

Systematic notes on Asian birds. 55.
A re-examination of the date of publication of
Jerdon's Second Supplement to the Catalogue
of the Birds of southern India

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Because Jerdon's Second Supplement, published in 1845, reflects an exchange of information with Edward Blyth, the date of issue requires interpretation to position it in relation to several papers that year by Blyth. The evidence suggests that we should accept that it appeared soon after 9th August 1845. The only names potentially affected by this resolution are the generic name *Phragamaticola* the establishment of which is reviewed, and *Phragamaticola olivacea* 'Blyth' Jerdon, which is in synonymy.

Introduction

Thomas Caverhill ¹ Jerdon (1811-1872) entered the service of the East India Company in 1835 as an Assistant Surgeon. Arriving in the Madras Presidency in southern India on 21st February 1836, he spent much of the next four years with his regiment, the 2nd Light Cavalry, and was in the field with them in the Deccan and the Eastern Ghats. After his marriage in July 1841 he was posted to the Nilgiri Hills and then to Nellore, where he drew on the knowledge of the local tribal people to find many reptiles as well as birds. Later he became a 'very competent' observer and collector of plants and of fish as well, taking advantage of spells at Fort St. George ² in 1842 and 1844-47. He was appointed Civil Surgeon at Tellicherry in 1847 and was there until 1851, next rejoining the army with the rank of Surgeon and serving in the Sagor and Nerbudda territory until the mutiny of the Bengal army in 1858. After that he spent a year on sick leave in Darjeeling, and was then appointed to a regiment in Burma. Following his success in obtaining the patronage of Lord Canning his services were transferred to the Government of India on special duty preparing major works on Indian natural history. He left India in 1864. Elliot (1873) provided much colourful background information in his memoir on him.

¹ This is the spelling used by Elliott (1873) and in his obituary in *The Ibis*. Sometimes, and perhaps correctly, spelled Claverhill.

² Madras, now Chennai.

Jerdon and Blyth

In 1839 Jerdon began to publish his *Catalogue of the Birds of southern India* in the *Madras Journal of Literature and Science* (below called just the *Madras Journal*). Two parts issued that year (Jerdon, 1839a, b) were succeeded by four more the next year (Jerdon, 1840a, b, c, d), and by the time Edward Blyth arrived in Calcutta in 1841 Jerdon had established a reputation for his work. In 1842 he sent some specimens to William Jardine in Scotland, but these were so badly infested with moth that they had to be destroyed on arrival (Kinnear, 1952). Specimens were later sent to the British Museum, and Sharpe (1906) thought that "most of [Jerdon's] types of new species appear to have been presented to the Museum". Whether Jerdon actually ever marked a specimen as a type is not clear; like Hodgson he favoured drawing his birds, or having local artists do so, and Elliot (1873) suggested that often when he described his new taxa "his type specimens were out of reach ... [or that due to his habitual carelessness they] had been lost or destroyed". During 1842 to 1844 he also presented specimens to the museum in Calcutta (Blyth, 1852: 345), and from among them Blyth seems to have passed some duplicates to the Museum of the East India Company (Dickinson et al., 2001). Horsfield & Moore (1854) credited these to the Asiatic Society of Bengal rather than to Jerdon or Blyth suggesting that the specimens supplied were mingled with those of other original donors to the Society's museum in Calcutta. In 1843³, the first of four parts of Jerdon's *Illustrations of Indian Ornithology* appeared, with the second in 1845 (see also Table 1).

Jerdon was almost the same age as Edward Blyth (1810-1873), but arrived in India well before him, and by the time Blyth reached Calcutta had his Catalogue already in print. From 1841 to 1845 the two seem to have corresponded⁴, and Blyth proposed Jerdon as a member of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, but from 1845 to about 1858 there is little in Blyth's published writings to show regular and sustained contact. Possibly the relationship was strained by disagreement over the publication of novelties, for Blyth published some of Jerdon's before he could do so himself. That Jerdon failed to publish his descriptions promptly is likely to have been due in part to the financial problems of the *Madras Journal* (Dickinson et al., 2004). These certainly delayed both the first and the second supplements to Jerdon's Catalogue.

