

# The never ending story of Schiffermüller's names – a long evaded nomenclatural issue of pressing urgency and a special case for the ICZN (Insecta: Lepidoptera)

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## Abstract

Ignaz Schiffermüller's classical work on the Lepidoptera of Vienna district (s.l.) containing many new taxa named therein is one of the most important contributions to European lepidopterology published in the second half of the 18th century and regrettably a subject to never ending misinterpretations. The present paper sums up the highlights of the recent history and proposes the way leading to the stabilisation of Schiffermüller's names and zoological nomenclature.

## Zusammenfassung

Ignaz Schiffermüllers klassisches Werk über die Lepidoptera der Wiener Gegend mit einer großen Anzahl neu beschriebener Taxa darin, ist einer der wichtigsten Beiträge zur europäischen Lepidopterologie, der in der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts publiziert worden ist, und bedauerlicherweise ein Gegenstand für nie endenwollende Missinterpretationen. Die vorliegende Arbeit fasst die Höhepunkte der jüngsten Geschichte zusammen und schlägt einen Weg vor, der zur Stabilisierung von Schiffermüllers Namen und der zoologischen Nomenklatur führt.

**Key words:** zoological nomenclature, original descriptions, taxonomic history, Ignaz Schiffermüller (1727 – 1806), Opinions 516 & 1134, Lepidoptera.

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## Introduction

Over 12 years ago, during my visit of the Natural History Museum (BMNH, London), my good friend A. Wakeham-Dawson, at that time the Executive Secretary of the ICZN, and I met to a working lunch in South Kensington. During the lunch somehow or other we arrived at the case of the names proposed by Ignaz Schiffermüller (1727 – 1806). After lunch, back at the Museum, in the ICZN offices, the ICZN Case 3241 was soon born. Much later, J. Belicek (Canada) approached the ICZN with a query regarding Schiffermüller's names; I have subsequently invited him to join my project, the ICZN Case 3241 (KUDRNA & BELICEK 2005). Regrettably

A. Wakeham-Dawson left unexpected the ICZN before the aforementioned study could have been completed. Since the submission of the Case 3241 to his successor almost 10 years ago, no progress has been made. Neither has the Case 3241 been put forward to the Commissioners vote, nor was the short Official Correction Request regarding the ICZN Opinion 516 based on the Case 3241, submitted in the autumn of 2013, decided and published by the ICZN. The purpose of the present paper is to revoke the case of Schiffermüller's names for the sake of stabilisation of zoological nomenclature, the declared primary aim of the Code and the ICZN.

### **The “Ankündigung” and the “Wiener Verzeichnis”**

Not later than on 11<sup>th</sup> September 1775 an unknown small number of copies of an anonymous book on the Lepidoptera bearing the (provisional?) title “Ankündigung eines systematischen Werkes von den Schmetterlingen der Wienergegend” was published in Wien (Vienna: Austria). The “Ankündigung eines systematischen Werkes von den Schmetterlingen der Wienergegend” is extremely rare and only a few copies are now known to exist (KUDRNA & BELICEK 2005). In the following year, 1776, the rest of the run of the same work bearing the full title “Systematisches Verzeichniß der Schmetterlinge der Wienergegend” appeared and became later known as the “Wiener Verzeichnis”. The text of both editions is otherwise identical for the purpose of zoological nomenclature, including the same typographical errors, the title pages and two plates appended to some copies of the 1776 impression excepted. The 1776 impression is by far not as rare as the one of 1775 (KUDRNA & BELICEK 2005).

On the title page of both the first and the second impression, the ‘editorship’ – ‘herausgegeben von einigen Lehrern am k.k. Theresianum’ – is attributed to some teachers at the Theresianum. The meaning of the word ‘Herausgeber’ is not the same as the meaning of the word ‘author’ and does not imply ‘authorship’. The word ‘Ankündigung’ (meaning ‘Announcement’) had been thought by some as being a misspelling of ‘Ankündigung’. This assumption is wrong. The word ‘Ankündigung’ was grammatically correct in the late 18th century and commonly used in Austria. In fact the word “Ankündigung” is according to the University of Leipzig (website “Wortschatz”) still grammatically correct, although now hardly used.

