

## ***Alca antiqua* (Marsh, 1870), an invalid combination for a fossil auk (Alcidae)**

by Storrs L. Olson

Received 15 June 2006

The most abundant fossil bird in the early Pliocene deposits of the Yorktown Formation in North Carolina is an auk originally described by Marsh (1870) as *Catarractes antiquus*. *Catarractes* is a variant spelling of a generic name that was synonymised with *Uria* Brisson (1760), which is now used for the living murrens. Olson & Rasmussen (2001: 273) recognised that the affinities of the fossil auk lay with those of the genus *Alca* Linnaeus (1758), so they created the new combination *Alca antiqua* (Marsh, 1870). This, however, is a secondary homonym preoccupied by *Alca antiqua* Gmelin (1789), the basionym for the extant Ancient Murrelet *Synthliboramphus antiquus*, and therefore is unavailable for the fossil species. The next available name is *Australca grandis* Brodkorb (1955). Olson & Rasmussen (2001) synonymised *Australca* Brodkorb (1955) with *Alca* Linnaeus (1758). Therefore, the fossil species should now be known as:

### ***Alca grandis* (Brodkorb, 1955), new combination**

#### **Acknowledgements**

I thank Neil Adam Smith for calling this problem to my attention. The manuscript was reviewed by Richard C. Banks, Walter Bock, Steven Gregory, Pamela Rasmussen and David W. Steadman.

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Address: Department of Vertebrate Zoology, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, P.O. Box 37012, Washington DC 20013-7012, USA, e-mail: olsons@si.edu