

## ***Certhiasomus*, a new genus of woodcreeper (Aves: Passeriformes: Dendrocolaptidae)**

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### **Abstract**

Phylogenetic analysis of the family Dendrocolaptidae (Aves: Passeriformes) indicates that the two species traditionally placed in the genus *Deconychura* are not sister taxa. *Certhiasomus*, a new genus of woodcreeper, is described for one of these species, *C. stictolaemus*.

**Key words:** *Deconychura longicauda*, *Deconychura stictolaema*, *Certhiasomus stictolaemus*, morphometric heterogeneity, phylogeny, ranking criteria

The genus *Deconychura* (Aves: Passeriformes: Dendrocolaptidae) contains two species: *D. longicauda* (Pelzeln 1868) (Long-tailed Woodcreeper), the type species (Cherrie 1891); and *D. stictolaema* (Pelzeln 1868) (Spot-throated Woodcreeper). *Deconychura longicauda* is a polytypic species (seven subspecies are currently recognized) that occurs in humid upland and floodplain forest throughout Amazonia and disjunctly in trans-Andean lowland forest from northern Colombia north to Honduras (Marantz *et al.* 2003). *Deconychura stictolaema*, three subspecies of which are currently recognized, also occurs in Amazonia but has a more limited distribution than *D. longicauda* and does not occur west of the Andes or in Central America.

Interestingly, these two species were described in different genera by the same author: Pelzeln (1868) assigned *D. longicauda* to *Dendrocincla* and *D. stictolaema* to *Sittasomus*. Pelzeln (1868) did not provide justification for placing *D. stictolaema* in *Sittasomus*, which was probably based on overall body size and proportions, but he did mention the similarity between *D. longicauda* and *Dendrocincla tyrannina*. Hellmayr (1904, 1907) noting the extreme plumage and structural similarities between *D. stictolaema* and *D. longicauda*, united them under the genus *Deconychura*, a treatment followed unanimously since then. Only Raikow's (1994) morphological phylogeny of the Dendrocolaptidae indicated that *Deconychura* might not be monophyletic. Raikow (1994) found no synapomorphies for the genus among the 36 morphological characters analyzed, and his results placed *D. longicauda* in a clade that did not include *D. stictolaema*.

As part of a project to reconstruct the species level phylogenetic relationships of the Furnariidae and Dendrocolaptidae from DNA sequences, we determined conclusively that *D. longicauda* and *D. stictolaema* are not sister taxa. Instead, *D. stictolaema* is sister to a clade composed of *D. longicauda*, *Sittasomus griseicapillus* (Vieillot 1818) (Olivaceous Woodcreeper), and the genus *Dendrocincla* (six species). We considered two taxonomic options for addressing the polyphyly of *Deconychura*: (1) merging *Dendrocincla*, *Sittasomus* and *Deconychura* into a single expanded genus, or (2) erecting a new genus for *D. stictolaema*. Because combining *Dendrocincla*, *Sittasomus*, and *Deconychura* into a single genus would result in a clade far more heterogeneous than any other genus in the Dendrocolaptidae (see below), we describe a new genus for *D. stictolaema*, as follows: