

SPECIAL NOTICES

The taxonomy included in this update is the Clements 2005 taxonomy, updated April 1, 2005.

The following North American species names were changed in the 2004 update and remain so here:

OLD NAME

Fea's Petrel
European Golden-Plover
Band-tailed Gull
Rock Dove
White-winged Parakeet
Long-eared Owl
Hoopoe
Common House-Martin
Middendorff's Grasshopper-Warbler
Stonechat

NEW NAME

Cape Verde Petrel
Eurasian Golden-Plover
Belcher's Gull
Rock Pigeon
Canary-winged Parakeet
Northern Long-eared Owl
Eurasian Hoopoe
House Martin
Middendorff's Warbler
Siberian Stonechat

Cackling Goose has been added as a split from Canada Goose. Cackling Goose includes the *hutchinsii* (Richardson's), *asiatica*, *leucopareia* (Aleutian), *taverneri* (part of the Lesser complex), and *minima subspecies*. If you have not already done so, please refer to your field guides and internet resources to determine which of your records should now be Cackling Goose records.

There are significant changes in world species. Please see, and print if appropriate, the .PDF files included with the update and displayed during installation. You can Search those documents to find any species reference you wish.

New AOU Sequence: AviSys does not follow the most recent radical, incomplete AOU species sequence change. Remember, the AOU list represents only ~2,000 of the ~10,000 birds of the world. The following is our position:

The recent AOU taxonomic change is merely **one** of **many** expected radical changes in taxonomy. I expect that the sequence will be a moving target for many, many months — for instance, who is to say some other family won't be moved ahead of the ducks next month? A continually moving sequence, in the midst of an ongoing work, serves nobody. To quote the AOU, “. . . it [is] anticipated that ongoing work will result in additional higher level classification changes. Such changes will be incorporated in the next edition of the AOU Checklist, but cannot be easily incorporated into Supplements.”

Recent genetic research has confirmed that many species will have to be moved to other families — but even the AOU can't agree on where. The AOU made the decision to retain the current sequence in the AOU checklist, but to mark the approximately 80 species that are likely to be moved (including various wood warblers, chats, tanagers, seedeaters, grassquits and longspurs) with asterisks.

Additionally, an AOU change means nothing in the greater world taxonomy if the AOU sequence has not been merged with the world sequence via similar DNA study. For example, move the Anseriformes **how far** ahead of the Gaviformes? Ahead of the Penguins? Ahead of the Ostrich? The ongoing DNA study of other, non-AOU, families will result in even more disruptive changes to the sequence. I will retain the current sequence in AviSys until the work reaches some level of stability, or when the next formal AOU Checklist is published (which will imply relative stability).

As an aside, you can imagine the uproar I would be subject to when sending new copies of AviSys to people who have never heard of the current turbulence in taxonomic sequence, or when current users do a taxonomy update and find the ducks at the front of the list. While many birders are mentally flexible in such matters, and some demand day-to-day “exactness” (based on which authority? when? what is the meaning of the word “exact?”), the great majority seek stability — related to their field guides, if for no other reason. State committees are already recommending that observers continue to report birds in the “traditional” order. A change to the sequence now would be **easy** for me to do — but it **would not be easy** for the vast majority of AviSys users..
