

AOU Splits, Name Changes and Adds Affecting ABA Area Birds

(This is quite old and may not be of interest to you)

In the July, 1997 issue of the AOU journal Auk, significant splits and name changes were announced, accompanied by pre-announcement of massive sequence changes.

The splits and name changes for the ABA Area birds are very straightforward and are immediately accepted by the ABA. Those are easy to perform in AviSys, and users should follow the instructions in the following sections.

However, the sequence changes were formally published in the new edition of the AOU Checklist in July 1998. Those sequence changes are published for species in North and Central America only, yet they impact hundreds, if not thousands, of species world-wide. Therefore, before the changes can be applied to a world software master list, they must be integrated with the world list. Jim Clements will integrate the AOU sequence changes and is expected to publish the revised world checklist in 1999.

After the new Clements list is published, we will release on our web site a downloadable utility for AviSys Version 4.x which will automatically update your entire Master Checklist to the new sequence, including name changes, splits, etc., for non-ABA Area species. That process should take just a few minutes. The utility program is already built in to AviSys 4.5 and later. For users who do not have web access, a diskette will be available by mail for a modest handling fee.

No birding software on the market provides a way for the user to manually update the master list for *sequence* changes as massive as the typical AOU sequence changes - at least not without superhuman effort, an insane expenditure of time, and significant (virtually certain) risk of error. You can, however, easily make the following splits and name changes:

Splits, Name Changes, and one Add, for the ABA Area Birds

The **Solitary Vireo** has been split into:

Blue-headed Vireo, *Vireo solitarius* (eastern US and Canada)

Cassin's Vireo, *V. cassinii* (west coast)

Plumbeous Vireo, *V. plumbeus* (Rockies and Great Basin)

The **Plain Titmouse** has been split into:

Oak Titmouse, *Baeolophus inornatus* (west coast)

Juniper Titmouse, *B. griseus* (east of the Sierras)

The **Marbled Murrelet** is split into:

Marbled Murrelet, *Brachyramphus marmoratus* (mostly west coast)

Long-billed Murrelet, *B. perdix* (mostly interior)

The **Canary-winged Parakeet** has had an English name change to:

White-winged Parakeet

The **Mexican Crow** has had an English name change to:

Tamaulipas Crow

The **Falcated Teal** has had an English name change to:

Falcated Duck

The **Siberian Tit** has had an English name change to:

Gray-headed Chickadee

The **American Golden-Plover** has had a scientific name change to:

Pluvialis dominica

The **Olive-sided Flycatcher** has had a scientific name change to:

Contopus cooperi

Add Newfoundland to the **Common Redshank**, *Tringa totanus*, checklist status -- which places it in the North America Mode (ABA) checklist. See the instructions below. (This is a recent ABA action)

Band-tailed/Belcher's Gulls, are still under study by the ABA and remain off the ABA list. The **Red-crowned Parrot** (Texas) remains on the list, and the **Green Parakeet** is under study and remains off the list.

Consult your field guides, especially the National Geographic, for the normal ranges of these new species. The state checklist data, below, includes vagrants and may not be helpful in determining the species of your old sightings.

The Parakeet Conundrum

A parakeet resident in Florida, and present on the ABA Checklist, is the Canary-winged Parakeet, *Brotogeris versicolurus*.

The AOU split the species into White-winged Parakeet, *B. versicolurus*, and Yellow-chevrons Parakeet, *B. chiriri*. So, as described above, you need to **rename** Canary-winged Parakeet to White-winged Parakeet. It remains in the Florida checklist (for now). In World mode, *if it is not already there*, add Yellow-chevrons Parakeet, *Brotogeris chiriri*, after the White-winged, but do not place it in any state checklists (yet). (Clements was way ahead of the game with this one.)

