1994 and 2008. They were the names generally used in field guides and other popular publications. They appear in the 'Working

List of Australian Birds' created by BirdLife Australia (WLAB, 2014 – a list based on the BirdLife International taxonomy).

More recently, the logic behind the 1978 spelling rule called for an overdue change of 'Painted Snipe', a species in a different family from 'true' snipes. This became 'Australian Painted-snipe', a spelling now generally followed by informed writers. 'Painted-snipe' was prompted by the recognition of a new Australian species. However, apart from new species, the C&B/WLAB group names considered here have been relatively stable for about 30 years. The terms of reference adopted by BirdLife Australia and its predecessors contained an express requirement for a conservative approach.

Enter 'IOC'

The 1990s saw international developments that were to create complications for the form of names used in Australia. The introduction to that ground-breaking species catalogue, Sibley and Monroe (1990), described the principles and procedures used for selection of English names. It noted, ominously, that 'Hyphenation of compound group-names has caused some concern'. In a preface, Charles Sibley commented wryly on the problem of English names, for which co-author Burt Monroe 'had organised a world-wide correspondence group': 'Since this may turn out to be one of the most controversial features I refer critics to Burt.'

The first of the 17 volumes of the Lynx Edicions *Handbook* appeared in 1992. This said, optimistically, as we can see now:

> Vernacular English names have been based on those selected, on the basis of extensive international correspondence, by B. L. Monroe, and published in Sibley & Monroe (1990); these have already been chosen to act as the basis for the standardization of English nomenclature planned for the 1994 International Ornithological Congress, and in future volumes the intention is to follow the official list adopted by the congress.

Due to disagreements on basic issues, the Monroe project made little progress. In 1994 the IOC commissioned another, enlarged committee, chaired by Frank Gill, to continue work on standard English names. (The IOC was a series of meetings of ornithologists held every four years. The initials were sometimes used to refer to the organising group as it existed from time to time.) The work of the Gill committee was to take more than 15 years. The complete list was published in 2006 (Gill 2006). Group names were again a contentious issue.

At the time of publication of the second C&B list (2008) a controversy about naming conventions was bubbling in North America. The guidelines proposed by the IOC group (Gill committee) were not accepted by the AOU (AOU 2007, Gill 2008, 2009). Despite the opposition from AOU, the IOC group gained international support. It set up the online 'IOC' taxonomic and English names list in 2008. The 'IOC' label is still used, even though the former IOC was later reorganised as the International Ornithologists' Union (IOU). The later 'IOC' is sometimes explained as referring to the 'International Ornithological Community'. The 'IOC' list has been endorsed by the IOU, pending the outcome of work it is sponsoring towards a unified world taxonomy – the Working Group Avian Checklists project.

The IOC, to use that label in its new sense, gave much thought to the form of names. There were different views on how to deal with compound names and hyphens, 'the single most contentious point in the entire project' (Gill 2006 p.8). IOC aimed to minimise use of hyphens, so, departing from the approach taken in Australia, preferred 'Fairywren' and

'Black Cockatoo'. However, sowing the seeds of future confusion, a hyphen was to be used in bird-bird names, *e.g.* 'Quail-thrush'. That was a partial acceptance of the Australian (and AOU) hyphening approach https://www.worldbirdnames.org/new/english-names/spelling-rules/
Except for bird-bird names, hyphens were not to be used 'to highlight possible relationships'. 'Storm-Petrel' was criticised on the ground that relationships within the group were unsettled, and it was best to use 'Petrel' as a broad term (Gill 2009).

This has become a complex subject from a world-wide viewpoint. To avoid loading this narrative with too much detail, some discussion of the bird-bird rule, and of taxonomic issues illustrated by use of the word 'babbler', has been placed in an appendix to this note.

The IOC list has gained some popularity in Australia, at the expense of WLAB. One State-based association, Birds Queensland, has adopted the IOC taxonomy and English names. The tendency that has emerged among State bird societies to go their own way with their policy on bird names recalls the unhappy situation at the time of federation when each State had adopted its own standard for the width of its rail lines. The useful book on Australian bird names, Fraser and Gray (2019), uses the IOC list, rather than WLAB, as its base list. Incidentally, those authors offer their own view of the hyphens issue (p.xiv).

Enter BirdLife International

The Cambridge-based BirdLife International (BLI) published its 2-volume checklist in 2014 and 2016, in partnership with the Barcelona-based *Handbook of the Birds of the World*. BirdLife Australia's WLAB follows the BLI taxonomy, but not necessarily the English names. BLI now maintains an online checklist.

The BLI policy that is relevant here has been expressed as follows –

> Irrespective of relationships we hyphenate compound generic names with the second element of the name in lower case, thus preferring to resist the situation, as advocated by Gill & Wright (2006) (whose comprehensive and thoughtful overall review of name formation we respectfully acknowledge), in which it is possible to have three variant combinations (e.g. 'Fruit Dove', 'Eagle-Owl' and 'Flycatcher-shrike'). (del Hoyo & Collar 2014).

BLI has some influence internationally, being an assessor for bird conservation status for the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), which maintains the 'Red List' of threatened species. IUCN follows the BLI taxonomy and English name policy for birds.

Clements/Cornell Lab/eBird

Because of eBird, a taxonomic arrangement much used in Australia is the one that still bears the name of James Clements (1927-2005). His Ph D thesis in 1975 was the first version of his checklist, which became an important tool for bird-ticking North Americans. It is now updated regularly by Cornell Lab of Ornithology, and is followed in Cornell Lab's online Birds of the World, as well as eBird. With respect to common names, users of eBird have a choice. If you select 'English (Australia)' you will see names of Australian birds that generally, but not entirely, follow WLAB, and names for some other birds that follow Australian conventions and spellings. In the table below, the names under 'Cornell BoW and Clements' are the names in the primary checklist given on the Cornell Lab website.

South Australia

In South Australia, the removal of hyphens has been taken further than the IOC list managed to achieve. The IOC had made concessions on use of the hyphen. Apart from the bird-bird exception, it departed from its general rule against hyphens 'if otherwise the name would be hard to pronounce or would look odd'.

The South Australians have done away with several more hyphens, either by adopting a single unhyphened word or returning to two-word group names. That was seen as a logical extension of the IOC/Gill guidelines. The policy adopted is explained in Horton *et al.* (2020).

Examples

Here are some examples of variations in the group name part of names in use now.

C & B 1994, 2008 and WLAB	BLI/HBW 2014/16 and BLI v8.1	G&W 2006 and IOC v14.1	Cornell BoW and Clements	South Australia Checklist	Aust. Faunal Directory
Button-quail	Buttonquail	Buttonquail	Buttonquail	Buttonquail	Buttonquail
Bronze-Cuckoo	Bronze-cuckoo	Bronze Cuckoo	Bronze-Cuckoo	Bronze Cuckoo	Bronze-cuckoo
Cuckoo-Dove	Cuckoo-dove	Cuckoo-Dove	Cuckoo-Dove		Cuckoo-dove
Fairy-wren	Fairy-wren	Fairywren	Fairywren	Fairywren	Fairy-wren
Emu-wren	Emu-wren	Emu-wren	Emuwren	Emuwren	Emu-wren
Scrub-robin	Scrub-robin	Scrub Robin	Scrub-Robin	Scrub Robin	Scrub-robin
Shrike-thrush	Shrike-thrush	Shrikethrush	Shrikethrush	Shrikethrush	Shrike-thrush
Shrike-tit	Shrike-tit	Shriketit	Shrike-tit	Shriketit	Shrike-tit
King-Parrot	King-parrot	King Parrot	King-Parrot		King-parrot
Black-Cockatoo	Black-cockatoo	Black Cockatoo	Black-Cockatoo	Black Cockatoo	Black-cockatoo
Storm-Petrel	Storm-petrel	Storm Petrel	Storm-Petrel	Storm Petrel	Storm-Petrel
Stone-curlew	Thick-knee	Stone-curlew	Thick-knee	Stonecurlew	Stone-curlew
Sand Plover	Sandplover	Sand Plover	Sand-Plover	Sand Plover	Sand Plover

