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News, Notes, Comments

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News, Notes, Comments

Updates to Four-letter and Six-letter Alpha Codes based on Revisions by the American Ornithologists' Union

Pyle and DeSante (2003) derived alpha codes based on the English and scientific names of 2030 species recorded in the American Ornithologist's Union (AOU) 1998 check-list and supplements through 2002. They also derived codes for 91 non-species forms including subspecies, unidentified taxa, intergrades, morphs, and hybrids. Four-letter codes, based on the English name, largely coincided with those utilized by the Bird Banding Laboratory for use on banding schedules. Six-letter codes, based on the scientific names of these taxa, are used primarily by ornithologists in Latin America. These lists can be downloaded from The Institute for Bird Populations web site at <http://www.birdpop.org/AlphaCodes.htm>.

Since these lists were derived, the AOU has revised their taxonomy and nomenclature in two supplements (Banks et al. 2003, 2004). Here we list all changes to the alpha-code lists (English

name, four-letter code, scientific name, and six-letter code) based on these revisions by the AOU. We have also corrected four errors to the previous list and added five unidentified-species taxa based on entries to point-count data collected by The Institute for Bird Populations (IBP). We publish this list for those who have already incorporated the old list into their databases and would find it easier to make these corrections than to download the revised list. The revised list (through 2004), incorporating the following changes as well as the new taxonomic order, is now available at the above web site.

We thank Nicole Michel and Bob Wilkerson for assistance in providing and maintaining the lists on the web site and Ken Burton for pointing out errors to the previous list. This is Contribution # 267 of The Institute for Bird Populations.

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Appendix 1. Changes to the lists of four-letter and six-letter codes for birds recorded in the American Ornithologists' Union check-list area.

Insert Great-winged Petrel (*Pterodroma macroptera*) after Northern Fulmar (*Fulmaris glacialis*). Four-letter Code = GWPE, Six-letter Code = PTEMAC.

Insert Cackling Goose (*Branta hutchinsii*) before Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*). Four-letter Code = CACG, Six-letter Code = BRAHUT.

Change Aleutian Canada Goose (*B. c. leucopareia*) to Aleutian Cackling Goose *B. h. leucopareia*. Change Six-letter Code to BRAHLE.

Change Cackling Goose (*B. c. minima*) to Minima Cackling Goose (*B. h. minima*). Change Four-letter Code to MCGO, Six-letter Code to BRAHMI.

Canada Goose. Change Four-letter Code from CAGO to CANG.

Insert "Unidentified Duck", "Anatinae (gen, sp)" after Ruddy Duck (*Oxyura jamaicensis*). Four-letter Code = UNDU, Six-letter Code = ANAGSP.

Steller's Sea-Eagle (*Haliaeetus pelagicus*). Change Four-letter Code to STSE.

Insert "Unidentified Accipiter Hawk", "Accipiter (sp)" after Northern Goshawk (*A. gentilis*). Four-letter Code = UNAH, Six-letter Code = ACCSPE.

Insert "Unidentified Hawk", "Acciptridae (gen, sp)" after Ornate Hawk-Eagle (*Spizaetus ornatus*). Four-letter Code = UNHA, Six-letter Code = ACCGSP.

Black-throated Bobwhite *Colinus nigrogularis*. Change Six-letter Code to COLNIG.

Change Mongolian Plover to Lesser Sand-Plover (*Charadrius mongolus*). Change Four-letter Code to LSAP.

Insert Greater Sand-Plover (*Charadrius leschenaultii*) after Lesser Sand-Plover. Four-letter Code = GSAP, Six-letter Code = CHALES.

Mountain Plover (*Charadrius montanus*). Change Four-letter Code to MOPL.

Change Spoonbill Sandpiper to Spoon-billed Sandpiper (*Eurynorhynchus pygmeus*). Change Four-letter Code to SBSA.

Change Band-tailed Gull to Belcher's Gull (*Larus belcheri*). Change Four-letter Code to BEGU.

Black-tailed Gull (*Larus crassirostris*). Change Four-letter Code to BTGU.

Change Rock Dove to Rock Pigeon (*Columba livia*). Change Four-letter Code to ROPI.

