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A new look at the holotype and type locality of *Setopagis maculosa* (Todd, 1920) (Aves: Caprimulgidae), with remarks on its systematic relationships

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Abstract

Setopagis maculosa (Todd, 1920) (Aves: Caprimulgidae) was described based on a single male specimen collected by Samuel Milton Klages in French Guiana, northeastern South America. Since then, no new specimens have been collected nor have any reliable records been made, and the validity of the species has been questioned. A detailed analysis of the holotype reveals that it has unique and distinctive morphological traits that support the validity and taxonomic status of the species, which is provisionally placed in *Setopagis*. We present new information on the type locality at the time of its collection, which may shed some light on the habitat preferences of the species, and we provide details on its plumage that have been largely overlooked and that will be important for future field identification.

Key words: Caprimulgiformes, Cayenne Nightjar, Samuel M. Klages, taxonomy

Introduction

The Cayenne Nightjar *Setopagis maculosa* is one of the most enigmatic of Neotropical birds, and one of four nightjar species known exclusively from holotypes (Cleere 1998; Holyoak 2001). It was first described as *Nyctipolus maculosus* based on a single male collected by Samuel Milton Klages on 24 April 1917 at “Tamanoir, Mana River, French Guiana” (Todd 1920). Subsequently, it was included in the genus *Caprimulgus* (Peters 1940), but is now tentatively placed in *Setopagis* (Remsen *et al.* 2014). Despite intensive surveys in French Guiana, there have been only a few unconfirmed sightings, all from the region of Saül (03°37'N, 53°12'W), c.200 km south of the type locality. Because no reliable observations exist, nothing is known of its life history (Tostain *et al.* 1992; Cleere 1998; Holyoak 2001; Ingels & Pelletier 2001; Cleere & Ingels 2004a).

The validity and taxonomic status of *S. maculosa* have been questioned. Griscom & Greenway (1937) argued that it could not represent a distinct species because the holotype is not fully adult and because it closely resembles both Blackish Nightjar *Nyctipolus nigrescens* Cabanis, 1848, and Roraiman Nightjar *Setopagis whitelyi* (Salvin, 1885). Other authors however, have stressed the validity of the taxon (Ingels 2001; Cleere & Ingels 2004a).

In this paper, we present new evidence for the specific validity of *S. maculosa*, re-evaluate habitats at the type locality, and discuss its systematic relationships.

Methods

The holotype of *Setopagis maculosa* (P60854) is deposited at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History (CMNH). During visits to the CMNH (JI in Dec 1984, TVVC and VC in Mar 2012), we compared the holotype with other nightjar species in the collection. We were also given access to Klages's field notes archived at the CMNH. JI visited the type locality in search of *S. maculosa* from 4–8 Nov 2002 and again, with Nigel Cleere, from 3–7 Nov 2003. We follow the South American Classification Committee (Remsen *et al.* 2014) for nomenclature.