



Nomenclatural notes on Neotropical swallows of the genus *Tachycineta* Cabanis (Aves: Hirundinidae)

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Several Neotropical swallows of the genus *Tachycineta* Cabanis, 1850, have conspicuously white rumps, which caused three of them to be baptized *leucopyga*. This situation caused confusion concerning the scientific names of these swallows, in particular the Chilean Swallow.

The Chilean Swallow, a common species of the southern part of South America, was first described as new for science by Meyen (1834). The species was known as *Hirundo leucopyga* Meyen, 1834, during the first twenty years of its scientific existence (only original genus-species combinations are used in this paragraph). In 1850, Cabanis (1850) implied that *Hirundo leucopyga* Meyen, 1834, was preoccupied by *Hirundo leucopyga* Lichtenstein (no year given) and suggested that the species should be known as *Petrochelidon meyeri* Cabanis, 1850. Consequently, the latter species name was widely applied to this swallow in the second half of the 19th century and in the early 20th century. The situation changed in the 1930s when Hellmayr (1932: 48, 1935: 76) suggested that *Hirundo leucopyga* Meyen was *not* preoccupied by *Hirundo leucopyga* Lichtenstein, and reinstated the former name as valid for the species. Thence, the Chilean Swallow was again known as *Hirundo leucopyga* Meyen for half a century until Brooke (1974: 131) suggested that *Hirundo leucopyga* Meyen, 1834, is preoccupied by *Hirundo leucopyga* Pallas, 1811, and supported *Petrochelidon meyeri* Cabanis as the proper name for the species, using the species-group name in the combination with the genus *Tachycineta* Cabanis. We re-examined all relevant published sources, unpublished catalogues and museum specimens and concluded that both Cabanis (1850) and Brooke (1974) erred and that the Chilean Swallow should be known as *Hirundo* (= *Tachycineta*) *leucopyga* Meyen, 1834. A detailed analysis of relevant names is given below in chronological order.

Museum acronyms are as follows: MHH = Museum Heineanum, Halberstadt, Germany; MIZ = Muzeum i Instytut Zoologii [= Museum and Institute of Zoology], Polish Academy of Sciences, Warszawa, Poland; and ZMB = Museum für Naturkunde, Berlin, Germany.

Words originally written in non-Latin scripts were transliterated into Latin ones according to currently valid rules (see Mlíkovský 2009, Pedersen 2009). Nomenclatural issues follow the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature (ICZN 1999). Current taxonomic status of avian taxa follows Dickinson (2003).

Systematic list

“*Hirundo leucopyga* Pallas, 1811”

Brooke (1974: 131) suggested that Pallas (1811: 539) described an Asian swift species as *Hirundo leucopyga*. However, Pallas never created such a name. In his Latin text, Pallas (1811: 538-541) mentioned a white-rumped variety of the Common Swift *Hirundo* (= *Apus*) *apus* Linné, 1758, which he called (p. 538) “ β *Hirundo* (*Cypselus*) *fusc-nigricans*, *uroptygio albo*” (his italics). He further referred to this variety five-times on pp. 539–541. First (p. 539), he noted that the Common Swift was seen in Dauria “*cum varietate β leucopyga mixta*” (his italics), i.e. “in mixed [flocks] with the *white-rumped β -variety*”. Second (p. 539), he remarked “*Haesitavi diu, an leucopygam β varietatem pro distincta specie haberem*” (his italics), i.e. “I hesitate to recognize the *white-rumped β -variety* as a distinct species” (and added reasons why he decided so). Third, on p. 540 he gave a detailed description of this variety, referring to it solely as to the “*Varietati β* ” (his italics), not using the word ‘leucopygus’. In further text, Pallas (1811) simply referred to this bird as to “ *β* ” (p. 540).