



## **Hyphenated Bird Names: A Response to the American Ornithologists' Union's Rejection of International Ornithological Congress Guidelines**

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**Hyphenated bird names: A response to the American Ornithologists' Union's rejection of International Ornithological Congress guidelines.**—The North American Check-list Committee (NACC) affirms that it will stick to its practices for the spelling of English names of world birds (*Auk* 124:1472, 2007). On behalf of the American Ornithologists' Union (AOU), the NACC rejected our proposal to adopt specific guidelines recommended by the International Ornithological Congress (IOC) Standing Committee on English Names. We regret this decision.

The recommendations were endorsed by the IOC in Hamburg, Germany, in August 2006 and have been adopted in whole or in part by other societies. The AOU had the opportunity to join others worldwide in agreement on some small, but consequential, issues and chose not to do so.

These guidelines were a consensus-based product of 15 years of constructive debate by more than 30 experts on the birds of the world, including distinguished members of the AOU and their

peers in sister societies on other continents. The guidelines are closely aligned with the presentation of the premier world list (*The Howard and Moore Complete Checklist of the Birds of the World*, Princeton University Press, 2003), which provided the taxonomic foundation of the first edition of the IOC list.

We defer to a separate contribution a detailed discussion of the reasons why we chose not to hyphenate compound group names on a worldwide basis. A preview of the problems associated with the current AOU policy is available on the World Bird Names website ([www.worldbirdnames.org](http://www.worldbirdnames.org)).

We urge all our colleagues who may be interested in improving worldwide communication in ornithology and bird conservation to explore the IOC guidelines comprehensively and to become engaged in our continuing efforts to improve them.—FRANK B. GILL, *P.O. Box 428, Rushland, Pennsylvania 18956, USA* (e-mail: [fbgill@earthlink.net](mailto:fbgill@earthlink.net)); STEPHEN M. RUSSELL, *2850 North Camino de Oeste, Tucson, Arizona 85745, USA*; and MINTURN T. WRIGHT III, *1200 Sugartown Road, Berwyn, Pennsylvania 19312, USA*.

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