### **The key issue – Schiffermüller's letter to Linnaeus**

The original letter reproduced below is deposited as no. 274 in the collections of the Linnaean Society of London (KUDRNA & BELICEK 2005). It may have been discovered and possibly mentioned for the first time by SATTLER (1969). The two key parts relevant for the authorship, the status of the “Ankündigung” and the “Wiener Verzeichnis” and the dates of publication are translated in English.

Nobilissime ac clarissime Vir!

Excusa, munusculum tibi offerre ignotus quod audeam, Systematicum Lepidopterorum circa Vienam observatorum catalogum. Cupido summopere, tuum de eo nosse iudicium; quo, quae erronea aut quoquo modo defectuosa sunt, emendare in ea, quam per partes edere meditor, horum insectorum historia possim. Ego te, ut in Botanica, ita et in hac naturalis historiae parte ducem per omnia ac magistrum secutus sum; paulo amplius tamen, pro enormi, quam haec regio obtulit, ac porro promittit, phalaenarum praecipue copia, tua subdividenda Genera censui, Familiæ nomine, plantarum a te statutis generibus fors suppari, adapto. Tu, Vir illustrissime! boni rem consule, ac, si tantillum tibi vacat, vel leviter opus perlustra, ac tribus saltem lineis, quae de eo sentis expone.

Nomen meum in libri fronte non adjeci; cujus rei rationes alio in opere, quod de coloribus in lucem dedi, exposui; praecipua est, quod amici quidam observationes aliquas suppeditaverint praecipuus illorum, Michael Denis, etiam operam multam, in determinandis

ordinandisque Tortricibus praesertim, Pyralidibus ac Tineis contulerit. Vale, Vir nobilissime ac summe colende!

<i>Datum Vieniae in caes. reg.</i>	<i>Ignatius Schiffermüller</i>
<i>Theresiano Collegio</i>	<i>Architecturae civilis</i>
<i>11ma Septembris 1775</i>	<i>ac militaris Professor</i>

I. Schiffermüller sends C. Linnaeus a complimentary copy of the „Ankündigung eines systematischen Werkes von den Schmetterlingen der Wienergegend“ and asks him to correct any errors he, I. Schiffermüller, could have made in a preliminary impression of the work he is preparing for publication:

“Excuse me, that although unknown to you, I take the liberty of sending you a little gift, a systematic catalogue of the Lepidoptera observed in the district of Vienna. I would very much appreciate to receive your judgement about it, to enable me correcting any errors I may have made in the course of my work on the history of these insects, that I am preparing for publication, so that I can correct anything erroneous or otherwise mistaken.”

The following paragraph explains why I. Schiffermüller omitted his name from the title page of his book, referring also to his earlier anonymously published book on the colour spectrum, and explains the role of M. Denis:

“I have not included my name in the title of the book; the reason for this I have explained in my other work I have published on colours ([SCHIFFERMÜLLER] 1771) The most important [reason] is that many friends have contributed their observations. The most important among them, Michael Denis, has helped by the identification of Tortrices, Pyralides and Tineids.”

It is safe to conclude, that

1. The “Ankündigung eines systematischen Werkes von den Schmetterlingen der Wienergegend“ was published in a very small number of copies and was not intended for general distribution. It does not constitute a publication according to the Code.

2. The “Ankündigung eines systematischen Werkes von den Schmetterlingen der Wienergegend“ was published on or before 11<sup>th</sup> September 1775 (i.e. the true date of publication is 11<sup>th</sup> September 1775).

3. I. Schiffermüller is the true and sole author of both the “Ankündigung eines systematischen Werkes von den Schmetterlingen der Wienergegend”. and the “Systematisches Verzeichniß der Schmetterlinge der Wienergegend”.

