

CAECILIIDAE IN AMPHIBIA AND INSECTA (PSOCOPTERA):
ALTERNATIVE PROPOSALS TO REMOVE THE HOMONYMY.

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It is strange that this problem of family-group name homonymy has been known for so long (since 1929) without definitive resolution, in view of the repeated efforts by entomologists to remove the homonymy.

We thus support enthusiastically this proposal to dispose of the problem officially and definitively. Our only suggestion is that the desirability be considered of keeping the changed family name as closely corresponding to the spelling of its type genus as possible, not only to promote ease of association but also to minimise implication of existence of a nominal type genus that in fact does not exist.

That is to say, the nominal type-genera of the two families *are* different, as they would have to be: *Caecilia* of amphibians, *Caecilius* of insects. It would be useful for the changed family name to reflect the difference. Additionally, there is no nominal genus *Caecilionis* (or *-us*, or *-a*), which is to some extent implied by a rendition of the changed family name as CAECILIONIDAE, and proposal of that generic name in the future, for any group of animals, would forever be at least strongly contraindicated, although sure to be unwitting since the name would not be listed in any index as occupied.

For these reasons we suggest that a family name change of clearer and more proper correlation with type genus than CAECILIONIDAE, based on *Caecilius*, would be CAECILIAIDAE, based on *Caecilia*. That alternative would leave the automatically properly formed and familiar name CAECILIIDAE for the insect family, and since that family is large and widely distributed there is no reason on grounds of 'significance' to seek to preserve the familiar family name for the amphibian group rather than the insect group. Furthermore, a family name created from the entire name *Caecilia* is much more euphonious than one from *Caecilius* (viz., CAECILIUSIDAE).

Finally, the anglicized vernacular for members of the insect family would be spared the necessity of rendition as 'caecilionids', remaining as 'caeciliids', while the members of the amphibian family would need only an insignificant change in their vernacular, viz. 'caeciliaids'. In this context it might be wished that Gray's original orthography (CAECILIADAE, hence 'caeciliads') be accepted as correct by use of the plenary powers of the Commission, as a uniquely condoned exception to Art. 29 of the Code.

Assuming that such an exception would never be approved, we accordingly suggest that as an alternative to the previous proposal number (1) that the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature use its plenary powers to rule that the stem of *Caecilia* Linnaeus, 1758, for the purposes of Art. 29, is *Caecilia*, thereby creating for it the family name CAECILIAIDAE. If approved, the original proposals under headings number (2) and (3) would remain with our endorsement, but those under heading (4), replacement of names on the Official List of Family-Group Names in Zoology, would have to be changed as follows:

- (a) CAECILIIDAE (ex CAECILIINI) Kolbe, 1880 (type genus *Caecilius* Curtis, 1837); and
- (b) CAECILIAIDAE (ex CAECILIADAE) Gray, 1825 (type genus *Caecilia* Linnaeus, 1758).

Likewise the proposal number (5) would be altered to read:

to place the family-group name CAECILIADAE Gray, 1825 (an incorrect original spelling of CAECILIAIDAE through the ruling under the plenary powers in (1) above) on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Family-Group Names in Zoology.



Smith, Hobart M. and Polhemus, John T. 1984. "Caecilidae in amphibia and insecta (Psocoptera): alternative proposals to remove the homonymy. Z. N. (S.) 2333." *The Bulletin of zoological nomenclature* 41, 108–109.

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