The ABA immediately accepts the English name change, but does not accept the added species, Yellow-chevrons, as an ABA Area bird. Now, both species are in question. The latest ABA Checklist Committee pronouncement is that they ". . . will investigate whether one or both species warrant placement on the ABA Checklist." One can also read "none" in that statement.

It seems that the Yellow-chevrons is replacing the White-winged in many areas -- cage bird dealers are now importing Yellow-chevrons almost exclusively and cage releases are now replacing the older species. These are normally long-lived birds, and the "replacement" suggests that the White-winged might never have been truly self-sustaining -- they may have been sustained by continuing releases, just as they are now being replaced by the new species. Both species are now in question as "wild" birds. Stay tuned to the ABA publications.

Performing the Splits in AviSys (This is a ten minute job, at most)

In AviSys, a new species is added below the currently highlighted species, using the Edit menu.

The strategy for the AOU changes should be like this example:

** Edit the name of the Solitary Vireo to the new species you have the most sightings of. (In an easterners' case, edit Solitary Vireo to Blue-headed Vireo. This will be the example we use throughout these instructions.)

** Add the other two new vireos below it. (In our example, Cassin's below Blue-headed, then Plumbeous below Blue-headed)

** Repeat the process for the Titmice and the Murrelets, and add the Redshank.

** The other names are simply edited.

Note!!! For the newly added birds to appear in the AviSys Master Checklist in North America (ABA) mode, each bird must be added to at least one state or province checklist (other than Hawaii).

Correcting the State Checklist Status for the New Species

(Note: If you are using the Tony White update utility, you don't need to do this)

Highlight the species in AviSys, and click the StateCL button to add/delete states to the bird:

Marbled Murrelet: AK CA OR WA BC

Long-billed Murrelet: AK AR CA CO FL IN IA KS MA MT NY NC OH OR SC WY AB NF ON PQ

Oak Titmouse: CA OR

Juniper Titmouse: AZ CA CO ID NV NM OK OR TX UT WY

Blue-headed Vireo: All states, provinces and territories **except** AK AZ HI ID MT NV UT WA (use "ShowAll" to make this easy)

Cassin's Vireo: AK AZ CA CO ID KS LA MA MT NE NV NM OR TX UT WA AB BC PQ

Plumbeous Vireo: AZ CA CO FL ID KS LA MA MT NE NV NM OR SD TX UT WY NS

Common Redshank: NF

Correcting Your Sightings for the New Species

For each of the affected groups perform the following:

In the example we use, all the sighting records that were previously assigned to the Solitary Vireo are now assigned to the Blue-headed Vireo (simply because only the name was changed). The example below assumes you have sightings of all three Vireos. While the description looks a little dense, it's really very intuitive when you do it -- you'll just end up clicking on records to correct them.

Loading the Species Edit List

Highlight each of the species that doesn't currently have records assigned to it (Cassin's Vireo and Plumbeous Vireo) and using Ctrl-F3, or Utils/Save Species For Edit, load each of those in the species edit list dialog.

Listing the Affected Records

List all the sighting records for the new species (Blue-headed Vireo) using List Recs, selecting the species in the criteria dialog. (You now have all the old Solitary Vireo records listed as Blue-headed Vireo records, and you have the species edit list loaded with the names Plumbeous Vireo and Cassin's Vireo -- ready to use for rapid editing.)

Correcting (Mass Editing) the Affected Records

Starting at the top of the list of records, for the first sighting record that should be assigned to another species, highlight the record, click the Edit button, select Species, and select the correct new species, let's say Plumbeous Vireo, from the species edit dialog.

You have just started an automatic mass edit using Plumbeous Vireo. Repeat that edit by simply scrolling through the records, double-clicking** all those that should be edited to Plumbeous Vireo.

Repeat the above two steps for the other species, Cassin's Vireo.

Repeat this entire process, as needed, for the Titmice and Murrelets.

(** Actually, using the Cursor-Down key and the Enter key, with two hands, you can rapidly edit hundreds of records.)