It is to be further noted that M. Denis could hardly join I. Schiffermüller as a co-author in the stage of the manuscript preparation of the “Ankündigung“ and the “Wiener Verzeichnis” as he took on a post of a librarian of the “königliche und kaiserliche öffentliche Garellische Bibliothek” (‘Garelli Library’) following the temporary dissolution of the Jesuit Order (SJ) in September 1773. The names of Schiffermüller’s remaining helping friends, colleague-teachers and students at the Theresianum, are not known (KUDRNA & BELICEK 2005). Schiffermüller’s act of sending a complimentary copy of his book along with the above letter containing a reference to his earlier book ([SCHIFFERMÜLLER] 1771) published also anonymously are irrefutable testimonies for any objective person.

SATTLER & TREMEWAN (2009) are an exception. They deny I. Schiffermüller, an honourable Jesuit (SPETA 2003), the authorship of his book and reject his credible statement regarding his friend M. Denis, SJ, and unnamed SJ members as untrue. They high-handedly assume the right to ignore the facts and decide the authorship of a book published almost 240 years ago. Their denial implies accusing the author of untruth. Their action is deplorable, inconceivable and wholly unacceptable. Their claim is based on indirect “second-hand” evidence of conven-



iently selected subsequent references and not substantiated by facts. It is interesting that they have overlooked that FORSTER & WOHLFAHRT (1952-1955) attributed the authorship Schiff-ermüller ("Schiff.") alone.

It is also interesting that BALLETO et al. (2015) apparently following SATTLER & TREMEWAN (2009) claim that the authorship of Schiffermüller's book is attributed to Schiff-ermüller & Denis in the catalogue of the Garelli Library.

The first library was set-up in Theresianum in 1748 and counted 2000 volumes. It consisted of the private library of the former Royal librarian (Hofbibliothekar) Pius N. Garelli who was at the same time a medical doctor of the Erzherzog (Archduke) Karl, the later Kaiser Karl VI. The first librarian Erasmus Fröhlich thanks to his good contacts substantially enlarged the library. Archduchess Maria Theresia visited the library in 1749 and subsequently resolved to support the library with a private annual grant of 4000 Fl. Following the dissolution of the Theresianum the library containing 11000 volumes then, was transferred to the newly founded University of Lemberg. There it was destroyed by fire during a student rebellion on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1848 (F. Gschwandtner pers. comm.) presumably including the catalogue. The present existence of a catalogue of the Garelli Library is unknown in Vienna.

### **The ICZN Opinion 516 and its consequences**

Up to about 1960 Schiffermüller's names had mostly been accepted and attributed to him as their sole author, often abbreviated "Schiff." as was customary at the time, and/or referred to the "Wiener Verzeichnis" and usually the year 1776. Even more recently, some esteemed authors such as FORSTER & WOHLFAHRT (1952-55, 1976) and HIGGINS & RILEY (1970) also attributed the authorship of the "Wiener Verzeichnis" resp. "Ankündigung" to I. Schiffermüller alone. In 1958 the Opinion 516, drafted by F. Hemming, then the Executive Secretary of the ICZN, changed the situation completely.

In 1958, the "Ankündigung eines systematischen Werkes von den Schmetterlingen der Wienergegend" of 1775 was placed by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature (ICZN) using its plenary powers on the Official List of Works approved as available for Zoological Nomenclature as the title No. 37 (Opinion 516). In the Opinion 516 the Commission ruled on the relative priority of a few systematic works on the order Lepidoptera published in 1775, including the "Ankündigung eines systematischen Werkes von den Schmetterlingen der Wienergegend". The Commission used its plenary powers in the first place for the purpose of determining the date of publication (HEMMING 1957). The Commission has declared that the "Ankündigung" was published on 8<sup>th</sup> December 1775.

In addition to the above the authorship of the "Ankündigung eines systematischen Werkes von den Schmetterlingen der Wienergegend" was in the Opinion 516 attributed to Michael Denis & Ignaz Schiffermüller (in that order), but the Commission made no binding decision or recommendation in the respect of the authorship.

