

Continued from p. 37

AOU Taxonomic and Nomenclatorial Changes Affecting the ABA Checklist

The 54th supplement to the AOU's *Check-list of North American Birds* was published in the July 2013 issue of *The Auk* (Chesser et al. 2013). All changes accepted by the AOU NACC that affect the *ABA Checklist* are discussed here. First is a detailed treatment of two "splits" affecting the *ABA Checklist*. Second is a summary of the many changes in the linear sequence ("checklist order") of birds on the *ABA Checklist*.

Formerly considered a subspecies of the Little Shearwater (*Puffinus assimilis*), the **Barolo Shearwater** (*P. baroli*) is recognized as a monotypic species, based on differences in mitochondrial DNA, vocalizations, and morphology (Austin et al. 2004, Robb and Mullarney 2008, Chesser et

al. 2013). Barolo Shearwater therefore replaces Little Shearwater on the *ABA Checklist*. The AOU NACC does not specify the taxonomic status of or otherwise mention the extralimital taxon *P. (a). boydi*, which breeds on the Cape Verde Islands and is thought to be generally sedentary. Suggesting wide taxonomic confusion over these taxa, Clements et al. (2012) consider the Barolo Shearwater and the Boyd's Shearwater (*P. boydi*) to represent separate monotypic species, the British Ornithologists' Union Records Committee (Collinson 2006) considers *baroli* and *boydi* to be the two subspecies of the Macaronesian Shearwater (*P. baroli*), and Dickinson and Remsen (2013) maintain both taxa as subspecies of the Audubon's Shearwater!

The seventh edition of the *ABA Checklist* (Pranty et al. 2008) lists five reports (three records) of Little Shearwater, but the status of these records requires revision. A specimen from Cape Sable Island, Nova Scotia, 1 September 1896 is correctly identified. However, the other specimen, from South Carolina, probably in August 1883, was recently re-identified as an Audubon's Shearwater (Howell



The AOU in 2013 split out **Barolo Shearwater** from Little Shearwater; such taxonomic decisions are automatically accepted by the ABA Checklist Committee. Because this is the species that occurs in the ABA Area, Little Shearwater is replaced on the *ABA Checklist* with Barolo Shearwater. *Off Nova Scotia; July 2013. Photo by © Tom Johnson.*

2012), and the identification of a Little Shearwater photographed off Monterey County, California, 29 October 2003 was not accepted after re-review by the CBRC (Heindel and Garrett 2008).

Additional observations of Barolo Shearwater from the ABA Area have been obtained recently. Several sight reports have been accepted recently by local records committees, and other reports have been made from research cruises during July–August 2013. Here we cite the following photographic records: singles off Massachusetts 25 August 2007 and 26 August 2012 (Garvey and Iliff 2011), four singles along a 30-mile transect off Nova Scotia 17 August 2012 (T. B. Johnson, personal communication), and multiple 2013 records (T. B. Johnson, personal communication) that we became aware of after submitting this manuscript. Note that all of the recent photographic records are between Nova Scotia and Massachusetts during mid-July to early September. It seems likely that Barolo Shearwater occurs regularly in the ABA Area.

The Little Shearwater was listed in the seventh edition of the *ABA Checklist* as a Code 5 species (Pranty et al. 2008). Barolo Shearwater is listed as a Code 4 species, but additional fieldwork may prove it to be a Code 3 species.

Sagebrush Sparrow (*Artemisiospiza nevadensis*) and **Bell's Sparrow** (*A. belli*)—no ABA CLC vote. The AOU NACC (Chesser et al. 2013) split the Sage Sparrow into these two species because of differences in mitochondrial DNA, morphology, and ecology (Cicero and Johnson 2007, Cicero and Koo 2012). As both species are found in the ABA Area, this split increases the *ABA Checklist* by one, with each species being listed as Code 1.

Sagebrush Sparrows breed from central Washington and northwestern Colorado southward from eastern California to northwestern New Mexico. They winter from southeastern California and northern Mexico to western Texas. The species is now generally regarded to be monotypic. Bell's Sparrows are found west of the Sierra crest and in interior valleys from northern California to northern Baja California Sur, Mexico. The subspecies *belli* (widespread but local), *clementeae* (endemic to San Clemente Island, California), and *cinerea* (endemic to southwestern Baja California and northwestern Baja California Sur) are resident, but the subspecies *canescens* is partly migratory,

breeding in California and presumably southeastern Nye County, Nevada, in the western fringe of the San Joaquin Valley and adjacent valleys to the west, and in the Mojave Desert to the east. At least some *canescens* winter to the Salton Sea, California (Patten et al. 2004) and western Arizona, where it “seems nearly as common” as Sagebrush Sparrow (Phillips et al. 1964).