The supplements to Jerdon's Catalogue

Dickinson et al. (2004) reported on the discovery of copies of a curious composite work, dated 1839 but demonstrably wrongly so dated, which they dubbed Jerdon, 1841. In this the Catalogue itself was reprinted, with through pagination in place of its original pagination within the parts of the six separate issues of the journal, and the First

³ Elliot (1873: 145) gave 1843 as the date of publication of Part 1, in Madras; and Zimmer (1926) gave this same date.

⁴ They seem to have met rarely. Elliot (1873: 147) reported that Jerdon was in Calcutta about twelve months after 'the mutiny of the Bengal army', thus about 1859, and Jerdon may well have met Blyth either before or after spending his year's sick leave in Darjeeling. They certainly met in May 1862 (Blyth, 1862).

Supplement was included as a preprint, while the type set for it was as yet unused by the journal.

Dickinson et al. (2004) also noted that the Second Supplement should be dated 1845, in line with the title page to volume XIII of the *Madras Journal* ⁵. Exactly when in 1845 this appeared is what we address here.

Potential conflicts in priority

The second Supplement (Jerdon, 1845a) appeared the same year as several ornithological papers by Blyth (1845a, b, c). In recent examinations of issues of priority of names relating to *Mirafra affinis* Jerdon, Dickinson et al. (2001: 94) accepted 1846 for this but, later, Dickinson et al. (2002: 124) rejected 1846 and used 1845 for *Pycnonotus zantholaimus* (Jerdon, 1845a). Although Dickinson et al. (2001, 2002) were aware of dating problems with issues of the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* (JASB), at that stage nothing could be done to establish with any certainty whether Blyth's paper (Blyth, 1845c) on *Pycnonotus zantholaimus* (see Table 1 for spelling) had been delayed into 1846.

Now, as outlined by Dickinson & Pittie (2006, this volume), a start has been made on evaluating the dates of issue of the JASB. These authors have offered most probable, although not proven, dates for Blyth (1845a), Blyth (1845b) and Blyth (1845c), respectively, as March, September and December 1845. The second of these dates, that given for Blyth (1845b), covered the name *Strix lettoides* and the third, that for Blyth (1845c), *Pycnonotus zantholaimus*. Both these names Baker (1930) considered junior synonyms of names in Jerdon (1845a). If Baker was correct there would be no problem, but if Blyth's names appeared first then currently accepted names would be the prior names and the applicability of Art. 23.9.1 of the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature (I.C.Z.N., 1999) ('The Code') would have to be assessed ⁶.

The evidence pointing to an approximate date of publication

Evidence is to be found in Jerdon's paper itself (in No. 31 of the *Madras Journal*), and elsewhere in the same journal issue, and also in the JASB. First, in Jerdon (1845a) on p. 136 there is mention of p. 958 of volume 13 of the JASB. Page 958 was in the December 1844 issue of the JASB, and Dickinson & Pittie (2006) have explained that this should be dated about March 1845 ⁷. Second, on p. 165, also in issue 31, a letter was reproduced that had appeared in the *Madras Spectator* on 9th August. Thus this issue of the *Madras Journal* must have appeared after that ⁸.

Finally, Blyth (1846) mentioned Jerdon's work on p. 280, and again in a footnote on p. 285, in issue 172 of the JASB, which appeared no earlier than late December 1846, be-

⁵ As also reported by Hartert (1909: 554).

⁶ In all probability neither of Blyth's names has been in use as a valid name since 1899, and both would be able to be declared *nomina oblita*, but lack of usage would require verification.

⁷ It follows mention on p. 885 in the preceding issue of the date 1st January 1845.

