

SHORT NOTE

A nomenclatural issue related to Lopdells' penguin *Archaeospheniscus lopdelli*

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Lopdells' penguin *Archaeospheniscus lopdelli* was described by Brian Marples (1952), who dedicated the fossil species' name to two people, "Dr. and Mrs. J.C. Lopdell."¹ This would make *lopdelli* an incorrect latinisation by Marples of the last name Lopdell into a plural genitive Latin noun, a process described in the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature (ICZN 1999) Article 31.1.2.

Tennyson *et al.* (2010) published an emendation for *lopdelli* to *lopdellorum*, noting that Marples (1952) meant to dedicate the penguin to two people, not just Dr. Lopdell. They justified this emendation by citing part of Article 33.2.1 which deals with original spellings, and they wrote that "the specific epithet *lopdelli* is an incorrect original spelling because Marples (1952) intentionally and explicitly dedicated the species to a man and a woman together."

Tennyson *et al.* (2010) are correct that *lopdellorum* would be the correct latinisation of Lopdell for two people. However, their emendation is unjustified under the Code. Article 32.5.1 states:

"If there is in the original publication itself, without recourse to any external source of information, clear evidence of an inadvertent error, such as a lapsus calami or a copyist's or printer's error, it must be corrected. Incorrect transliteration or latinization, or use of an inappropriate connecting vowel, are not to be considered inadvertent errors."

The use of *lopdelli* was an incorrect latinisation, not a *lapsus calami*, and so is not considered inadvertent. Further, Article 33.2 has more context that they do not include in their paper:

"33.2. Emendations

Any demonstrably intentional change in the original spelling of a name other than a mandatory change is an 'emendation', except as provided in Article 33.4.

33.2.1. A change in the original spelling of a name is only to be interpreted as 'demonstrably intentional' when in the work itself, or in an author's (or publisher's) corrigenda, there is an explicit statement of intention, or when both the original and the changed spelling are cited and the latter is adopted in place of the former, or when two or more names in the same work are treated in a similar way."

¹ Anne Davidson Lopdell, neé Veitch. (Te Tari Taiwhenua Internal Affairs 2024)

The “explicit statement of intention” is meant to refer only to an emendation given in the original text, or in the author’s corrigenda - not to the original use of the name. Marples (1952) offered no such emendation of *lopdelli* in his text, and so there is no demonstrably intentional change. Put another way: there can be no change by Marples in the original spelling, if the original spelling is used once only. Article 33.2.1 does not apply here. As noted in 32.2:

“The original spelling of a name is the ‘correct original spelling’, unless it is demonstrably incorrect as provided in Article 32.5.”

Because Article 32.5.1 is clear that an incorrect latinisation is not to be considered inadvertent, and because there were no other corrections by Marples in his book, *A. lopdellorum* is an unjustified emendation, and the available species name continues to be *Archaeospheniscus lopdelli*.

This latinisation error by Marples is unfortunate, as ideally the species would refer correctly to both Lopdells with a genitive plural. The Code, however, only recommends that authors should use the genitive case, not that they must:

“Recommendation 31A. Avoidance of personal names as nouns in apposition. An author who establishes a new species-group name based on a personal name should preferably form the name in the genitive case and not as a noun in apposition, in order to avoid the appearance that the species-group name is a citation of the authorship of the generic name.”

Further, Article 31.1 notes:

“A species-group name formed from a personal name may be either a noun in the genitive case, or a noun in

apposition (in the nominative case), or an adjective or participle.”

Technically, *lopdelli* could be a masculine, singular genitive noun, referring to only one Lopdell. However, if *lopdelli* is considered a well-formed masculine second declension Latin noun in apposition in the nominative plural, it does refer to both Dr John Colin Lopdell OBE and also to Mrs Anne Davidson Lopdell – the Lopdells of Lopdells’ penguin.

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