



The original spellings of *Thryothorus* Vieillot, 1816 (Vertebrata, Aves): a correction

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While discussing the problems related to multiple original spellings or *symprotographs* (Dubois 2010: 14) of nomina in zootaxonomy, David *et al.* (2009: 5) stated that one of the generic bird nomina created by Vieillot (1816) had been so under two different spellings: *Thriothorus* (p. 45) and *Thryothorus* (p. 70). They pointed to the fact that subsequently Vieillot (1819: 55) had only used the spelling *Thryothorus* for this nomen, and thus had acted as a first-reviser between the two spellings under the new Rule introduced in Article 24.2.4 of the last edition of the *Code* (Anonymous 1999), a nomenclatural act designated by Dubois (2010: 15) as an *internal first-reviser action* or IFRA.

Dubois (2010: 26) stated that the spelling that appeared in p. 45 of Vieillot (1816) was not *Thriothorus* but *Thirothorus*, but agreed with the identification of the valid spelling following an IFRA being *Thryothorus*. This “correction” was in fact a mistake. It resulted from the fact that Dubois had not used the original edition of the book of Vieillot, but the reprint of the Willughby Society edited by Howard Saunders (Vieillot 1883). Although it is presented as such, this reprint is not strictly identical to the original. It does show the spelling *Thirothorus* in its p. 45, but this is a misprint for *Thriothorus*, which indeed is the spelling that appears in the original edition.

This misprint is not the only one in the 1883 “reprint” of Vieillot. We identified two other ones: *Ralus* (1883: 61) for *Rallus* (1816: 61) and *Cincinnurus* (1883: 69) for *Cicinnurus* (1816: 69). These misprints contradict the following statement in the *Preface* of the 1883 edition according to which it would be an exact reproduction of the original: “*In the present reprint of the ‘Analyse,’ the original errors of the press, which are tolerably numerous, have been faithfully reproduced.*” (Saunders in Vieillot 1883: iv).

This case calls again attention to the need, when dealing with very precise and sensible questions of zoological nomenclature, in particular involving spellings, not to use “reprints” or “new editions” of the classical works where nomina had been created, but always the original edition. A second similar case had been pointed out by Dubois (2010: 19) regarding his previous erroneous credit to Linnaeus (1758) of a spelling that had been in fact created in the Engelmann reprint of this seminal work (Linnaeus 1894). Fortunately, in the recent years many old works of zootaxonomy have been digitized and are now available as real facsimile on the net, and it is highly preferable to use these exact copies of the originals rather than paper “reprints”, even, or more so, when the latter are themselves old (from the 19th century, in the two cases above), as they may include misprints or unwarranted “corrections”.

References

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