Some subsequent authors (SATTLER 1969) rightly claimed, that the inclusion of the word "Ankündigung" in the title was intended merely as a prepublication announcement, advertising a future book; this explanation is supported by the rarity of the 1775 impression and corroborated by the relatively long lapse of time between the appearance of the 1775 and 1776 impressions and above all by Schiffermüller's letter to C. Linnaeus. Some authors (e.g. KOCÁK 1982, 84, SATTLER 1969) subsequently rightly rejected the "Ankündigung eines systematischen Werkes von den Schmetterlingen der Wienergegend" for the purposes of zoological nomenclature (Art. 8 and 9 of the Code). KUDRNA & BELICEK (2005) reviewed the authorship and the publication dates of both the "Ankündigung" and the "Wiener Verzeichnis" and presented new facts demonstrating that the sole author of both from a nomenclatorial point of view identical works is Ignaz Schiffermüller.



HEMMING's (1957, 1958) error is apparently based upon a single indirect information contained in a book review of the "Ankündigung" in the *Jenaische Zeitungen von gelehrten Sachen* (Pt. 98, p. 825) which appeared on 8<sup>th</sup> December 1775 and indicated that the book was available prior that day (SATTLER 1969). The errors he made in the Opinion 516 should not impair F. Hemming's great positive contribution to zoological nomenclature; he was the only Executive Secretary capable of making the Commission really work.

The action proposed herewith and to be taken as soon as possible is very simple. Following the Article 80.4 of the Code, the Commission should not hesitate to correct the worst errors contained in the Opinion 516 as follows:

"Ankündigung eines systematischen Werkes von den Schmetterlingen der Wienergegend" is the grammatically correct title of the work No. 37 placed on the Official List of Works approved as available for Zoological Nomenclature.

The sole author of the above anonymously published work placed as No. 37 on the Official List of Works approved as available for Zoological Nomenclature is I. Schiffermüller.

The established true date of publication of the aforesaid work No. 37 is 11<sup>th</sup> September 1775; nonetheless, for the sake of stability of zoological nomenclature, the precedence of the "Ankündigung eines systematischen Werkes von den Schmetterlingen der Wienergegend" in relation to the other works published in 1775 and listed in the Opinion 516 is to remain as directed by the Commission in the aforesaid Opinion.

Following the Article 80.4, the Commission should also correct the Opinion 1134: the author of *Papilio polyxena* placed on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology is [SCHIFFERMÜLLER], 1775; '[Denis]' is to be deleted.

It is regrettable that for the sake of stability of zoological nomenclature the true date of publication cannot be corrected any more and that the "Systematisches Verzeichniß der Schmetterlinge der Wienergegend" cannot be reinstated as the valid publication. A reprint or PDF of this paper will be submitted to the Commission in place of a new or rewritten Official Correction Request.

### **The names proposed by Ignaz Schiffermüller for butterflies**

The availability of the names proposed for the Lepidoptera in the "Ankündigung" was questioned and doubted by many authors. KUDRNA & BELICEK (2005) scrutinized for their availability according to the requirements of the present Code only the names proposed for butterflies. Among the 45 new names proposed in the "Ankündigung" six nomina nuda were identified.

*Papilio daphne* [SCHIFFERMÜLLER], 1775  
*Papilio medusa* [SCHIFFERMÜLLER], 1775  
*Papilio phoebe* [SCHIFFERMÜLLER], 1775  
*Papilio spini* [SCHIFFERMÜLLER], 1775  
*Papilio vau album* [sic] [SCHIFFERMÜLLER], 1775  
*Papilio xanthomelas* [SCHIFFERMÜLLER], 1775

The above six Schiffermüller's names are nomina nuda because they were published without description or indication and thus fail to satisfy the Art. 12 of the Code. KUDRNA & BELICEK (2005) identified the replacement names. All 'replacement' names were proposed in original combinations with the generic name *Papilio* LINNAEUS, 1758. The present combinations are:

*Brenthis daphne* (BERGSTRÄSSER, 1780)  
*Erebia medusa* (FABRICIUS, 1787)

*Melitaea phoebe* (GOEZE, 1779)  
*Satyrium spini* (FABRICIUS, 1787)  
*Nymphalis l-album* (ESPER, [1781])  
*Nymphalis xanthomelas* (ESPER, [1781])

It is to be noted as positive fact that all the above nomina nuda but one – *Papilio vau-album* [sic] [SCHIFFERMÜLLER], 1775 – have remained unchanged except for the author's name and the year of publication.

