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**The “Very Thankless Task”: Revision of *Luniceps* Clay and
Meinertzhagen, 1939 (Insecta: Phthiraptera: Ischnocera:
Phlopteridae), with descriptions of six new species and one new
subspecies**

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Abstract

The louse genus *Lunaceps* Clay and Meinertzhagen, 1939, parasitic on shorebirds (Charadriiformes: Scolopacidae) is revised. Six new species and one new subspecies of *Lunaceps* Clay and Meinertzhagen, 1939 parasitic on shorebirds (Charadriiformes, Scolopacidae) are described. They are *L. enigmaticus* sp. nov. from Stilt Sandpiper *Micropalama himantopus* (Bonaparte, 1826), *L. kukri* sp. nov. from Long-billed Curlew *Numenius americanus* Bechstein, 1812, *L. mintoni* sp. nov. from Great Knot *Calidris tenuirostris* (Horsfield, 1821), *L. rothkoi* sp. nov. from Buff-breasted Sandpiper *Tryngites subruficollis* (Vieillot, 1819), *L. schismatus* sp. nov. from Dunlin *Calidris alpina* (Linnaeus, 1758), *L. superciliosus* from Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *Calidris acuminata* (Horsfield, 1821) and Long-toed Stint *Calidris subminuta* (Middendorff, 1853), and *L. numenii madagascariensis* ssp. nov. from Far Eastern Curlew *Numenius madagascariensis* (Linnaeus, 1766). Furthermore, the species *L. cabanisi* Timmermann, 1954, and *L. pusillus* are placed as new junior synonyms of *L. incoenis* (Kellogg and Chapman, 1899); the species *L. haematopi* Timmermann, 1954, *L. oliveri* Timmermann, 1954, and *L. husainii* Ansari, 1956, are placed as new junior synonyms of *L. numenii numenii* (Denny, 1842), *L. numenii phaeopi* (Denny, 1842), and *L. falcinellus* Timmermann, 1954, respectively, and the subspecies *L. holophaeus timmermanni* Bechet, 1968, is regarded as a new junior synonym of *L. falcinellus* Timmermann, 1954. *Lunaceps limosella limosa* Bechet, 1968, which was previously considered a junior synonym of *L. limosella* Timmermann, 1954, is resurrected as a valid species. *Lunaceps wilsoni* Carriker, 1956, is considered a nomen dubium, and *L. parabolicus* Eichler (in Niethammer), 1953, is removed to the genus *Quadriceps* Clay and Meinertzhagen, 1939 as *Quadriceps parabolicus* comb. nov., although its status in *Quadriceps* needs further attention. All species and subspecies of *Lunaceps* are illustrated and red-described, and a key is provided for their identification. Three populations, from which only poor or limited data are available, are placed as incerta sedis.

Key words: Chewing lice, *Lunaceps*, Philopteridae, shorebirds, sandpipers, curlews, godwits, whimbrel, new species, new synonymies, red-descriptions, key to species