Change the genus "Columba", of ten species between Pale-vented Pigeon (*cayennensis*) and Short-billed Pigeon (*nigrirostris*), inclusive, to *Patagioenas*. Change the Six-letter Code for all 10 species from COL<XXX> to PAT<XXX> as appropriate.

White-faced Quail-Dove (*Geotrogon albifacies*). Change Four-letter Code to WFAQ.

Change Gray-headed Quail-Dove to Gray-fronted Quail-Dove (*G. costaricensis*). Change Four-letter Code to GFQD.

Insert White-fronted Quail-Dove (*Geotrygon leucometopia*) after Gray-fronted Quail-Dove. Four-letter Code = WFRQ, Six-letter Code = GEOLEU.

Oriental Scops-Owl (*Otus sunia*). Change Four-letter Code to ORSO.

Change the genus "Otus", of ten species between Western Screech-Owl (*kennicottii*) and Puerto Rican Screech-Owl (*nudipes*), inclusive, to *Megascops*. Change the Six-letter Code for all 10 species from OTU<XXX> to MEG<XXX> as appropriate.

Change Cuban Screech-Owl (*Otus lawrencii*) to Bare-legged Owl (*Gymnoglaux lawrencii*). Change Four-letter Code to BLOW, Six-letter Code to GYMLAW.

Snowy Owl. Change *Nyctea scandiaca* to *Bubo scandiacus*. Change Six-letter Code to BUBSCA.

Insert "Unidentified Owl", "Strigidae (gen, sp)" after Unspotted Saw-whet Owl (*Aegolius ridgwayi*). Four-letter Code = UNOW, Six-letter Code = STRGSP.

Change Jungle Nightjar to Gray Nightjar (*Caprimulgus indicus*), Change Four-letter Code to GRNI.

Antillean Palm-Swift (*Tachornis phoenicobia*). Change Four-letter Code to ANPS.

Change Red-vented Woodpecker to Yucatan Woodpecker (*Melanerpes pygmaeus*). Change Four-letter Code to YUWO.

Change Three-toed Woodpecker (*Picoides tridactylus*) to American Three-toed Woodpecker (*P. dorsalis*). Change Four-letter Code to ATTW, Six-letter Code to PICDOR.

Change Pygmy Antwren (*Myrmotherula brachyura*) to Moustached Antwren (*M. ignota*). Change Four-letter Code to MOAN, Six-letter Code to MYRIGN.

Insert "Unidentified *Poecile* Chickadee", "Poecile (sp)" after Gray-headed Chickadee (*P. cincta*). Four-letter Code = UNPC, Six-letter Code = POESPE.

Insert Willow Warbler (*Phylloscopus trochilus*) after Wood Warbler (*P. sibilatrix*). Four-letter Code = WILW, Six-letter Code = PHYTRO.

Insert Lesser Whitethroat (*Sylvia currica*) after Arctic Warbler (*Phylloscopus borealis*). Four-letter Code = LEWH, Six-letter Code = SYLCUR.

Change Siberian Flycatcher to Dark-sided Flycatcher (*Muscicapa sibirica*). Change Four-letter Code to DSFL.

Change Gray-spotted Flycatcher to Gray-streaked Flycatcher (*M. griseisticta*). The Four-letter code remains GSFL.

Insert Spotted Flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*) after Asian Brown Flycatcher (*M. dauurica*). Four-letter Code = SPFL, Six-letter Code = MUSSTR.

Common House-Martin (*Delichon urbica*). Change Four-letter Code to COHM.

Cuban Solitaire (*Myadestes elisabeth*). Change Four-letter Code to CUSO.

Change Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla flava*) to Eastern Yellow Wagtail (*M. tschutschensis*). Change Four-letter Code to EYWA, Six-letter Code to MOTTSC. *Note: Removal of conflict liberates "YEWA" for Yellow Warbler (Dendroica petechia). Banks et al. (2004:993) noted that they may be revising the Yellow Warbler complex soon. Because "YWAR" is such a heavily used code, we have chosen to await this revision before considering a change of YWAR to YEWA.*

Insert Hispaniolan Crossbill (*Loxia megaplaga*) after Red Crossbill (*L. curvirostra*). Four-letter Code = HICR, Six-letter Code = LOXMEG.