The only changed name, *Papilio vaualbum* [SCHIFFERMÜLLER], 1775, originally published hyphenated, is a nomen nudum (KUDRNA 2001, 2002, KUDRNA & BELICEK 2005, KUDRNA et al. 2011) and deserves a special reference. It was published without description, illustration or indication. The name was forgotten and absent from all standard handbooks until 1970 when this nomen oblitum was most unfortunately reintroduced by HIGGINS & RILEY (1970) probably following LANG (1884). Since 1970 this nomen nudum is spreading and being used again and again, even intentionally accompanied by an excuse “for the sake of stable zoological nomenclature” (e.g. GASCOIGNE-PEES et al. 2014, HESSELBARTH et al. 1999, NÄSSIG 1995 and many others). A reference to an “indication” appears, too; it disregards the meaning of the term indication as defined by the Code (Article 12, esp. 12.2). The indication and “indication” will be discussed in more detail further below.

The next special case of a Schiffermüller's nomen nudum is even more amazing. TENNENT & RUSSELL (2010) have designated the neotype of the nomen nudum *Papilio phoebe* [SCHIFFERMÜLLER], 1775, a species in their paper mistakenly attributed to [DENIS & SCHIFFERMÜLLER], 1775. They have tied the identity of the species to an unpublished illustration of a larva attributed to I. Schiffermüller (HIGGINS 1959). The neotype of a nomen nudum and more over based on an unpublished historical illustration (HIGGINS 1959) contradicts the Articles 74 and 75 of the Code. I hereby propose that the aforementioned neotype has to be declared invalid by the ICZN.

The advocates of nomina nuda erected in the “Ankündigung” (e.g. HESSELBARTH et al. 1995, NÄSSIG 1995, SATTLER & TREMEWAN 1984) usually claim to have found an indication, that makes the names available. These authors overlook or intentionally ignore the definition of the term indication (v. Code, glossary): Definition is only a bibliographical reference to a previously published description or illustration that satisfies the provisions of the Code (Art. 10, 11 and 12). A reference to a locality, host-plant, work of animal or a specimen in a collection are specifically excluded as not constituting an indication. A combination of a few features not constituting indications put together does not constitute a valid indication.

### **The names proposed by I. Schiffermüller for moths**

Some 30 years ago A.Ö. Kocak, a young little known Turkish lepidopterist then, undertook a nomenclatural revision of the Lepidoptera names proposed by I. Schiffermüller (KOCAK 1982, 84). It was the first work of this scope ever published on this topic. Following the Opinion 516 KOCAK (1982, 84) attributed the names to [Denis & Schiffermüller] but, as already mentioned, questioned the availability of the “Ankündigung” for the purposes of zoological nomenclature, as ruled by the ICZN. The paper was gratefully acknowledged as a useful base for detailed scrutinizing of butterfly names by KUDRNA & BELICEK (2005). However, his contribution for stabilising Schiffermüller's names proposed for moths is much broader. Obviously, a work of such scope can hardly be entirely free of mistakes, especially concerning the selection of replacement names. Nonetheless, A.Ö. Kocak deserves thanks of his successors for his contribu-



tion. Scientists make mistakes like all humans and A.Ö. Kocak is no exception. Making mistakes is not deplorable. Deplorable is twisting facts.