Pending further study, *canescens* could be split out as a species separate from Bell's Sparrow (Cicero and Koo 2012). Adding to the taxonomic confusion is that prior to this split by the AOU NACC, Patten and Unitt (2002) believed that the two taxa should not be considered

The AOU in 2013 split the Sage Sparrow into Sagebrush Sparrow and Bell's Sparrow. Species limits in the Sage Sparrow complex remain murky. It is possible that the taxon *canescens* (shown here), currently considered a subspecies of **Bell's Sparrow**, may be elevated to full-species status with additional field and genetics work. *Kern County, California; January 2004. Photo by © Robert Roysce.*



separate subspecies and subsumed *canescens* into *nevadensis*. Rising (1996) and Beadle and Rising (2002) anticipated the AOU in splitting the Sage Sparrow into two species (Bell's Sparrow and Sage Sparrow), but unlike the AOU (Chesser et al. 2013) their "Sage Sparrow" is a polytypic species consisting of *canescens* and *nevadensis*.

The challenge to birders is how to separate *canescens* Bell's Sparrows from Sagebrush Sparrows—especially in areas of extralimital occurrence. Based on present knowledge, the two species can be differentiated with certainty only from in-hand measurements of individuals of known sex (but see below). Exceptional records of Sage Sparrows, such as those photographed in Kentucky (Hulsey 2008) and Nova Scotia (Forsythe 1995), are best considered not identifiable to species based on current knowledge, but "almost certainly" represent Sagebrush Sparrows based on geography (Chesser et al. 2013). P. Pyle (2013) recently examined about 250 specimens of Sagebrush Sparrows and *canescens* Bell's Sparrows, concentrating on those in relatively fresh definitive basic plumage (September–March), when the ranges of the two species overlap. In this plumage, Sagebrush Sparrows show much more extensive and distinct streaking on the back and a less-distinct malar streak compared to *canescens* Bell's Sparrows, with little to no overlap (Pyle 2013). But the extent of geographic variation within the Sagebrush Sparrow, coupled with the effects of wear through winter, are uncertain. Field-identification criteria for Sagebrush Sparrows and Bell's Sparrows represent a work in progress.

Shorebird Sequence

Per Chesser et al. (2013), the scientific names and linear sequence of the order Charadriiformes—in particular, the sandpipers and allies in the family Scolopacidae—have been substantially altered. Several shorebird genera are subsumed into *Calidris*, resulting in numerous changes to the linear sequence of some of our most familiar sandpipers. At a higher taxonomic level, families in the order Charadriiformes are rearranged as follows: Burhinidae, Recurvirostridae, Haematopodidae, Charadriidae, Jacanidae, Scolopacidae, Glareolidae, Stercorariidae, Alcidae, and Laridae. The rearranged sequence for the 170 species within the order follows:

Double-striped Thick-knee (*Burhinus bistriatus*)
 Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*)
 Black-necked Stilt (*Himantopus mexicanus*)
 American Avocet (*Recurvirostra americana*)
 Eurasian Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*)
 American Oystercatcher (*Haematopus palliatus*)
 Black Oystercatcher (*Haematopus bachmani*)
 Northern Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*)
 Black-bellied Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*)
 European Golden-Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*)
 American Golden-Plover (*Pluvialis dominica*)
 Pacific Golden-Plover (*Pluvialis fulva*)
 Lesser Sand-Plover (*Charadrius mongolus*)
 Greater Sand-Plover (*Charadrius leschenaultii*)
 Collared Plover (*Charadrius collaris*)
 Snowy Plover (*Charadrius nivosus*)
 Wilson's Plover (*Charadrius wilsonia*)
 Common Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*)
 Semipalmated Plover (*Charadrius semipalmatus*)
 Piping Plover (*Charadrius melodus*)
 Little Ringed Plover (*Charadrius dubius*)
 Killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*)
 Mountain Plover (*Charadrius montanus*)
 Eurasian Dotterel (*Charadrius morinellus*)
 Northern Jacana (*Jacana spinosa*)
 Terek Sandpiper (*Xenus cinereus*)
 Common Sandpiper (*Actitis hypoleucos*)
 Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularius*)
 Green Sandpiper (*Tringa ochropus*)
 Solitary Sandpiper (*Tringa solitaria*)
 Gray-tailed Tattler (*Tringa brevipes*)
 Wandering Tattler (*Tringa incana*)
 Spotted Redshank (*Tringa erythropus*)
 Greater Yellowlegs (*Tringa melanoleuca*)
 Common Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*)
 Willet (*Tringa semipalmata*)
 Lesser Yellowlegs (*Tringa flavipes*)
 Marsh Sandpiper (*Tringa stagnatilis*)
 Wood Sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*)
 Common Redshank (*Tringa totanus*)
 Upland Sandpiper (*Bartramia longicauda*)
 Little Curlew (*Numenius minutus*)
 Eskimo Curlew (*Numenius borealis*)
 Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*)
 Bristle-thighed Curlew (*Numenius tahitiensis*)

