

Case 2616

ICHTHYOPHIIDAE Taylor, 1968 (Amphibia, Gymnophiona): proposed conservation

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Abstract. The purpose of this application is the conservation of the caecilian family-group name ICHTHYOPHIIDAE Taylor, 1968, which is threatened by the unused senior objective synonym EPICRIIDAE Fitzinger, 1843.

1. Fitzinger (1826, p. 36) erected the genus *Ichthyophis*, containing *Caecilia glutinosa* Linnaeus, 1758 (p. 299) and a new species from Java. His later (p. 63) description of the Javanese species, there named *I. hasseltii*, stated 'M. Hasselt's I. Ex Asia, Insula Java'. *I. hasseltii* is a nomen nudum (see Taylor, 1960, pp. 39–40), so that *C. glutinosa* is by monotypy the type species of *Ichthyophis*. The following year Boie (1827, col. 565) described the species *Coecilia* [sic] *hypocyana* and attributed this species name to Van Hasselt, who had collected the type material in Java. It is clear that Fitzinger's *I. hasseltii* was based on this same material, but that Boie's description gives the available name (see Taylor, 1968, pp. 94–97).

2. Wagler (1828, col. 742) erected and described the genus *Epicrium* as a replacement name for *Ichthyophis*, which he erroneously considered to be a nomen nudum. He listed *C. hypocyana* Boie, 1827 and included a description of the species *Epicrium hasseltii*. Both Cantor (1847, p. 1058) and Gray (1850, p. 60), apparently independently, correctly treated *Epicrium* Wagler, 1828, as a junior synonym of *Ichthyophis* Fitzinger, 1826 and considered the species names *hasseltii* and *hypocyana* to be junior subjective synonyms of *glutinosus*. *Epicrium* has not been used as a valid name since 1864 (Günther, 1864, p. 441), and by Article 67h of the Code has the same type species as *Ichthyophis*, namely *C. glutinosa*.

3. Taylor (1965, p. 261) resurrected *Ichthyophis hypocyaneus* [sic] (Van Hasselt) from the synonymy of *I. glutinosus* (Linnaeus, 1758). Hoogmoed (in Frost, 1985, p. 634) pointed out that authorship of the species name *hypocyaneus* (correctly *hypocyana*) must be attributed to Boie (1827) because he was the first to describe it. Taylor (1968, pp. 47–48) curiously listed both '*Caecilia glutinosus* Linnaeus' and then '*Ichthyophis hasseltii* (= *Coecilia hypocyanea* van Hasselt)' as the type species of *Ichthyophis*. Wake (in Frost, 1985, p. 632) wrongly listed *Coecilia hypocyanea* as the type of the genus *Ichthyophis*. However, as already stated, because *C. glutinosa* was the only valid species name listed in Fitzinger's description of *Ichthyophis*, it must be the type species by original monotypy.

4. The family EPICRIA was listed by Fitzinger (1843, p. 34) in his *Systema Reptilium*, founded on *Epicrium* Wagler, 1828. This family-group name, like *Epicrium*, has until recently been uniformly ignored by all workers on caecilians, and, until 1968, only a

single family CAECILIIDAE Gray, 1825 (now emended to CAECILIAIDAE Rafinesque Schmaltz, 1814 in Opinion 1462; BZN 44: 263–264) was recognised.

5. The family ICHTHYOPHIIDAE was described by Taylor (1968, p. 46–47) founded on *Ichthyophis* Fitzinger, 1826. Since 1968 Taylor's classification has been widely accepted and referred to in the literature. An incomplete survey shows that this family-group name has been referenced in at least 50 works, including the two most important recent treatises on amphibian biology and systematics (Duellman & Trueb (1986) and Frost (1985)).

6. Dubois (1984, p. 113) claimed that EPICRIIDAE Fitzinger, 1843 is a senior synonym of ICHTHYOPHIIDAE Taylor, 1968 and, following the Principle of Priority, must replace the latter name.

7. We strongly believe that the replacement of ICHTHYOPHIIDAE with EPICRIIDAE should be suppressed, primarily because we think it desirable and in the spirit of the Code that family-group names should, where possible, be based on valid generic names, and secondarily because of the confusion that would result from the replacement of a name that has gained general acceptance by an unused one, despite Article 40a(i) of the Code. In order to eradicate EPICRIIDAE it is necessary to suppress *Epicrium*, even though it is a junior objective synonym.

8. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary powers to suppress the name *Epicrium* Wagler, 1828 for the purposes of the Principle of Priority but not for those of the Principle of Homonymy;
- (2) to place on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology the name *Ichthyophis* Fitzinger, 1826 (gender: masculine), type species by monotypy *Caecilia glutinosa* Linnaeus, 1758;
- (3) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name *glutinosa* Linnaeus, 1758, as published in the binomen *Caecilia glutinosa* (specific name of the type species of *Ichthyophis* Fitzinger, 1826);
- (4) to place on the Official List of Family-Group Names in Zoology the name ICHTHYOPHIIDAE Taylor, 1968 (type genus *Ichthyophis* Fitzinger, 1826);
- (5) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Generic Names in Zoology the name *Epicrium* Wagler, 1828, as suppressed in (1) above;
- (6) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Family-Group Names in Zoology the name EPICRIIDAE (published as 'Epicria') Fitzinger, 1843 (type genus *Epicrium* Wagler, 1828), (invalid because the name of the type genus has been suppressed in (1) above).

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