SATTLER & TREMEWAN (1984), two then well known lepidopterists and established staff members of the British Natural History Museum (London) rejected and denigrated KOCAK's (1982, 84) contribution using as an example a single selected name. They rejected KOCAK's (1982, 84) claim that *Tortrix botrana* [DENIS & SCHIFFERMÜLLER] [sic], 1775, is a nomen nudum. Finding a single negative example among so many is much easier than accomplishing a complex work such as KOCAK (1982, 84) has done.

SATTLER & TREMEWAN (1984) claim that the following "indication" makes the name available: "The larvae of this section ("Abtheilung") have 16 feet, are small, slender, mostly green, set with hairs, and very lively. They dwell in rolled or tied leaves which they eat from within". This "indication" (sensu SATTLER & TREMEWAN 1984) is referable to an unspecified number of species of the section, not specifically to *Tortrix botrana*. However, SATTLER & TREMEWAN (1984) have, to say the least, overlooked the Art. 12 of the Code and the definition of the term indication. It is useful to repeat that an indication is "a reference to a previously published information or a published act, which in the absence of a definition or description allows a name proposed before 1931 and that otherwise fulfils the relevant provisions of the Article 10 and 11 to be available" (Art. 12.2 and 13.6.1 of the Code).

I repeat again: References to host-plants and to the work of animal are specifically excluded. The general description of the group or section does depict the new species. The Code (12.3) specifically and unequivocally excludes: "The mention of any of the following does not in itself constitute a description, definition or indication: a vernacular name, locality, geological horizon, host, label, or specimen."

Speculating what reasons may have led SATTLER & TREMEWAN (1984) to denigrate the then little known young Turkish colleague is not the purpose of this paper. Nonetheless, it is surprising that the manuscript of their paper containing so serious misinterpretations of the Code has been recommended by the reviewers and subsequently published in a refereed journal.

### **Actions recommended and possible outlook**

The lesson learned: Maintaining questionable names contradicts the primary aims of the Code. The way of saving commonly used names is not hair rising fabrication of "indications" but a search for the subsequent author who made the name concerned available; this is shown by the six names replacing Schiffermüller's nomina nuda cited above (KUDRNA & BELICEK 2005) and concerning moths by KOCAK (1982, 84).

To strengthen the stability of zoological nomenclature KUDRNA & BELICEK (2005) suggested placing Schiffermüller's nomina nuda proposed for butterflies on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology and, if possible, at the same time fixing the valid replacement names (v. above). Since Schiffermüller's nomina nuda are still being used by many authors the action would positively contribute to the stabilisation of zoological nomenclature. Regrettably but not unexpectedly the Commission has so far taken no action.

Following the Article 80 of the Code, placing the following species-group names proposed by I. Schiffermüller in the "Ankündigung" on the Official List of Specific Names would certainly strengthen the stability of zoological nomenclature:



*Papilio agestis* ([SCHIFFERMÜLLER], 1775)  
*Papilio alcon* ([SCHIFFERMÜLLER], 1775)  
*Papilio arethusa* ([SCHIFFERMÜLLER], 1775)  
*Papilio cynthia* ([SCHIFFERMÜLLER], 1775)  
*Papilio damon* ([SCHIFFERMÜLLER], 1775)  
*Papilio daphnis* ([SCHIFFERMÜLLER], 1775)  
*Papilio dorylas* ([SCHIFFERMÜLLER], 1775)  
*Papilio hecate* ([SCHIFFERMÜLLER], 1775)  
*Papilio helle* ([SCHIFFERMÜLLER], 1775)  
*Papilio ilia* ([SCHIFFERMÜLLER], 1775)  
*Papilio manto* ([SCHIFFERMÜLLER], 1775)  
*Papilio pales* ([SCHIFFERMÜLLER], 1775)  
*Papilio pandora* ([SCHIFFERMÜLLER], 1775)  
*Papilio selene* ([SCHIFFERMÜLLER], 1775)

The name *Papilio polyxena* appears already on the Official List of Specific Names (Opinion 1134). Following the Article 80.4 of the Code we recommend to correct the authorship of the above name to ([SCHIFFERMÜLLER], 1775) by deleting ‘Denis’.

