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A historical Australasian Shoveler *Spatula rhynchotis* specimen from southern South America

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Australasian Shoveler *Spatula rhynchotis* is endemic to Australia and New Zealand (Johnsgard 1978, Delacour 1973, Sibley & Monroe 1990, Fullagar 2010). We present what appears to be the first record of the species away from Australasia, a specimen at the Museu Nacional, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The specimen is a male shoveler identified by us as a breeding-plumage drake *S. rhynchotis* (Fig. 1). Its catalogue number is MN 19034, and the specimen has been present at Museu Nacional since at least 1897 (Miranda-Ribeiro 1928). The original label reads '♂ *Anas platalea* / Iris = brun obscur / Rep-Arg. = Entre Rios' with '*Anas cayennensis*' written on a second, more recent, label (Fig. 2). The name '*Anas cayennensis*' seems to have been taken by Miranda-Ribeiro from Buffon, but has never been made available for any wildfowl species (Salvadori 1895). Measurements taken by us were: bill length 57 mm (from the base of the feathers to the tip of the culmen); bill width 29 mm (at the widest point); and wing length 235 mm (flattened, from the carpal joint to the tip of the longest primary).

Our identification of the specimen as a male Australasian Shoveler is based on depictions of *S. rhynchotis* in the literature (e.g. Merne 1974, Scott 1977, Madge & Burn 1988, Marchant & Higgins 1990, Kear 1991, Johnsgard 1992, Todd 1996, Ogilvie & Young 1998), as well as information provided by D. M. Teixeira, curator of birds at Museu Nacional, who checked the specimen against a series housed at the Natural History Museum, Tring, in February 1993.

The brown iris mentioned on the label is not typical of drake Australian Shoveler in this plumage, when it is usually yellow (Marchant & Higgins 1990: 1346). However, the same authors mentioned that a 'captive breeding male had brown (121B) iris', in reference to Smithe's (1975) colour guide.

The specimen's immaculate plumage, with its well-defined white crescentic face patches, solid bluish-green glossed head, long unclipped wings, and the absence of corneous callosities on the soles of its feet suggest a wild bird rather than an escapee or an imported bird. Referring to the early 20th century, Phillips (1986) stated that individuals of the species 'have never been imported into Europe or America'.

As to the possibility of the specimen being a hybrid involving any of Northern Shoveler *S. clypeata*, Blue-winged Teal *S. discors*, Cinnamon Teal *S. cyanoptera* and Red Shoveler *S. platalea* (see McCarthy 2006), we do not have any evidence to support such a hypothesis, which appears discountable based on the available literature (e.g. Childs 1952, Harrison & Harrison 1959, 1963, 1965, Bolen 1979, McCarthy 2006). The main hybrid pitfall is Northern Shoveler × Blue-winged Teal, which closely recalls Australasian Shoveler and can also show brown irides. However, the bold black crescent-shaped markings on the breast are more indicative of Australasian Shoveler (usually fainter in hybrids) and similar markings are also present on the flanks and belly (often more streak-like in hybrids), while bill shape is also closer to Australasian Shoveler (S. Reeber *in litt.* 2017).

As to its provenance, we have located specimens of various other species including Fulvous Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna bicolor* (MN 21796), Tropical Parula *Parula pitaiayumi*



Figure 1 (above). Specimen of breeding-plumaged male Australasian Shoveler *Anas rhynchos* in lateral, dorsal and ventral views, deposited at Museu Nacional (MN 19034), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and labelled as having been collected in Entre Rios province, Argentina (Marco A. Crozariol)



Figure 2 (left). Specimen labels, showing the earlier erroneous identifications of '*Anas cayennensis*' and '*Anas platalea*'. The green label displays the specimen's catalogue number at Museu Nacional (MN 19034). (Marco A. Crozariol)

(MN 14492) and Saffron-cowled Blackbird *Xanthopsar flavus* (MN 15684) also collected in 'Entre Rios', apparently around 1877, as some labels indicate, and all of them deposited at Museu Nacional by October 1897 (Miranda-Ribeiro 1928). Their labels are in the same handwriting as that attached to the Australasian Shoveler.

To our knowledge this is the first record of the species outside Australasia, rather than a hybrid with *A. clypeata* or any of the other above-mentioned species, and is potentially the first record for Argentina (Roesler & Táboas 2016) and South America (Remsen *et al.* 2017).

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