



Nomenclatural notes on *Cyornis* and *Rhinomyias* flycatchers (Aves: Muscicapidae) of South-East Asia

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Abstract

A nomenclatural revision of two flycatcher names first introduced into the literature by Blyth (1870) and other relevant names showed the following: (1) *Cyornis cyanopolia* should be attributed to Blyth (1870) and is a valid name for the flycatcher *Cyornis unicolor cyanopolia* Blyth. (2) *Muscicapa infuscata* should be attributed to Blyth (1870) and is a junior subjective synonym of *Rhinomyias umbratilis* (Strickland, 1849). (3) *Cyornis infuscata* Hartert, 1902, never existed as a zoological name. (4) *Cyornis harterti* Robinson & Kinnear, 1928, is not available for nomenclatural purposes.

Key words: Aves, nomenclature, *Cyornis cyanopolia*, *Muscicapa infuscata*, *Rhinomyias umbratilis*, *Cyornis harterti*

Introduction

Two label names, *Cyornis cyanopolia* Boie and *Muscicapa infuscata* Müller, were introduced into the literature by Blyth (1870) in a manner which raised confusion about their availability for the purposes of zoological nomenclature and their taxonomic meaning (Finsch 1901a,b; Hartert 1902; Robinson & Kinnear 1928; Deignan 1963; Watson *et al.* 1986; Dickinson *et al.* 2002, 2004; Dekker 2003; Mees 2004; LeCroy 2008; Quaisser 2010). Here I reconsider their nomenclatural status and comment on their taxonomic meaning. The names are discussed in chronological order.

Museum acronyms are as follows: AMNH = American Museum of Natural History, New York, USA; BMNH = Natural History Museum at Tring, Tring, United Kingdom; RMNH = Netherlands Centre for Biodiversity Naturalis, Leiden, The Netherlands.

Nomenclatural issues follow the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature (ICZN 1999; hereafter referred to as to the Code). Current taxonomic status of avian taxa follows Dickinson (2003).

Systematic list

Cyornis cyanopolia Blyth, 1870

Heinrich Boie (1794–1827) collected in Java several specimens of a flycatcher which he recognized as new for science and labeled *Cyornis cyanopolia*. Blyth (1870: 165) studied them in the RMNH in autumn 1869, remarking in his paper: “*Cyornis cyanopolia* (Boie), from Sumatra, Java and Borneo, differs in no respect that I can perceive, whether from recollection or comparison with Dr. Jerdon’s description [= Jerdon 1862: 465], from *C. unicolor*, nobis [= Blyth 1843: 1007], of the Sikhim Himalaya.” This sentence started a paragraph on *Cyornis* flycatchers and the name “*Cyornis cyanopolia*” was printed in small caps. This misled many subsequent workers to believe that Blyth (1870) used *Cyornis cyanopolia* as a valid name for a taxon. Some of them considered the name available for nomenclatural purposes (e.g. Gray 1871: 218; Salvadori 1874: 132; Giebel 1875: 633; Hume 1879: 59; Mees 2004; Quaisser 2010), while others argued that it is a nomen nudum (e.g. Hartert 1902: 550; Dickinson *et al.* 2002). However, Blyth (1870) clearly said that Boie’s *C. cyanopolia* is inseparable from his own *C. unicolor*. Thus, provisions of Art. 11.5. of the Code were not fulfilled (“Names to be valid when proposed.”) and *Cyornis cyanopolia* Boie was