

REMARKS ON THE NAMES OF FAMILIES AND HIGHER TAXA IN SPIDERS

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ABSTRACT

The following names for suprageneric taxa are discussed, and for some of them an indication of their status is given: *Dionycha*, *Trionycha*, *Dionychae*, *Trionychae*, *Dionychi*, *Trionychi*, *Hypochilina*, *Hypochilomorphae*, *Dipneumonina*, *Dipneumonomorphae*, *Quadrostiatae*, *Quadrostiati*, *Araneae*, *Aranei*, *Araneida*, *Araneidae*, *Argiopidae*, *Linyphiidae*, *Micryphantidae*, *Erigonidae*, *Scytodidae*, *Sparassidae*, *Eurparassidae*, *Amaurobiidae*, *Ciniflonidae*, *Drassidae*, *Drassodidae*, and *Gnaphosidae*.

INTRODUCTION

In the course of preparing the Supplement to my 1948 work, the Spiders of Connecticut, it has been necessary to take into account various name changes. While most of these concern generic and specific names there are a few instances where the names of higher taxa are involved. The possibility that I might have to consider changing these names is occasioned by the appearance since 1948 of two large contributions by Petrunkevitch (1955, 1958), and of course the great *Bibliographia Araneorum* of Bonnet. I find myself in a position somewhat analogous to that in which Bonnet found himself, which necessitated his publishing a whole series of notes, "Difficultés de Nomenclature chez les Aranéides," or with a similar title.

THE ENDINGS OF THE NAMES OF SUPERFAMILIES AND OTHER HIGHER TAXA.

In 1955 Petrunkevitch listed a number of names of superfamilies with the comment that he had "corrected" the spelling so that they would end in -oidea. As a matter of fact this ending for superfamilies had already been used by Berland (1932), Bristowe (1938), myself (1948), and Gertsch (1949). I had used this ending to conform with Section 110 of the Banks and Caudell Entomological Code, and now the most recent edition of the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature (ICZN) recommends it.

Petrunkevitch also changed the endings of the names of some still higher taxa. What in 1928 he had called the *Dionycha* and *Trionycha* (Latin, neuter plural ending), became *Dionychae* and *Trionychae* (feminine plural ending) in 1933, and *Dionychi* and *Trionychi* (masculine plural ending) in 1955. The *Hypochilomorphae*, *Dipneumonomorphae* and *Quadrostiatae*, among others of 1933 became the *Hypochilina*, *Dipneumonia*, and *Quadrostiati* of 1958. I am unable to suggest an explanation of all these changes.

Although the Order name Araneae had been in use for more than a century it was changed by Petrunkevitch (1958) to Aranei, and this orthography has also been used by Chrysanthus, Proszynski, and Thaler. Undoubtedly they reasoned that the name Araneae being the Latin plural for Linnaeus' *Aranea* (=spider) it would have to be supplanted by the plural form for the masculine *Araneus* after the legalizing of the Clerkian name in 1948. However, since the ICZN does not deal with the names of higher categories there is nothing that requires such a change, or that indicates how the names of Orders are to be formed.

ARANEAE—ARANEIDA

For many workers this omission is of no concern because they, especially the French (except Simon who used Araneae) prefer the orthography Araneida. But this then would appear to come in conflict with the family name Araneidae, and on this account Bonnet rejects Araneidae and prefers Argiopidae. Levi (1968:320) states "Bonnet, in his authoritative *Bibliographia Araneorum* reasoned that the name Araneidae is so similar to the name of the Order Araneae as to create confusion." That the confusion is with Araneida (not Araneae) can be seen from the following quotation from Bonnet's work (1955:700): "en effet c'est *Araneidae* (ainsi que certains auteurs l'ont fait) qu'aurait dû normalement s'appeler cette famille; mais cela aurait créé une grande confusion avec tout l'ordre des *Araneidae* [sic]." This very confusion was undoubtedly responsible for the misspelling of the last word, since he meant, of course, *Araneida*!

While Levi (1968:320) correctly indicated that Latreille's Araneides and Leach's Araneadae can be considered as family names it should be pointed out that these two writers included *all* spiders in one family, so that the name was really used by them in an Order sense. The taxon family in a modern sense had not yet come into use.

MICRYPHANTIDAE—ERIGONIDAE

Araneologists are still not in agreement as to which name should be used for a very large family of small spiders, and which is by some workers considered merely as a subfamily of the Linyphiidae. Locket and Millidge (1953) have given reasons why Micryphantidae may be questionable from the point of view of taxonomy, a matter to which I had briefly referred in my 1943 paper. Platnick and Levi (1973) discuss it further. Petrunkevitch had used Erigonidae in 1939 and 1958, but Micryphantidae in 1933, 1942, and 1955. In this latter paper the name was correctly credited to Bertkau, though the date should have been given, not as 1885, but 1872. Further, Petrunkevitch gave Erigonidae as a synonym "(ex: Erigoninae Simon 1926)." In the 1958 paper he stated his reasons for changing, and these were not based on taxonomy, but were purely nomenclatorial. The following remarks concern that aspect.

On page 148 of the 1958 paper appears the following: "Family Erigonidae Walck. 1837 Nom correct. pro Erigonides (Latin given by Walck. himself on p. 345 of vol. II) (=Micryphantidae)." In the first place the date of Walckenaer's *Histoire Naturelle des Insectes Aptères*, volume II has long been known to be 1841, not 1837. In the second place the correction in spelling is not from the orthography "Erigonides" but from "Erigonae." The orthographic form "Erigonides" was used not for family but for race. In a footnote on page 375 Petrunkevitch has these data correctly given, and then states that he prefers Erigonidae over the name Micryphantidae because of page priority, the latter

appearing on page 348, but the former on page 345. The reader is given to understand that Walckenaer was using the two terms for members of what Petrunkevitch considers the same family.

Now if one analyzes Walckenaer's work one finds that he included 36 species in the genus *Argus*, and that these were arranged in eight "races," which in turn were placed in three "familles," viz., the Erigonae, the Micryphantes, and the Melicerides. Quite obviously the terms "race" and "famille" are meant for subgeneric taxa! That this is so can also be seen by the fact that he included his Famille Epeirides, his Famille Theridionides, and his Famille Linyphides as groups within the genus *Linyphia*, while his genus *Epeira* contains eight families. A selection of familiar species from this genus (with their currently accepted names) include: *Araneus diadematus* in the Family Ovalaires; *A. cucurbitinus* in the Fam. Inclinees; *Nephila clavipes* in the Fam. Elongatae; *Argiope aurantia* in the Fam. Decoratae; *Acanthepeira stellata* in the Fam. Encarpatae; *Wixia ectypa* in the Fam. Triangularae gibbosae; and *Verrucosa arenata* in the Fam. Irregulares. Still another indication that Walckenaer was not using his "Famille" in the sense that we understand "Family" is that the same names were used in more than one place. For example, besides putting the Fam. Epeirides in *Linyphia* he also put it in the genus *Plectana*, and has a Fam. Ovatae in *Theridion*, one in *Linyphia*, and another in *Epeira*!

I believe it is clear that if the name Erigonidae is to be used it should certainly not be credited to Walckenaer. There is no more reason to accept his name for this family than to accept his Fam. Saltatoriae, which appears under the genus *Attus*, or his Sparassoides under *Olios*, or his Clubionides under *Sparassus*. The spiders he placed in *Clubiona* are not included in his Fam. Clubionides. To be consistent, since he credited Walckenaer with the name Erigonidae, Petrunkevitch should have also credited Walckenaer with the family names Salticidae, Sparassidae, Clubionidae, and Linyphiidae! The latter name he had first (1955) credited to Dahl 1913, then later (1958) to Blackwall 1861. The name *does* go back to Blackwall, but to an 1859 paper. That he had known of the peculiarities of Walckenaer's system is indicated by the fact that in his 1955 paper he commented on this, and included a footnote on page 135 discussing the way in which DeGeer treated the term family, and concluded with the remark "Walckenaer followed this same principle."

I had previously (1938) stated that the name Erigonidae dated from Gerhardt 1923. But Bonnet (1957:2913) correctly indicated that the name should actually be credited to Simon 1884. This would be in accordance with Article 36 of the ICZN, since Simon had used the term "Section Erigonini" for a taxon quite clearly in the family group category. Bonnet conceded that the name Micryphantidae might have priority over Erigonidae, but nowhere in his extensive work is there mention of Walckenaer's terms Erigonae and Erigonides.

THE USE OF MIHI. SPARASSIDAE-EUSPARASSIDAE

It was the common habit of many workers to include the word "mihi" after names which they themselves had introduced in nomenclature. Sometimes this word was used in error, particularly by Bertkau in 1878, as I have already pointed out (1938:638). Bonnet called attention to this (1958:4037) in connection with the name Scytodidae, expressing concern and wonderment that Bertkau "se soit attribué la création d'une famille qui existait déjà depuis quatorze ans." In actual fact the name was introduced (by Blackwall) not 14, but 26 years earlier. Bertkau also appended "mihi" to Sparassidae. In this connection Bonnet remarked (1958:4096), "Il est étrange que Bertkau s'attribue la paternité du

nom de cette famille que Simon avait créé quatre ans plus tôt et que Kaston n'ait pas repéré la citation originale de Simon." But in *this* case Bertkau was perfectly justified, for as I have shown, he used the name for the first time not 1878, as Bonnet and also Petrunkevitch (1955:146) imply, but in 1872, two years before Simon used it. And contrary to Bonnet's statement I had not overlooked Simon's contribution, but supplied a lengthy discussion (1938:638).

For workers who consider *Sparassus* a synonym of *Eusparassus* the family name Eusparassidae would be proper, and Bonnet (1956:1835) credits this latter name to Gravely 1931. But in the title of his paper Gravely used Sparassidae, and where in the paper proper he *did* use Eusparassidae it was credited to Petrunkevitch 1928, not to himself. Petrunkevitch (1958) credits the name to himself but as of 1939. Presumably this refers to its use for family rather than subfamily) status. However, according to Platnick and Levi (1973) credit should go to Jarvi 1912, and not to Caporiacco as I had erroneously indicated in 1943.

AMAUROBIIDAE—CINIFLONIDAE

Petrunkevitch (1955:140) credits the name Amaurobiidae to C. L. Koch 1868. Since C. L. Koch died in 1857 the latter's son, L. Koch, must have been meant. Yet reference to L. Koch's 1868 paper reveals no mention of the name Amaurobiidae, though the name Ciniflonidae does appear. This kind of *lapsus* as well as numerous other kinds abound in the writings of Petrunkevitch, and Bonnet (1953:156), in attempting an explanation of the many errors by this author assumed it likely that careless clerical assistants were to blame. In Petrunkevitch's 1955 and 1958 papers very many of the names were credited to the wrong authors, or were given with incorrect dates. Although it was Bertkau who in 1878 first used the name Amaurobiidae, Bonnet is correct in crediting authorship to Thorell who in 1870 first used the name for a family group (Amaurobiinae). Whether we should use Amaurobiidae or Ciniflonidae depends on the status of the genus name. Besides my own comments (1943:765) additional remarks have been published by Bonnet (1955:272), Cloudsley-Thompson (1957:135), and Kraus (1962). Levi and Kraus (1964), in the interest of continuing stability have requested the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature to suppress *Ciniflo* and Ciniflonidae, and to place *Amaurobius* and Amaurobiidae on the Official Indices of Generic and Family Names in Zoology. As pointed out by Platnick and Levi (1973) "existing usage [by the majority of workers] (Amaurobiidae) is to be maintained until the decision of the Commission is published."

DRASSIDAE—DRASSODIDAE—GNAPHOSIDAE

Petrunkevitch (1955, 1958) continued his rejection of the name Gnaphosidae, and even dates the name Drassodidae from his own usage of 1942. Not only was Drassodidae first used by Berland in 1932, but despite the lengthy discussion given by Bonnet (1956:1554) the reasons against its use as a substitute for Drassidae are just as valid today as when I previously discussed the matter (1943:766, 1948:341). Gnaphosidae is the valid name and has many years of usage going back to 1898.

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