The ICZN would be well advised to initiate – with reference to the past achievements of the late F. Hemming (1893 – 1964) – a thorough revision of the names proposed by I. Schiffermüller for moths and seek a grant from a research foundation to secure funding of such project and subsequently using the plenary powers to stabilise the names proposed in the “Ankündigung”. KOCAK (1982, 84) provides a useful base for this task. The precondition of the successful applicant would have to be a good command of both German and English languages. A decision made by the Commission using its plenary powers should also clarify generic names used for butterflies by some classical authors active in the late 18th and early 19th century, such as E.J.C. Esper (1742 – 1810). The very sad truth is that the post of the ICZN executive secretary has been kept vacant since about 2010. I would say: The ICZN urgently needs a personality like the late F. Hemming used to be.

### **Regulating scientific names – ICZN in theory and practice**

In theory scientific names are regulated by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature (ICZN), a member of the International Union of Biological Sciences, and the rules governing zoological nomenclature are available in the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature, currently valid is the 4th edition. In practice the situation may be a little less straightforward as it may seem to be at the first glance.

It has been discovered a few years ago that butterfly species placed formerly in two genera, *Phengaris* DOHERTY, 1791, and *Maculinea* EECKE, 1915, are congeneric (FRIC et al. 2007). Following the Principle of Priority, all species formerly placed in the genus *Maculinea* must be transferred to the genus *Phengaris*. The act expresses the research results and shows the taxonomic status and relationship of the species concerned. Some conservationists reject this fact mainly on ideological grounds and request the ICZN to suppress the generic name *Phengaris* (BALLETO et al. 2010) overlooking the following principles of zoological nomenclature (Code, Introduction, p. XIX):

“(1) The Code refrains from infringing upon taxonomic judgement, which must not be made subject to regulations or restraint.”

“(2) Nomenclature does not determine the inclusiveness or exclusiveness of any taxon, nor the rank to be accorded to any assemblage of animals, but, rather, provides the name that is to be used for a taxon whatever taxonomic limits and rank are given to it.”

It appears that some of the above authors try to utilise zoological nomenclature for their ideological aims. Curiously, the choice of this action may be interpreted as a compliment for FRIC et al. (2007) and an indirect confirmation of the results published by these authors. However, the arguments put forward by BALLETO et al. (2010) and later supported by PACLT (2012) can be easily rejected also on nomenclatorial grounds (FRIC et al. 2010).

The best way to reject the synonymy proposed by FRIC et al. (2007) would have been repeating the course of research in order to find mistakes and proposing corrections in a scientific manner. The executives of the Commission would be well advised to put the case forward to the Commissioners for their vote without any further delay or to reject it straightaway according to the preamble of the Code (see above). Instead of that the executives of the ICZN keep “sitting on the fence” and doing nothing since 2010. Why? Staying a week at the Natural History Museum (BMNH, London) in September 2013, I have unofficially heard a surprising explanation. There is apparently a strong influential lobby of “*Maculinea*-Fighters” preventing the vote knowing that not even 50 % of commissioners are likely to support the suppression of a valid name for ideological reasons. The suppression of a valid name requires at least a two third majority, i.e. 67 %. I am not privileged to disclose the source of my information. Eight years have passed since the publication of the above mentioned discovery (FRIC et al. 2007) and five years since the publication of the ideologically motivated objections, but no progress has been made and the decision of the Commission is nowhere in sight. There is no time limit and no case submitted to the ICZN for the decision by the Commissioners has to be decided or referred to the Commissioners for decision. Inefficient decision making, not only in this case, is quite characteristic of the present ICZN. As the result of this policy, both generic names – *Phengaris* and *Maculinea* – are being used. The significance of stable generic names has been abundantly demonstrated on numerous well chosen examples by EHRlich & MURPHY (1982). Unnecessary hesitating and postponing decisions destabilise zoological nomenclature and thus contradicts the main objective of the ICZN.

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