'Button-quail': It might be noted that 'Button-quail' was not from the 1926 Checklist but did not get its first use in the 1978 recommendations. Presumably having some earlier currency, it was used as a replacement for the 1926 'Quail' in the 1963 *Australian Encyclopedia* (editor, Alec Chisholm) and in Condon (1975). Curiously, *Macquarie Dictionary* 4th ed. gives 'button quail'. However, the hyphened name in WLAB now looks very lonely. It would be open to BirdLife Australia to change to 'Buttonquail' by reason of the general preference for that form both within and outside Australia. That change could be stated as not disturbing the 1978 policy with respect to other names, if that was the decision.

'Bronze-Cuckoo': All three possible formulations are shown in the table. 'Bronze-cuckoo' is an example of the BirdLife International English name policy noted above. The Australian Faunal Directory might be influenced by that approach in using 'Bronze-cuckoo', and

‘Black-cockatoo’. In a public exhibition on the cuckoo family, the Australian Museum, Sydney, used ‘BRONZE CUCKOO’ (viewed December 2023).

‘Cuckoo-Dove’: IOC permits a hyphen followed by ‘D’ under its rule for ‘bird-bird’ names. The only other examples in WLAB of the second bird beginning with uppercase are ‘Parrot-Finch’ and ‘Hawk-Cuckoo’ (a vagrant, while another candidate, ‘Drongo-cuckoo’, is awaiting editorial rectification).

‘Fairy-wren’: Subject to organisation or editorial policy, the form used must now be regarded as optional. If policy requires conformity with WLAB, the hyphen will be used. Otherwise, South Australians and Queenslanders, and others averse to hyphens, will leave it out.

‘Emu-wren’: For IOC, this is in a different position from ‘Fairywren’ because it requires application of the bird-bird rule (see Appendix), and hence insertion of a hyphen. IOC and BirdLife International arrive at ‘Emu-wren’ by different routes. It is not clear why Cornell/Clements prefers ‘Emuwren’. In Clements 1st ed. (1974) it was ‘Emu Wren’.

‘Scrub-robin’: For some authorities the spelling depends on whether this is seen as a ‘Robin’. The Atlas of Living Australia, which generally follows AFD, differs here, giving ‘Scrub-Robin’. The IOC form duplicates the IOC name for the not-closely-related ‘Scrub Robins’ of Africa.

‘Shrike-thrush’ and ‘Shrike-tit’: The relatively new forms ‘Shrikethrush’ and ‘Shriketit’ seem to have been introduced by Gill and Wright (2006), inconsistently with the bird-bird rule. See Appendix. It might be noted that Cornell Lab uses ‘Shrikethrush’ and ‘Shrike-tit’.

‘King-Parrot’: This name is an oddity, evidently being brought into existence in 1978 in the belief that ‘King’ was a royal title, rather than a reference to Governor King of New South Wales. Nonetheless, the compound word has been given the same treatment as ‘Bronze-Cuckoo’, leading to the three versions. As an eponym, the name is due for review under a different set of renaming principles.

‘Black-Cockatoo’: The table shows that the same policies are followed as for ‘Bronze-Cuckoo’.

‘Storm-Petrel’: Again, we see three versions in the table. However, in this case the Australian Faunal Directory has not used the BLI ‘Storm-petrel’ but followed the WLAB ‘Storm-Petrel’. (There are Commonwealth government examples of the former approach e.g. *Wildlife Conservation Plan for Seabirds 2020*, Wilson’s Storm-petrel *Oceanites oceanicus*.)

‘Stone-curlew’: ‘Stonecurlew’ is another example of South Australia departing from IOC.

‘Thick-knee’, which had been proposed unsuccessfully by RAOU 1978, remains the main rival of ‘Stone-curlew’ as a group name.

