

These organizations cover the United States and Canada. The NEBBA is principally in New England. The EBBA covers the region between the Northeastern and the Inland, with some overlapping. The IBBA extends from the longitude of eastern Ohio to the Rocky Mountains, and the WBBA beyond the Rockies.—HAROLD B. WOOD, President-pro tem, EBBA, Harrisburg, Pa.

'A PLEA FOR THE NAME 'BLUE GROUSE'

EDITOR OF 'THE AUK':—

The aim of the A.O.U. Check-List, namely, the perpetuation of established common names and the weeding out of local or but partially established names, as well as names causing confusion, is a most commendable one. In general, I think, the Check-List has been unusually successful in this work. But let me call your attention to a most serious inconsistency in the Check-List.

Although the Check-List has regularly changed its English names to fit the names which people actually use (as in the case of Snowflake vs. Snow Bunting), it actually is trying to perpetuate seven different common names for the bird which is called Blue Grouse by the people who live with it throughout the West. These seven are Dusky, Richardson's, Fleming's, Sooty, Sitka, Sierra, and Mount Pinos Grouse. They all refer to but one bird, which is separated at present into two taxonomic species: *Dendragapus obscurus* and *Dendragapus fuliginosus*.<sup>1</sup>

So far as I have been able to ascertain, no one uses the "book names" of the Check-List except writers unfamiliar with the bird but familiar with the Check-List, or writers who must conform to some editorial policy. I hope that the Check-List will be corrected soon in order to bring the book names of the members of *Dendragapus* into line with the facts of congruity. For subspecific reference, I would suggest that the names *Dusky*, *Richardson*, etc., be added to Blue Grouse to become *Dusky Blue Grouse*, *Richardson Blue Grouse*, *Sooty Blue Grouse*, etc. The fact that we are using the same common name for the root-name of two taxonomic species is immaterial. We already do so (e.g., Eastern Bobwhite and Masked Bobwhite) elsewhere. My own guess is that the birds are but one species of two species-groups rather than two species.

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Washington

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<sup>1</sup> *D. fuliginosus* has now been united with *D. obscurus*. See the Nineteenth Supplement to the A.O.U. Check-list on page 445 of this issue.—Ed.