ABA CHECKLIST REPORT

Far Eastern Curlew (*Numenius madagascariensis*)
Slender-billed Curlew (*Numenius tenuirostris*)
Eurasian Curlew (*Numenius arquata*)
Long-billed Curlew (*Numenius americanus*)
Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*)
Hudsonian Godwit (*Limosa haemastica*)
Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*)
Marbled Godwit (*Limosa fedoa*)
Ruddy Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*)
Black Turnstone (*Arenaria melanocephala*)
Great Knot (*Calidris tenuirostris*)
Red Knot (*Calidris canutus*)
Surbird (*Calidris virgata*)
Ruff (*Calidris pugnax*)
Broad-billed Sandpiper (*Calidris falcinellus*)
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper (*Calidris acuminata*)
Stilt Sandpiper (*Calidris himantopus*)
Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*)
Temminck's Stint (*Calidris temminckii*)
Long-toed Stint (*Calidris subminuta*)
Spoon-billed Sandpiper (*Calidris pygmea*)
Red-necked Stint (*Calidris ruficollis*)
Sanderling (*Calidris alba*)
Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*)
Rock Sandpiper (*Calidris ptilocnemis*)
Purple Sandpiper (*Calidris maritima*)
Baird's Sandpiper (*Calidris bairdii*)
Little Stint (*Calidris minuta*)
Least Sandpiper (*Calidris minutilla*)
White-rumped Sandpiper (*Calidris fuscicollis*)
Buff-breasted Sandpiper (*Calidris subruficollis*)
Pectoral Sandpiper (*Calidris melanotos*)
Semipalmated Sandpiper (*Calidris pusilla*)
Western Sandpiper (*Calidris mauri*)
Short-billed Dowitcher (*Limnodromus griseus*)
Long-billed Dowitcher (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*)
Jack Snipe (*Lymnocyptes minimus*)
Solitary Snipe (*Gallinago solitaria*)
Wilson's Snipe (*Gallinago wilsonia*)
Common Snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*)
Pin-tailed Snipe (*Gallinago stenura*)
Eurasian Woodcock (*Scolopax rusticola*)
American Woodcock (*Scolopax minor*)
Wilson's Phalarope (*Phalaropus tricolor*)

Red-necked Phalarope (*Phalaropus lobatus*)
Red Phalarope (*Phalaropus fulicarius*)
Oriental Pratincole (*Glareola maldivarum*)
Great Skua (*Stercorarius skua*)
South Polar Skua (*Stercorarius maccormicki*)
Pomarine Jaeger (*Stercorarius pomarinus*)
Parasitic Jaeger (*Stercorarius parasiticus*)
Long-tailed Jaeger (*Stercorarius longicaudus*)
Dovekie (*Alle alle*)
Common Murre (*Uria aalge*)
Thick-billed Murre (*Uria lomvia*)
Razorbill (*Alca torda*)
Great Auk (*Pinguinus impennis*)
Black Guillemot (*Cepphus grylle*)
Pigeon Guillemot (*Cepphus columba*)
Long-billed Murrelet (*Brachyramphus perdix*)
Marbled Murrelet (*Brachyramphus marmoratus*)
Kittlitz's Murrelet (*Brachyramphus brevirostris*)
Scripps's Murrelet (*Synthliboramphus scrippsi*)
Guadalupe Murrelet (*Synthliboramphus hypoleucus*)
Craveri's Murrelet (*Synthliboramphus craveri*)
Ancient Murrelet (*Synthliboramphus antiquus*)
Cassin's Auklet (*Ptychoramphus aleuticus*)
Parakeet Auklet (*Aethia psittacula*)
Least Auklet (*Aethia pusilla*)
Whiskered Auklet (*Aethia pygmaea*)
Crested Auklet (*Aethia cristatella*)
Rhinoceros Auklet (*Cerorhinca monocerata*)
Atlantic Puffin (*Fratercula arctica*)
Horned Puffin (*Fratercula corniculata*)
Tufted Puffin (*Fratercula cirrhata*)
Swallow-tailed Gull (*Creagrus furcatus*)
Black-legged Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*)
Red-legged Kittiwake (*Rissa brevirostris*)
Ivory Gull (*Pagophila eburnea*)
Sabine's Gull (*Xema sabini*)
Bonaparte's Gull (*Chroicocephalus philadelphia*)
Gray-hooded Gull (*Chroicocephalus cirrocephalus*)
Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*)
Little Gull (*Hydrocoloeus minutus*)
Ross's Gull (*Rhodostethia rosea*)
Laughing Gull (*Leucophaeus atricilla*)
Franklin's Gull (*Leucophaeus pipixcan*)
Belcher's Gull (*Larus belcheri*)
Black-tailed Gull (*Larus crassirostris*)