⁸ The library accessions details listed in the JASB provide a date by which issue 30 was received. However, there does not seem to be any mention of receipt of issue 31 in the 1845 and 1846 volumes of the JASB.

Table 1. Inconsistency in the dating of Jerdon (1845) by Baker (1930a)

Jerdon (1845) Name used	Page	Baker (1930a) Page	Date used	Commentary	Baker assigned priority to
<i>Scops griseus</i>	119	385	1845	A synonym of <i>Otus b. bakkamoena</i> Pennant, 1769; Baker listed <i>lethioides</i> Blyth (1845b) as a synonym junior to <i>griseus</i> . Peters (1940: 99) listed <i>griseus</i> but dated this 1844.	Jerdon (1845a)
<i>Brachypus xantholaemus</i>	122	86	1844	Baker listed only Jerdon's name and dated it 1844. The name <i>Pycnonotus zantholaiinus</i> , which appeared in Blyth (1845c), was ignored.	Jerdon (1845a)
<i>Malacocircus affinis</i>	128	36	1847	Baker listed no Blyth name that might conflict. He dated Jerdon's name 1847, but pl. 19 of Illustrations of Indian Ornithology appeared in 1845 (Sherborn, 1922; Zimmer, 1926). Deignan (1964: 339) followed Baker's choice of citation. Where this name is used in Jerdon's 2nd. Supplement there was no description, just an 'indication' to the plate in Ill. Ind. Orn.	Jerdon's Illustrations of Indian Ornithology (1845b)
<i>Phragmaticicola olivacea</i> Blyth	129	179	August 1845	A synonym of <i>Phragmaticicola aedon</i> (Pallas, 1776). Baker listed <i>Arundinax olivaceus</i> Blyth (1845c) as a synonym junior to <i>Phragmaticicola olivacea</i> Jerdon, 1845a. See text for a discussion of the impact of priority here.	Jerdon (1845a)
<i>Phyllopeuste occipitalis</i> Blyth	131	189		A <i>nomen nudum</i> in Jerdon, 1845a, not included as such by Baker, who listed the name as new from Blyth (1845c).	
<i>Mirafra affinis</i>	136	277	After August 1845	Baker credited this name to Blyth, '1844-45' [= Blyth 1845a]. Peters (1960: 19) followed this.	Blyth (1845a)
<i>Mirafra hayii</i>	136	278	After August 1845	Baker credited this name to Blyth, '1844-45' [= Blyth 1845a].	Blyth (1845a)

cause the date 11th December is to be found on p. 279. This implies 'publication no later than December, 1846' of Jerdon (1845a), although the paper by Blyth (1846), was probably written some months earlier.

We are left with a period of some 16 months from mid August 1845 to December 1846 at any time within which Jerdon's Second Supplement might have been published. Refining the date further requires the examination of the dates derived by others.

In the Synonymy for his *Fauna of British India, Birds*, with help from Tom Iredale, Baker (1930a, b) made a serious effort to explore the priorities of names of Indian birds. He was inconsistent in dating Jerdon's 'Second Supplement' as he variously used '1844', '1845', 'August, 1845', and 'after August 1845'. His use of August, 1845, presumably reflects the dated letter from the *Madras Spectator* mentioned above. Checking all the names from Jerdon's Second Supplement occurring in Baker (1930a) we found 11 and collected their dates, but we restrict Table 1 to names where there is an issue of priority between synonyms.

In summary, Baker credited the two *Mirafra* (from issue 156 of the *JASB*) to Blyth ('1844' = 1845a) ahead of Jerdon (1845a), but put *Scops griseus* Jerdon, 1845a, ahead of *Strix lettoides* Blyth, 1845b (from issue 159 of the *JASB*) and put *Brachypus xantholæmus* Jerdon, 1845a, and the use of *Phragmaticola olivacea* 'Blyth' Jerdon, 1845a, ahead of Blyth's competing names (from issue 164 of the *JASB*). Baker's decisions suggest that we should reduce the above-mentioned 16 month period to reflect publication of Jerdon (1845a) before September 1845, which is the date suggested by Dickinson & Pittie (2006) for Blyth, 1845b.

We consider it appropriate to follow Baker (1930a, b) in the sequencing of these papers if only because stability is best served by doing so. It may eventually be found that each of them dates from a little later, but re-dating any of the new names in these papers to 1846 does not seem warranted. Thus we feel it is best to cite Jerdon (1845a) from 'not before Aug. 10th 1845'. This is a date that upsets none of the names that might be affected by the multiple conflicts between Jerdon's paper and several other papers, except for the one case discussed below. Strictly, Art. 21.4 of The International Code of Zoological Nomenclature (I.C.Z.N., 1999) (The Code) requires that we adopt "the earliest day on which the work is demonstrated to be in existence as a published work". We have not complied exactly with that requirement; however in view of the conflicts of priority that might arise if this work were taken out of the context of the publications by Blyth (1845b, c), we feel that the date we offer should be used unless and until Baker's sequence of these publications can be shown to be wrong.

The case of the generic name *Phragmaticola* and its type species

The introduction of *Phragmaticola* and its precedence over *Arundinax* Blyth (1845c) is an instructive example of the parsimonious decisions that often need to be made, guided by The Code (I.C.Z.N., 1999), without necessarily resorting to the plenary powers of the Commission.

As shown above, Jerdon's Second Supplement (1845a) is best considered to ante-date Blyth's 'Notices and descriptions of various new or little known species of birds' (1845c). In it, on p. 129, Jerdon introduced the binomen *Phragmaticola olivacea* which he credited to Blyth as a new species, making the statement: "I forwarded it [presumably

referring to a specimen he procured at Nellore] to Mr Blyth, being myself doubtful where to locate it, and that gentleman has made of it a new genus to which he has given the above name, and will shortly fully describe its peculiarities." Had he confined himself to imparting just this knowledge, the binomen given would have been a *nomen nudum*, but he went on to describe some salient features: "It is somewhat allied to *Sphenura*, especially in its habits, but differs in its wider and more depressed bill... Its plumage... is almost identical with that of the European Reed Thrush ...", listing next five measurements, of which only the bill is not directly comparable (we do not know Jerdon's method of taking this measurement) with those of modern diagnoses, e.g., Ali & Ripley (1983: 535).

Later, Blyth (1845c: 595) acted upon the specimens sent to him by Jerdon, whom he acknowledged as discoverer, and others he obtained near Calcutta, as well as those sent to him by Captain Abbot from Ramree, Arracan, publishing a new generic name *Arundinax*, nobis [Latin, 'to us'], while slightly expanding upon Jerdon's definition, and a new species name *Ar. olivaceus*, nobis, with a full description. Quite why Blyth used a different generic name from that which he presumably communicated earlier to Jerdon we shall probably never know, but it is this latter name that gained the support of most nineteenth century authors. Seebohm (1881: 120) placed both names in the synonymy of *Lusciniola* G.R. Gray, 1841, considering *Phragamaticola* to be *descr. null.* ['no description'] thereby advancing the status of *Arundinax*, such that it was used by Oates (1889: 388), Sharpe (1903: 207) and la Touche (1920: 650), but not Hartert (1909: 554), who was confident that *Phragamaticola* had priority .

Baker (1924: 439), using an emended spelling *Phragmaticola*, stated: 'Blyth's name *Arundinax* for this genus was probably published some months later than *Phragmaticola*, and the latter must therefore be used.'

This is much where the situation was left until Bond (1975: 50) reviewed both the introduction of these names and the correct spelling to be used. In his paper he considers Jerdon's brief description to 'satisfy all of the requirements for an original description.' He also believed the original orthography to be a printer's error or a *lapsus* on the part of Jerdon, citing Blyth's later ('1849' = 1852) use of *Phragmaticola* in synonymy, and Jerdon's statement that the name had been originally chosen by Blyth, as evidence. However, the Code in force at the time (the 2nd Edition, I.C.Z.N., 1964), like the current edition, did not admit such evidence; and both editions state within Article 32 'Incorrect transliteration or latinization, or the use of an inappropriate connecting vowel, are not to be considered inadvertent errors'. Thus the transliteration of φράγματος '*phragmatos*' as '*phragamatos*' in *phragamat-i-cola* need not be viewed as an error.

We therefore have to make two decisions. First, does Jerdon's action (1845a: 129) constitute a valid nomenclatural act? We believe it does, as it satisfies 'Requirements of names published before 1931' Article 12.1. of The Code (I.C.Z.N., 1999: 16), in that the name must be and is 'accompanied by a description or definition of the taxon it denotes, or by an indication.' Furthermore, Article 12.2.6. states that 'a combined description or definition of a new nominal genus and a single new nominal species [Jerdon's binomen], which then provides an indication for each name irrespective of whether the names are stated to be new'. This also satisfies the need for stability as *Arundinax* has not been

used as the valid name for this monotypic genus since 1924. The nominal type species has been identified with *Muscicapa Aëdon* Pallas, 1776, at least since Gray (1869: 208). Second, is the spelling as used, by e.g., Dickinson (2003: 583), of the generic name (*Phragmaticola*) supported by the ICZN? As shown above, Bond was incorrect in assuming that the Code supported the automatic correction to *Phragmaticola* as there is no clear evidence within the work itself that Jerdon intended the original spelling to be other than that given (*Phragmaticicola*). Whether any revised spelling is an unjustified emendation or an incorrect subsequent spelling it is almost impossible to tell, as in none of the subsequent uses by Bonaparte (1850: 287), Blyth (1852), or Jerdon (1863) is there any explanation for the change.

The spelling used by Baker (1924) was not followed by Chasen (1935: 249), Vaurie (1959: 238), Ripley (1961: 464), Deignan (1963: 175), or Cheng (1976: 737) all of whom used the original orthography. Ripley (1982: 422) mentioned the 'proper spelling' given by Bond (1975) and was followed by Watson et al. (1986: 77) and by Cheng (1987: 790), but not by Voous (1977: 48), Wolters (1980: 364) or Sibley & Monroe (1990: 615). Regardless of this mixed practice the correct citation must be as follows:

Phragmaticola

Phragmaticola Jerdon, 1845. Second Supplement to the Catalogue of the birds of Southern India. Madras J. Lit. Sci., 13 (31), p. 129.

Type by monotypy, *Phragmaticola olivacea* (Blyth MS) Jerdon, 1845 = *Muscicapa Aëdon* Pallas, 1776.

Phragmaticola aedon (Pallas, 1776).

Phragmaticola is an incorrect subsequent spelling (Art. 33.5).

Jerdon's *Illustrations of Indian Ornithology*

Sherborn, in a MS note, with the set of this work in the Tweeddale Library, the Natural History Museum, South Kensington gave the dates of publication of parts 1 and 2 as March 1845 without explaining his evidence; but see Sherborn, 1922). According to Elliot (1873) however "the first number appeared at Madras in 1843 ...", and this fits with other reports (Anon., 1844; Strickland, 1845). However, March 1845 for part 2 (pls. 13-25) seems to be uncontested.

In Table 1 we report that the name *Malacocircus affinis* was in Jerdon (1845a) and his *Illustrations* (Jerdon, 1845b). In this case, an 'indication' leading to the *Illustrations* appears in the Second Supplement, with a plate number. This number will have been known to Jerdon many months before publication of the plates themselves and could have been inserted in the Second Supplement well before the *Illustrations* were published. However, in the light of Sherborn's notes Baker would seem to have been right to accord them priority.

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⁹ Within which the First Supplement formed pp. 189-201 and the Second did not feature.

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