



Contributions to a List of First Reviser actions: ornithology

NORMAND DAVID, EDWARD C. DICKINSON and STEVEN M. S. GREGORY

Normand David, 516 Shakespeare, Dollard-des-Ormeaux, Quebec, Canada H9G 1A2 E-mail: normanddavid@videotron.ca

Edward C. Dickinson, Flat 3, 19 Bolsover Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN20 7JG, U.K.

Steven M.S. Gregory, 35 Monarch Road, Northampton, Northamptonshire, NN2 6EH, U.K.

Abstract

A record of First Reviser actions is needed and ZooBank is apparently expected to collect these. In support of this we provide some contributions both to assist with the creation of the appropriate data fields within ZooBank and to stimulate greater awareness of the retroactivity of Art. 24.2.4 of the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature. Of 66 cases collected relating to ornithology, and solely to dual or multiple original spellings, 45 are cases where, in consequence of this Article, under the Principle of Priority, an earlier nomenclatural act requires recognition in replacement of more recent acts. In just a few cases the consequence is a spelling that has not been in recent use. We also act as First Revisers in 10 additional cases discovered during our research.

Key words: First Reviser, spellings, ZooBank, retroactivity, Code, prevailing usage

Introduction

Almost two years ago we considered that it would be valuable if somewhere, perhaps centrally for zoology as a whole, a ‘register’ should be maintained of actions by First Revisers (hereinafter FR) in the context of the *International Code of Zoological Nomenclature* (ICZN 1999), hereinafter the ‘Code’, because many are now forgotten. In proposing such a step we concluded that there would ultimately need to be a generally agreed methodology for this. Several tasks are given to an FR to act upon, and one of these is to decide between original spellings when two or more have been used in the original work (Art. 24.2; ICZN, 1999: 30)¹. We chose to focus on this.

Despite the considerable importance attached to the role of an FR there is, as far as we are aware, no central record of the actions of FRs in ornithology; yet somehow check-lists and handbooks, to which we turn for our authorities, are expected to know about and to follow the actions of FRs. The best authorities actually reference all actions by an FR (typically in a foot-note), but this practice may be in danger of extinction.

We were aware that the ICZN (1999), in the 4th edition of the Code, had modified the role of the FR by the introduction of Art. 24.2.4, and that this would require consideration. We were also clear that Art. 86.3 implied that unless stated otherwise this new Article would be retroactive in effect. However, we were not certain that this was deliberate and we wished to establish what effect there might be from retroactive application. For this reason we felt it best to put up a list that would provoke comment. Doing this for ornithology would, we felt, be sufficient to signal a need for general reflection. We knew that certain cases would be contentious, and we felt that if there were to be objections 76 collected cases would allow calmer consideration of retroactivity than having single issues used to challenge the concept. Thus these

1. All subsequent references to any “Art.” refer to the 1999 Edition of the I.C.Z.N. Code unless we cite an earlier Code.