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Nomenclatural corrections, neotype designation and new subspecies description in the genus *Suiriri* (Aves: Passeriformes: Tyrannidae)

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Abstract

Zimmer *et al.* (2001) documented two morphological and vocal forms within what was then known as *Suiriri suiriri affinis*, and described the short-billed form as *Suiriri islerorum*. However, studies of the Burmeister type material held at the Natural History Collections of the Martin-Luther-University Halle-Wittenberg, Germany, revealed the types of *Suiriri s. affinis* (Burmeister, 1856) to be the same taxon as *Suiriri islerorum*, which name therefore becomes a junior synonym. No published name is available for the long-billed form. A new name is therefore introduced by an original description in accordance with the *International code on zoological nomenclature*. The original type material of *S. s. bahiae* (Berlepsch, 1893) is confirmed to be lost; a neotype is designated.

Key words: Nomenclatural revision, *Suiriri*, new subspecies, neotype

Introduction

Founded in 1769 with the purchase of the natural history cabinets of Johann Friedrich Gottlieb Goldhagen (1742–88) and Gottfried August Gründler (1710–75), the development of the zoological collection of the Martin-Luther-University Halle-Wittenberg was most profoundly influenced by Carl Hermann Conrad Burmeister (1807–92), who enriched the collection with 5,400 bird specimens and 200 eggs originating from two major expeditions to Brazil (1850–52), and other expeditions to Uruguay, Argentina and Chile (1856–60) (for details of these trips, see Schneider *et al.* 2007, Köhler 2012). Today, the ornithological importance of the collection lies in its skins and skeletons of Mongolian and Cuban taxa; Schönwetter's collection of bird eggs, which covers nearly 4,000 species; skins and skeletons of threatened birds of East Germany; and the early type material from South America connected to Burmeister and his research network, which is the focus of the present work.

The taxonomy of the genus *Suiriri* has confused ornithologists for many decades, with two species variously recognised therein for most of the past century. Until the second half of the 20th century these two species were *S. suiriri* (Vieillot, 1818, which occurs from southern Bolivia south through Paraguay to northern Argentina and Uruguay), and *S. affinis* (Burmeister, 1856, which occurs from eastern Bolivia and northeastern Paraguay east across Brazil). These two taxa differ most notably in the color of the belly (white and yellow, respectively). Subsequent to the publication of Zimmer (1955), most authorities, including Meyer de Schauensee (1966) and Traylor (1979) but with the notable exception of Sibley and Monroe (1990), preferred to treat the genus as comprising just one species, *S. suiriri*, with three subspecies. This was based principally on the discovery of a large series of specimens from northeastern Paraguay displaying apparently intermediate characters (Laubmann 1940, Zimmer 1955); that these birds were intergrades was subsequently both contested (Short 1975) and confirmed (Traylor 1982). While recognising the problem posed by the intergrades, Ridgely and Tudor (1994) considered that “two biological species are probably involved”, but nevertheless stopped short of treating the two taxa concerned,

permitted access to relevant specimen material at these institutions. Guilherme Renzo Rocha Brito brought to our attention a recent specimen of *bahiae* held at MNRJ. MAR is indebted to the CNPq, for financial support of the project “Catálogo de tipos de espécies de aves brasileiras” (Procs. nos. 479049/2006-8, 476861/2009-8 and 307786/2011-0), and to the Fundação Carlos Chagas Filho de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (FAPERJ, Proc. E-26/101.489/2010). Richard Schodde, Edward Dickinson and Steven Gregory advised us concerning nomenclatural matters, while the editor, Terry Chesser, and two anonymous referees provided useful commentaries on the submitted version of the manuscript.

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