

Text extracted from Gill B.J.; Bell, B.D.; Chambers, G.K.; Medway, D.G.; Palma, R.L.; Scofield, R.P.; Tennyson, A.J.D.; Worthy, T.H. 2010. *Checklist of the birds of New Zealand, Norfolk and Macquarie Islands, and the Ross Dependency, Antarctica*. 4th edition. Wellington, Te Papa Press and Ornithological Society of New Zealand. Pages 275-276.

Order PASSERIFORMES: Passerine (Perching) Birds

See Christidis & Boles (2008) for a review of recent studies relevant to the higher-level systematics of the passerine birds.

Suborder ACANTHISITTI: New Zealand Wrens

Sibley *et al.* (1982) confirmed the primitive nature of the Acanthisittidae among passerines and proposed separating them as the infraorder Acanthisittides. Recent molecular work by Ericson *et al.* (2002) and Barker *et al.* (2004) went further, showing that New Zealand wrens are the basal member of the passerine clade and the sister-taxon to all other passerines. We therefore place them in their own suborder (Acanthisitti) rather than in the suboscines (suborder Tyranni or Oligomyodi).

Family ACANTHISITTIDAE Sundevall: New Zealand Wrens

Acanthisittinae Sundevall, 1872: *Methodi Naturalis Avium Tentamen 1*: 47 – Type genus *Acanthisitta* Lafresnaye, 1842.

Order of species follows Checklist Committee (1990), except that the North Island form of *Pachyplichas* is placed before the South Island form. *Dendroscansor* is placed last in the sequence as it seems to be a highly modified form.

Genus *Acanthisitta* Lafresnaye

Acanthisitta Lafresnaye, 1842: *Mag. Zool., Paris* (ser. 2) 4: 1, pl. 27 – Type species (by monotypy) *Acanthisitta tenuirostris* Lafresnaye = *Acanthisitta chloris chloris* (Sparrrman).

Acanthisittositta Buller, 1888: *History of the Birds of N.Z.*, 2nd edition 1: 113. Unjustified emendation.

Chlorisitta Mathews, 1935: *Bull. Brit. Ornith. Club* 55: 113 – Type species (by original designation) *Sitta chloris* Sparrrman = *Acanthisitta chloris chloris* (Sparrrman).

***Acanthisitta chloris* (Sparrrman)**

Rifleman

New Zealand. Originally occurred widely in North and South Islands, Stewart Island / Rakiura, and outliers. Range reduced following settlement mainly to residual forests, although (unlike *Xenicus* spp.) capable of adapting to exotic vegetation and occurs widely in commercial pine plantations. Common in *Nothofagus* forests of mountainous areas of both main islands.

***Acanthisitta chloris granti* Mathews & Iredale**

North Island Rifleman

Acanthisitta chloris granti Mathews & Iredale, 1913: *Ibis* 1 (10th ser.): 432 – North Island.

Chlorisitta chloris granti (Mathews & Iredale); Mathews 1935, *Bull. Brit. Ornith. Club* 55: 113.

North Island, Great Barrier (Aotea) and Hauturu / Little Barrier Islands. Widespread in forests of central and southern North Island, but signs of a recent range reduction in the west (Robertson, C. *et al.* 2007). In Northland restricted to a small relict population recently discovered at Warawara Forest, north of Hokianga Harbour (Pierce 1994). Holocene fossils have been found at Cape Reinga (Gill 1996b), Waitomo and Hawke's Bay.

***Acanthisitta chloris chloris* (Sparrrman)**

South Island Rifleman

Sitta Chloris Sparrrman, 1787: *Mus. Carlsonianum* 2: no XXXIII, pl. 33 – “Cape of Good Hope”, error for Queen Charlotte Sound, Marlborough (*vide* Oliver 1955, *New Zealand Birds*, 2nd edition: 449).

Motacilla citrina Gmelin, 1789: *Syst. Nat., 13th edition* 1(2): 979. Based on the “Citrine Warbler” of Latham 1783, *Gen. Synop. Birds* 2: 464 – “Nova Seelandia”, restricted to Dusky Sound, Fiordland (*vide* Oliver 1955, *New Zealand Birds*, 2nd edition: 451).

Sylvia citrina (Gmelin); Latham 1790, *Index Ornith.* 2: 529.

Sitta punctata Quoy & Gaimard, 1830: *in* Dumont d'Urville, *Voyage Astrolabe Zool. 1*: 221 – Tasman Bay.

Acanthisitta punctata (Quoy & Gaimard); G.R. Gray 1841, *List Gen. Birds* (2nd edition) *Appendix*: 6.

Acanthisitta tenuirostris Lafresnaye, 1841: *Rev. de Zool., Paris* 4: 242 – New Zealand.

Acanthisitta citrina (Gmelin); G.R. Gray 1841, *List Gen. Birds* (2nd edition) *Appendix*: 6.
Acanthisitta tenuirostris (Lafresnaye); Lafresnaye 1842, *Mag. Zool., Paris* (ser. 2) 4: 1, pl. 27.
Motacilla citrinella J.R. Forster, 1844: in M.H.C. Lichtenstein, *Descrip. Animalium*: 89 – South Island.
Acanthisitta punctata (Quoy & Gaimard); Ellman 1861, *Zoologist* 19: 7466.
Acanthisitta chloris (Sparrman); G.R. Gray 1862, *Ibis* 4: 219.
Acanthisitta chloris (Sparrman); Buller 1888, *History of the Birds of N.Z.*, 2nd edition 1: 113.
Acanthisitta citrina (Gmelin); Buller 1905, *Suppl. Birds N.Z.* 2: 103.
Acanthisitta chloris chloris (Sparrman); Mathews & Iredale 1913, *Ibis* 1 (10th ser.): 431.
Chlorisitta chloris chloris (Sparrman); Mathews 1935, *Bull. Brit. Ornith. Club* 55: 113.
Acanthisitta chloris citrina (Gmelin); Oliver 1955, *New Zealand Birds*, 2nd edition: 451.

Widespread from Nelson and Marlborough to Fiordland; also Stewart Island / Rakiura and outliers. Holocene fossils have been found in cave sites in north-west Nelson, Punakaiki and North Canterbury (e.g. Worthy 1993a, Worthy & Holdaway 1995).