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## **The ornithology of the Baudin expedition (1800-1804)**

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## How this dissertation is organised

Chapter 1 contains a concise summary of the state of ornithology up to 1800. It discusses the broad range of private collectors, royal collections, the first museums, preservation techniques, publications, general opinion regarding ornithology and its scholarly study. The expedition itself is described in chapter 2, with the preparation in all its aspects being briefly discussed first, followed by a description of the expedition with all its landfalls and challenges; this chapter is dominated by the birds the expedition encountered. At the end of this chapter the expedition's reception in France, the dispersal of the specimens and the attention that the ornithology of the expedition has attracted in the past 215 years since the return of *Le Naturaliste* is catalogued. The first two chapters provide some background information on the findings presented in the articles, which make up the main body of this dissertation, and which constitute chapter 3. This chapter consists of a series of nine published and two unpublished papers detailing the ornithological aspects of the Baudin expedition.

Chapter 3 (articles modified to fit in style of this dissertation) first describes Baudin's previous expedition to the Caribbean between 30 September 1796 and 7 June 1798, and describes the original specimens and the specimens that are still extant in 2017. The DNA identification of the barn owl collected in Puerto Rico is also clarified and Nicolas Baudin is exonerated from accusations made by Wetherbee. The second article summarises the author's knowledge of the Baudin expedition in 2014 with many findings documented here having remained unchanged in the intervening years. A short summary of the journey is given as a table of locations visited by the expedition's bird collectors. It lists the collectors, donors and inventories, as well as the disbursement of specimens and contains suggestions for further research. All the outstanding issues from the 2014 paper have been resolved in this dissertation.

The third article commences with one of the questions raised in the second article, 'How many specimens were brought back and what could be traced?' First, the 12 documents the author could get hold of are discussed, followed by taxidermy reports made by the Paris Museum's senior taxidermist, Louis Dufresne. Taxidermy is also briefly discussed here (this topic is discussed in greater detail in the tenth article). It transpires that 1,055 specimens were brought back. Most of the specimens from *Le Naturaliste* were mounted, while only a very low number of birds from *Le Géographe* received the same attention.

The fourth article discusses the importance of the Baudin expedition for Australian ornithology. During the research for this dissertation the author located 453 specimens collected in Australia prior to 1804 that were once in European collections. The majority of these (228 specimens, 50.3 %) were specimens collected by the Baudin expedition. In article five, René Maugé's collecting activities on Timor are discussed, with special attention being paid to the type-specimens collected there. As Baudin's was the first European expedition ever to collect birds in West-Timor, it is of great importance for our knowledge of Timor at that time. In the sixth article, Jean Macé is discussed as he single-handedly provided 135 of the 1,055 specimens brought back to France by the Baudin expedition in 1804. However, although the specimens are specifically marked as originating from him, an earlier shipment of 358 specimens in 1801 makes it extremely difficult to ascertain exactly which specimens were brought back by the Baudin expedition. The seventh paper relates that Bass was the source of donations to the Baudin expedition of ethnographical material, plus both live and collected birds in November 1802. His life is briefly described along with his Pacific journey in 1801-1802.

The eighth article discusses the illustration made by Charles-Alexandre Lesueur at St Peter Island, off the Eyre Peninsula, South Australia, and its suggested identification as a Scrubbird

/ Bristlebird. The ninth article discusses the history of the MNHN collection from 1793 to 1825. When analysing the article, one can see how important the 1800-1804 Baudin expedition was in the museum's history. The museum played a key role and today still contains the largest number of surviving specimens. The article also clearly demonstrates how many specimens left the museum after their initial arrival: 1,055 specimens originally entered the collection, but only 403 remained by 1 January 1809, five years later.

The tenth article is published in this dissertation for the first time and it discusses taxidermy style. Five birds from the 1796-98 expedition into the Caribbean and 10 birds from the 1800-1804 voyage were subjected to x-ray computed tomography. The various taxidermy workshops where these birds were handled are noted in this article, as are the difficulties in getting the right x-ray settings to show either the presence of arsenic or the correct skeleton parts and wiring. For the final article, the publication by Bonnemains & Chappuis of 1985 and some additional ornithological information are discussed. This article provides information on everything that was known on the 50 Lesueur drawings and the 140 pages of ornithological material written by François Péron up until that time. Revised insights and further in-depth research uncovered several omissions in the 1985 paper and these findings aim to provide clarity.

Chapter 4 contains some general conclusions based on the research presented in the previous chapters and is followed by the Appendices in chapter 5. Appendix 1 describes all known birds collected by the Baudin expedition. Appendix 2 contains a list of birds kept in the Vienna Museum which have a probable Baudin origin. Appendix 3 lists all the collectors and donors of birds to the expedition.