‘Sand Plover’: Here WLAB has not used a hyphen. BLI avoids ‘Sand-plover’ by using a single word. Cornell Lab is alone in the table in using a hyphen, the same authority preferring ‘Golden-Plover’, which must be regarded as an Americanism.

A problem

Many people will see a problem when, without explanation, different names are used for the same species, sometimes by the one author in a single piece of writing. Some might not. However, variations in names can create difficulty in finding a species in an index, or in a digital list where the exact spelling needs to be given.

Moreover, there have been complaints from those who process data. Analysis of data is usually undertaken using a computer package, typically either spreadsheet or database applications. It is quite common for this to involve matching data from two sources (or the same source for different periods) which may use different names for some species. While a human would usually recognise that Bronze-Cuckoo and Bronze Cuckoo (or Grey Butcherbird and Gray Butcherbird) were referring to the same bird group or species, most computer packages would regard them as different. If the problem is recognised by the analyst, an index must be compiled to ensure the names are in concordance: this is merely tiresome. However, if the analyst does not recognise the problem – or has not checked that the index is up to date – a range of serious consequences could arise. For example, data from one of the sources will be omitted from the analysis thus rendering it invalid (Martin Butterfield, pers. comm.)

The future?

It is difficult to be confident that uniformity on this issue will be achieved in the foreseeable future. Positions have become entrenched as one principle is set against another, and importance is attached by different authorities to different considerations. With respect to common names, stability is often cited as an important consideration. People who are familiar with a particular set of names will not welcome changes to the form of a large number of names where there is no apparent scientific purpose or convincing justification. 'Why don't they direct their time and resources to things that really matter?' many will ask.

However, as in 1990 and 1994, there is still, in some places, a goal of a standard international English name for 'academic communication'. It has been suggested that such a list of international names might exist alongside lists of different English names for local or national or regional purposes. See the website of the IOU's Working Group Avian Checklists (WGAC). https://www.internationalornithology.org/working-group-avian-checklists

In Australia, there is certainly confusion in the use of English bird names at the present time. It is unlikely that a two-tier system of names could be adopted in Australia without causing even greater confusion. Surely there is no room for both 'Black-Cockatoo' and 'Black Cockatoo'.

The first draft of a global list from WGAC, expected in 2025, will probably be accompanied by IOC English names. No doubt that will have some influence on names used by other organisations, and publishers. It might also be the occasion for renewal of old arguments, so whether we shall see a final, definitive list is another matter. There are serious obstacles in the way of complete agreement. Obstacles include the policy to be adopted on form of names; which misdescriptions are serious enough to require correction; when is usage the overriding consideration; use of scientific names as English names, and the colonial names issue (including eponyms).

Acknowledgments

I am grateful to all those authors who thought English bird names were a subject worth writing about, or who felt obliged to explain their position on the subject. There is no single policy on common names that will be universally agreed. That was brought home to me by the range of views I heard expressed during several years on the BLA English Names Committee, in fact over a much longer period of being interested in the subject. I am grateful for the useful conversations I have had with other members of that committee, particularly

with Andrew Black of South Australia. In preparing this note I also had the benefit of advice or information from many people including Martin Butterfield, Les Christidis, David Donsker, Stephen Garnett, Dominique Homberger, Leo Joseph, and Dick Schodde. Of course, those mentioned do not necessarily share all the views expressed here.

APPENDIX

English names and phylogeny. The convention relating to bird-bird names. The word 'babbler' as an example of a group name with more than one application

Sometimes taxonomy determines a name choice, although sometimes a taxonomic misnomer is acceptable by reason of established usage. The 1978 recommendations revised a small number of names to better reflect the 'taxonomic affinities' of a few species, for example adopting 'Masked Lapwing', instead of 'Spur-winged Plover'.

