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Abstracts

## SHORT COMMUNICATIONS

### HISTORIC GENETIC STRUCTURING AND PARAPHYLY WITHIN THE GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE

JEFFREY M. DACOSTA<sup>1,3</sup>, WALTER WEHTJE<sup>2</sup>, AND JOHN KLICKA<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Barrick Museum of Natural History, University of Nevada-Las Vegas, 4505 Maryland Parkway, Box 454012, Las Vegas, NV 89154*

<sup>2</sup>*Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, University of Missouri-Columbia, 302 Anheuser-Busch Natural Resources Building, Columbia, MO 65211*

<sup>3</sup>Present address: Department of Biology, Boston University, 5 Cummington Street, Boston, MA 02215. E-mail: [dacostaj@bu.edu](mailto:dacostaj@bu.edu)

*Abstract.* The Great-tailed Grackle (*Quiscalus mexicanus*) and Boat-tailed Grackle (*Q. major*) are sister species that have expanded their ranges during historical times. This expansion has created an area of sympatry between these species in Texas and Louisiana, and between distinctive Great-tailed Grackle subspecies in the southwestern United States and northern Mexico. We investigated the evolutionary histories of both species using mitochondrial DNA sequence data and modern phylogenetic methods. Our results reveal genetic structure within Great-tailed, but not Boat-tailed Grackles. Great-tailed Grackles are separated into two clades, but range expansion in the north has led to secondary contact between them. Boat-tailed Grackles are monophyletic and are embedded within the Great-tailed Grackle assemblage, rendering the latter paraphyletic. These results reveal a complex phylogeographic pattern caused by recent range expansion and secondary contact of once allopatric units.

*Key words:* grackle, mitochondrial DNA, paraphyly, phylogeography, *Quiscalus*, range expansion