

The Cuculidæ of the A. O. U. List.—I am sorry to perceive that our treatment of this family involves several errors. One of these is a mere blunder, almost self-corrective; another is a grammatical mistake, easily set right; but two others are ornithological improprieties of considerable taxonomic consequence.

1. *Cuculus canorus telephonus* appears as a member of the "Subfamily Cocyginæ, American Cuckoos," which of course it is not. This is a mere editorial inadvertency, or mechanical defect in the make-up of the List, by omission of a heading "Subfamily Cuculinæ" to cover this case. The 'break' is obvious, and easily mended.

2. "Cocyginæ" appears as the name of the American subfamily. This should be *Coccyzinæ*, of course, as derived from the name of the genus *Coccyzus*. I am well aware that the form *Coccyginæ* is used by many writers, including myself; it has so stood in the 'Key' since 1884 after Baird, Cabanis, and others, who alter *Coccyzus* of Vieillot into *Coccygus*. But those who preserve the original orthography of names, however faulty, must write *Coccyzus* and consequently *Coccyzinæ*, as I did in the orig. ed. of the 'Key', 1872. (This criticism does not reach our use of *Coccyges* as a subordinal term, for the latter is independently formed direct from the Greek κόκκυξ, a cuckoo, not from any generic name.) I am happy to be able to defend Vieillot's *Coccyzus* on good linguistic grounds; for it is derivable direct from the classic Greek verb κοκκυζω, 'I cry 'cuckoo.'" We are therefore philologically justified, as well as canonically correct, in using *Coccyzus* and *Coccyzinæ*. I may remark, in passing, the quite gratuitous changes which have been rung upon *Coccyzus*, namely: *Coccyzon*, *Coccygius*, *Coccysus*, *Coccygus*, *Coccyzius*, *Coccygon*, *Coccyca*, *Coccyzæa*, and probably yet other forms, all of them superfluous and supererogatory.

3. *Coccyzinæ*. As to the necessity or expediency of recognizing for the American Tree Cuckoos any subfamily apart from Old World *Cuculinæ*, there may easily be two opinions. I have kept them apart in all my works, but am coming to the conclusion that they can hardly be so considered, if we duly regard the various interrelations of genera in the whole family *Cuculidæ*. The strongest character I have seen ascribed to the American forms is that adduced by Beddard, P. Z. S. 1885, p. 187, who finds the ventral pteryla double at its commencement in *Coccyzus*, *Piaya*, *Sauvothera*, and perhaps *Diplopterus*, it being there single in *Cuculus*, etc. But even Beddard brings all these forms under one subfamily, *Cuculinæ*; and Shelley, Cat. B. Brit. Mus., XIX, 1891, p. 211, finds no supergeneric difference between *Coccyzus* and *Cuculus*, though he recognizes altogether no fewer than six subfamilies of *Cuculidæ*. I should wish to be better informed than I am before pronouncing upon this case without reserve; but my present impression is, that *Coccyzinæ* must be abandoned as a subfamily, and merged in *Cuculinæ*, substantially according to Beddard's views.

4. *Neomorphinæ*. However the doubt just expressed regarding *Coccyzinae* be finally resolved, there is no question that we must recognize for the group of which *Geococcyx* is a shining example a subfamily apart from *Coccyzinae* (or *Cuculinae*) on the one hand, and from *Crotophaginae* on the other. This is the group of American Ground Cuckoos which I have for many years been calling *Saurotherinae*; but it now appears that the genus *Saurothera* does not belong to it, and that its proper name is *Neomorphinae*, derived from the name of that genus (*Neomorphus* GLOGER, 1827) which has priority over all the others which belong to this subfamily. The *Neomorphinae* are a well-marked if not yet precisely limited group, much more nearly related to the *Crotophaginae* than to any other. Thus, they possess the accessory femorocaudal muscle, which is present in none of the *Cuculinae* (or *Coccyginae*); and the ventral pteryla of each side is furcate. In these respects the *Neomorphinae*, so characteristic of America, agree with the Old World *Centropodinae* but differ therefrom notably in some other characters. The *Neomorphinae* agree with the *Crotophaginae* in most respects, but differ in their pseudobronchial instead of truly bronchial syringes, and many other particulars. The *Neomorphinae* are Ground Cuckoos, with a certain gallinaceous suggestiveness, being more or less pheasant-like in external appearance; tail of 10 rectrices, as usual in the family (not 8, as in *Crotophaginae*), long and graduated, with elongated upper coverts (approaching *Diplopterus* and *Dromococcyx* in this respect); wings short, rounded, convex, with elongate inner secondaries (not long, flat, and pointed, as in *Cuculinae* or *Coccyzinae*); feet large and strong, in adaptation to terrestrial habits (as in *Centropus*, etc., but without any peculiarity of the hind claw). With the possible or probable exception of *Carpococcyx*, which is brought under *Neomorphinae* by Shelley, though it inhabits Borneo, and is therefore unintelligible as a member of this subfamily, if it be really such, the present subfamily is exclusively American. The genera which certainly compose it are *Neomorphus*, *Geococcyx*, and *Morococcyx*; very likely *Diplopterus* and *Dromococcyx* might without violence be brought under the same head. But until we know more of the structural characters of the two last named genera, as well as of *Saurothera*, *Piaya*, and *Hyetornis*, it will hardly be safe to pronounce upon these Neotropical forms.

The times may not yet be ripe enough to do away with all the uncertainty attending the division of *Cuculidæ*; but what I regard as established is, that the A. O. U. List contains representatives of at least three subfamilies: (1) CROTOPHAGINÆ. (2) NEOMORPHINÆ. (3) CUCULINÆ. The latter may or may not be warrantably divisible into *Coccyzinae* for the American genera *Coccyzus*, etc., and *Cuculinae* proper for our waif from Asia.—ELLIOTT COUES, *Washington, D. C.*

**Broad-tailed Hummingbird in California.**—I take pleasure in recording the capture of *Selasphorus platycercus*, ♂ ad., at Oakland, Cal., on May 8, 1890, the first taken in this State. On the same date an adult male of