The species that had been generally known as 'Hooded Dotterel' was changed to 'Hooded Plover' because 'Plover' was the 'international group-name for the species of *Charadrius*'. However, later, Gill (2006) chose 'Hooded Dotterel', placing the species in a different genus from *Charadrius*. Happily, in version 14.1 IOC has now located the species in *Charadrius*, and adopted 'Hooded Plover', 'with the revision of the genus and to align with other major world bird lists'. The difference in name had raised concern for the BLA 'Hooded Plover' recovery program, given the need for a single unconfusing label.

Some list compilers have gone further in pursuing taxonomic accuracy. In a guide to Indonesian birds, the authors have changed several established names, rejecting the view that 'the misleading nature of an old name is worth maintaining for the sake of stability'. 'Our hope is for these new, phylogenetically consistent names to simplify English name usage and to facilitate an easy intuitive understanding of the bird's actual affinities.' (Eaton *et al.* 2016). That policy led to the proposing of 'Willie Fantail', unexpected, but admittedly not a 'wagtail' as many non-Australians might understand the term. With a different viewpoint, the BirdLife International policy has been less concerned about taxonomic correctness in common names.

In their second list Christidis and Boles took the view that 'It is not deemed necessary to alter all group names to reflect … taxonomic changes.' They retained 'Regent Honeyeater' rather than adopt 'Regent Wattlebird'.

> English group names, such as wattlebird, do not have a one-to-one correspondence with generic names – that is not their role. Neither is it necessary to make every group name unique. Terms such as warbler, robin, wren and thrush are ecological groupings as much as taxonomic ones, and carry information about general appearance and behaviour of the birds – even between unrelated groups (C&B 2008).

However, a separate consideration has been the 1978 approach to hyphened names, as partially adopted by IOU. This makes it necessary to have regard to correct family relationships, so as to arrive at 'Black-Cockatoo' and 'Emu-wren'. The judgments made about relationships in 1978 have determined the form of names used in the BLA Working List, except for Pygmy-Goose, a notoriously variable formulation.

The IOC has struggled with the need to balance 'the importance of retaining a long-used name and the need to correct a misdescription'.
https://www.worldbirdnames.org/new/english-names/principles/

As the IOC list of English names is likely to be put forward as the basis for a list of 'international English names', the background to the choices made by IOC deserves further consideration.

These are the conventions for compound names given on the IOC website (wording slightly rearranged). They express what is called here 'the bird-bird rule' -

> Hyphens are used in compound names only to connect two names that are birds or bird families (*e.g.* Eagle-Owl, Flycatcher-shrike) or when the name would be otherwise difficult to read (*e.g.* Silky-flycatcher, White-eye).
>
> Where both names are the names of birds or bird families a hyphen should be inserted to signify that the taxon belongs to the family of the second word, not the first. If a name is of a taxon that is not a member of the stated bird family, the letter after the hyphen should be lowercase to signify that status (*e.g.* Flycatcher-shrike).

Eight bird-bird names had been put forward as compounds in RAOU 1978. Although widely used in Australia, three of those have not survived in the IOC list. Cuckooshrike, Shriketit and Shrikethrush are given as single words in Gill and Wright (2006), apparently for the first time in an influential publication. Unfortunately, this, with no satisfactory explanation, has introduced unwanted variation in how those names are spelt now.

In those names the IOC's 'single word' approach seems inconsistent with its own bird-bird rule and with its principle that existing usage would be a predominant guideline https://www.worldbirdnames.org/new/english-names/principles/ In Australia, all three hyphened names were of long standing, appearing in the 1926 Checklist. Moreover, C&B 1994 had affirmed the three hyphened group names for Australian use, as had American ornithologists for New Guinea species (Beehler 1986, but see Beehler 2016).

'Parrot-Finch is another bird-bird name that has appeared in WLAB, being a form consistent with the 1978 guidelines and the IOC bird-bird rule. The group is represented by one species in Australia but others are found in nearby regions. However, IOC gives 'Parrotfinch'. Howard and Moore, a main basis for the IOC list, had used 'Parrot Finch'. Choice of 'Parrotfinch' might have been influenced by aviary terminology, but there is no uniformity even in that field.

