



The rediscovery of Buffon’s “Guarouba” or “Perriche jaune”: two senior synonyms of *Aratinga pinto* Silveira, Lima & Höfling, 2005 (Aves: Psittaciformes)

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Abstract

Buffon’s “Guarouba” or “Perriche jaune” is illustrated in his magnificent “Histoire Naturelle des Oiseaux” and was interpreted by Buffon as the same bird described by Marcgrave in the 17th century as “Guarouba” or “Quijubatui”. Nevertheless, the bird described by Marcgrave corresponds to the species formally described by Gmelin (1789) as *Psittacus guarouba* and currently known as *Guarouba guarouba*. Buffon’s bird was named *Psittacus luteus* Boddaert, 1783, became the type-species of the genus *Aratinga*, and has long been considered a junior synonym of *Psittacus solstitialis* Linnaeus, 1758 (now *Aratinga solstitialis*). However, Buffon’s illustration, upon which the description of *P. luteus* Boddaert, 1783 was based, is not an *Aratinga solstitialis*, but a similar species recently redescribed and named *Aratinga pinto* Silveira, Lima & Höfling, 2005. An earlier, although long overlooked, older synonym of *P. luteus*, is *Psittacus maculatus* Statius Müller, 1776, also based on Buffon’s plate, and which turns out to be the valid nomen of this species. Thus, *Aratinga maculata* (Statius Müller, 1776) comb. nov. is the senior synonym of both *Psittacus luteus* Boddaert, 1783 syn. nov. and *Aratinga pinto* Silveira, Lima & Höfling, 2005 syn. nov. In order to establish nomenclatural stability, the holotype of *Aratinga pinto* is here designated as neotype of both *Psittacus maculatus* and *Psittacus luteus*, establishing an objective synonymy among the three nomina.

Key words: *Aratinga*, *Guarouba*, neotype, Psittacidae, synonymy, taxonomy, zoological nomenclature

Introduction

Psittaciformes (Aves) or parrots is a uniform, easily recognized, monophyletic group (Smith 1975, Forshaw 1977, Sibley & Ahlquist 1990, Sick 1990, Dixon 1994, Collar 1997, Rowley 1997, Brown & Toft 1999, Nemésio 2001, Tavares *et al.* 2004, Hume 2007), containing more than 350 species distributed in the tropical and subtropical parts of the world (Juniper & Parr 1998). Due to their conspicuous ability to imitate sounds, including the human voice, and the beauty of their feathers, psittacines are among the most studied birds since the beginning of ornithology (Strunden 1984). On the other hand, this enormous interest led early naturalists to name several new species based only on few specimens, brief descriptions, or illustrations. Consequently, many synonyms and homonyms were created, making the task of recognizing the valid nomina for these birds difficult even today (see Allen 1907: 335–339 for examples).

Since Carolus Linnaeus (1758) introduced the binominal system for naming animals, many species “described” before this date were given new and binominal nomina, both by Linnaeus himself and by other early taxonomists (Vanzolini 1996). One important feature for associating a name to an animal [allocation of a *nomen* to a *taxon*, according to Dubois (2000, 2005) and Dubois & Nemésio (2007)] is the existence of a name-bearing type, which was not always clearly designated in earlier times and remains a problem faced by