ABA CHECKLIST REPORT

Heermann's Gull (*Larus heermanni*)
Mew Gull (*Larus canus*)
Ring-billed Gull (*Larus delawarensis*)
Western Gull (*Larus occidentalis*)
Yellow-footed Gull (*Larus livens*)
California Gull (*Larus californicus*)
Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*)
Yellow-legged Gull (*Larus michahellis*)
Thayer's Gull (*Larus thayeri*)
Iceland Gull (*Larus glaucooides*)
Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*)
Slaty-backed Gull (*Larus schistisagus*)
Glaucous-winged Gull (*Larus glaucescens*)
Glaucous Gull (*Larus hyperboreus*)
Great Black-backed Gull (*Larus marinus*)
Kelp Gull (*Larus dominicanus*)
Brown Noddy (*Anous stolidus*)
Black Noddy (*Anous minutus*)
Sooty Tern (*Onychoprion fuscatus*)
Bridled Tern (*Onychoprion anaethetus*)
Aleutian Tern (*Onychoprion aleuticus*)
Least Tern (*Sternula antillarum*)
Large-billed Tern (*Phaetusa simplex*)
Gull-billed Tern (*Gelochelidon nilotica*)
Caspian Tern (*Hydroprogne caspia*)
Black Tern (*Chlidonias niger*)
White-winged Tern (*Chlidonias leucopterus*)
Whiskered Tern (*Chlidonias hybrida*)
Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougallii*)
Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*)
Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*)
Forster's Tern (*Sterna forsteri*)
Royal Tern (*Thalasseus maximus*)
Sandwich Tern (*Thalasseus sandvicensis*)
Elegant Tern (*Thalasseus elegans*)
Black Skimmer (*Rynchops niger*)

Flammulated Owl is moved from *Otus* to a new genus, becoming *Psiloscopus flammeolus*.

The sequence of the family **Mimidae** is rearranged as follows:

Blue Mockingbird (*Melanotis caerulescens*)
Gray Catbird (*Dumetella carolinensis*)
Curve-billed Thrasher (*Toxostoma curvirostre*)

Brown Thrasher (*Toxostoma rufum*)
Long-billed Thrasher (*Toxostoma longirostre*)
Bendire's Thrasher (*Toxostoma bendirei*)
California Thrasher (*Toxostoma redivivum*)
Le Conte's Thrasher (*Toxostoma lecontei*)
Crissal Thrasher (*Toxostoma crissale*)
Sage Thrasher (*Oreoscoptes montanus*)
Bahama Mockingbird (*Mimus gundlachii*)
Northern Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*)

Gray Silky-Flycatcher becomes *Ptiliogonys cinereus*, correcting a misspelling in the scientific name. Similarly, the family name is corrected to Ptiliogonatidae.

The sequence of finches in the genus **Haemorhous** is rearranged as follows:

House Finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*)
Purple Finch (*Haemorhous purpureus*)
Cassin's Finch (*Haemorhous cassinii*)

The AOU NACC has added five species to the AOU Checklist that had been accepted previously by the ABA CLC, with their correct taxonomic placements as follows:

Providence Petrel is placed between Great-winged Petrel and Herald Petrel.

Fea's Petrel is placed between Hawaiian Petrel and Cook's Petrel. Data from geolocators placed on nesting adults indicate that at least one Fea's Petrel recorded in the ABA Area was of the subspecies *desertas*. Some authorities recognize this taxon as a species separate from nominate *feae*, with the English name of Desertas Petrel (e.g., Shirihai et al. 2010, Howell 2012, Flood and Fisher 2013) or Bugio Petrel (Ramirez et al. 2013). This taxon, numbering between 160–180 pairs, breeds solely on the south plateau of Bugio Island—in an area of just 5.5 acres (Ramirez et al. 2013)—which is part of the Desertas Islands off Madeira. The nominate subspecies *feae* breeds on the Cape Verde Islands, 1,200 miles to the south-southwest.

Rosy-faced Lovebird is placed between Budgerigar and Monk Parakeet.

Nanday Parakeet is placed between Green Parakeet and White-winged Parakeet.

Asian Rosy-Finch is placed between Brambling and Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch.