

COTYLE BOIE 1826 (AVES, HIRUNDINIDAE): REQUEST FOR
SUPPRESSION Z.N.(S.)2117

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Cotyle Boie (1826: 971 - not seen) has not been used since 1890 as a generic name for a group of species including its type-species *Hirundo fucata* Temminck. It was abandoned on the theory of homonymy with *Cotile* Boie, 1822, (which is an objective junior synonym of *Riparia* Forster, 1817) under the former one letter rule or as an unjustified emendation of *Cotile*. *Cotyle* is thus available, but a powerful case exists for its suppression not only under Articles 23 (a-b) and 79 (b) but also because of the substantial confusion and disturbance of stability that its revival would cause.

2. Sharpe & Wyatt (1894: xlviii) state that Boie designated *Hirundo fucata* Temminck (1822: pl. 161) as the type-species of his new genus *Cotyle*, as discussed in Brooke (1974). Even if Boie did not designate a type-species for *Cotyle* as we now understand the act, Sharpe & Wyatt (*op. cit.*) did designate one in 1894. In 1903 Ridgway (1903: 106) proposed *Alopochelidon* with type-species *Hirundo fucata* Temminck. Ridgway's name is thus an objective junior synonym of *Cotyle* Boie, 1826, irrespective of whether Boie or Sharpe & Wyatt designated its type-species. Some authors had placed Temminck's *H. fucata* in *Atticora* Boie, 1844, with type-species *Hirundo fasciata* Gmelin, but after Ridgway's proposal this placing gradually fell away and for over 50 years (see below) *fucata* has been referred to *Alopochelidon*. The last time that *fucata* was referred to *Cotyle*, whether in its correct sense or as an unjustified emendation of *Cotile*, was by Stempelmann & Schulz (1890: 400).

3. It must be appreciated that *Cotyle* Boie, 1826, is not *Cotile* Boie (1822: 500) with type-species *Hirundo riparia* Linnaeus (1758: 192) by monotypy. *Cotile* is a junior objective synonym of *Riparia* Forster, (1817: 17), a much mentioned genus in the literature of the Aves. *Cotile* is not a classical word though *cotilum* is a rare Greek word for sexual organs. *Cotyle* is a Greek word meaning a little cup or depression and was used by ancient writers for the suckers on the tentacles of octopuses (Cephalopoda, Mollusca). Why anybody thought the latter name appropriate for a member of the avian family HIRUNDINIDAE I do not know. The first author to use *Cotyle* after its proposal was C.L. Brehm (1831: 142) who used it in the binomina *Cotyle fluviatilis* sibi, a subjective synonym of *H. riparia* L., and *Cotyle riparia*. Thereafter, *Cotyle* was used intermittently for a hundred years for *Cotile* Boie, 1822 (= *Riparia* Forster, 1817) by those who considered that the emendation was justified either on the grounds of classical etymology or to avoid the suspicion of obscenity. Some of these

authors did include *H. fucata* in *Cotyle* in their sense but I have found no evidence that anybody has ever used *Cotyle* in its correct sense since its proposal.

4. *Alopocheilidon fucata* is a well-established binomen in the literature — see Wetmore, 1926: 342; Naumburg, 1930: 319; Chapman, 1931: 105; Hellmayr, 1935: 48; Pinto, 1944: 316; Zimmer, 1955: 16; Peters, 1960: 92; Cuello & Gerzenstein, 1962: 140; Meyer de Schauensee, 1964: 301, 1966: 396. Other references could be cited, but this seems unnecessary in a case where current usage is unequivocally established. The last occasion before 1975 (see below) when the species was referred to any other genus was when Chubb (1921: 348) used the binomen *Atticora fucata*.

5. Recently, however, Short (1975: 287) has proposed that *H. fucata* Temminck be placed in *Stelgidopteryx* Baird, 1858. The type-species of this genus is *Hirundo serripennis* Audubon, 1838, by monotypy. The effect of this proposal — which I accept as taxonomically sound — is to sink *Alopocheilidon* as a junior subjective synonym of *Stelgidopteryx* (which is, in its own right, a well-established name in New World ornithology). It is obviously too soon to say whether Short's proposal will gain general acceptance, but that question does not affect the main purpose of this proposal, which is to ensure that, whatever name is used for the genus containing *Hirundo fucata* Temminck, it shall not be *Cotyle* Boie, 1826. The confusion arising from the revival of *Cotyle* would be increased by its peculiar history, since most authors have treated it as an emendation (justified or unjustified) of *Cotile* rather than as a nominal genus with its own type-species. I therefore take the somewhat unusual step of asking for the suppression of one generic name without asking for its junior synonym to be placed on the Official List.

6. I therefore ask the Commission:

- (1) to use its plenary powers to suppress the generic name *Cotyle* Boie, 1826, for the purposes of the Law of Priority but not for those of the Law of Homonymy;
- (2) to place the generic name *Cotyle* Boie, 1826, as suppressed in (1) above, on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Generic Names in Zoology.

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