Variable use of the word 'babbler' in names in the IOC list

This is a word that is used in the IOC list in two different senses. On the one hand it is a widely used non-technical noun, like 'warbler' or 'robin', applied to species in distantly-related families by reason of popular usage, reflecting a broad similarity in one respect or other among species sharing the name. However, 'babbler' is also used in a more technical sense to describe those species, whether or not with 'babbler' in the species name, that fall within a set of specified families. Whether the word in the second sense is appropriate in the name of a species depends on the phylogenetic theory followed. This is illustrated by the IOC explanatory comments cited below.

Apparently 'Tit-Babbler', 'Wren-Babbler' and 'Thrush-Babbler' are regarded as appropriate because 'Babbler', in the second sense, is a correct name for members of the relevant families. On the other hand, 'Shrike-babbler' and 'Rail-babbler' (lowercase 'b') indicate that the relevant families do not contain 'babblers' in the second sense. 'Shrike-Babbler' (Gill and Wright 2006) became 'Shrike-babbler' when the genus was moved to the Vireonidae, a non-

babbler family. However, it seems phylogeny is less important where 'babbler' is not part of a compound (hyphened) word. 'Babbler' for the Australo-Papuan babblers is allowed in the first (non-technical or traditional) sense. In the second sense, the only 'babblers' on the Australian list are the six species of white-eyes.

In the list below the IOC family designation is given in **bold**, followed by (>>) and the noun used in the list for one or more species in that family. Families that contain babblers in the second sense are indicated by *.

Pomastomidae (Australasian Babblers) >> Babbler

Cinclosomatidae (Jewel-babblers, Quail-thrushes) >> Jewel-babbler

Vireonidae (Shrike-babblers) >> Shrike-babbler

Eupetidae (Rail-babbler) >> Rail-babbler (single species)

Cisticolidae (Cisticolas and allies) >> Miniature Babbler (moved from Timaliidae, tentatively)

*** Sylviidae (Sylviid Babblers)** >> Hill Babbler ('The African hill-babblers belong in *Sylvia* …')

*** Paradoxornithidae (Parrotbills and Allies)** >> Babbler

*** Zosteropidae (White-eyes)** >> Babbler, Pygmy Babbler, Striped Babbler

*** Timaliidae (Babblers, Scimitar Babblers)** >> Babbler, Tit-Babbler, Wren-Babbler, Scimitar Babbler

*** Pellorneidae (Ground Babblers) –** 'major clade of babblers' 'new babbler family' >> Wren-Babbler, Babbler, Grass Babbler, Thrush-Babbler, Limestone Babbler, Scimitar Babbler

*** Leiothrichidae (Laughingthrushes and Allies) –** a 'new babbler family' >> Babbler

Modulatricidae (Dapplethoat and Allies) >> Babbler (single species)

Muscicapidae (Chats, Old World Flycatchers) >> Babbler (single transferred species *Leonardina woodi*,)

Illustrating the second sense of 'babbler', the following explanatory comments accompany the IOC list v.14.1 (numerals refer to line numbers) -

17899 'Crossley's Babbler is a vanga' (calling for name change to Crossley's Vanga)

22235 'Pnoepyga wren-babblers are not babblers …'

22904 '*Robsonius* is … not a babbler'

*23755 'Sylviidae and Paradoxornithidae form a major clade which is deeply diverged from the remaining families in the babbler radiation …'

*23877 Reference to Paradoxornithidae and 'other families in the babbler radiation'

*24011 'White-eyes constitute a major clade of babblers …'

*25064 'Genus *Argya* subsumes a clade of babblers ….'

25302 '*Kakamega* is not a babbler …' (Although called 'Grey-chested Babbler')

25360 '*Elachura formosa* is a relict lineage of passerine birds not related to babblers …'

25362 'Change English name from Spotted Wren-Babbler to Spotted Elachura with change of family and genus.'

26716 '*Geomalia heinrichi* is confirmed to be a thrush, not a babbler'

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