

Nomenclature of some species of genus Perla

The nomenclature of some species of Perla is in a confused state. Trouble possibly arising from this will certainly not affect the name of our newsletter, but the case might be of interest for many readers of PERLA.

The identity of Perla maxima (SCOPOLI, 1763) had been doubtful until KLAPALEK (1915) applied it to a particular species. Unfortunately, his interpretation was wrong and SCHOENEMUND (1914) showed that P. maxima was in fact a senior synonym of P. marginata (PANZER, 1799). The species erroneously called maxima should have taken (and is in fact now known by) the name P. grandis RAMBUR, 1842, of which KLAPALEK had examined the type. The name marginata should have been abandoned in favour of maxima. However, the incorrect use of these names continued. In the case of P. marginata strict application of the priority principle would now upset long established practice. Therefore, an application to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature was finally made (CONSIGLIO 1967). The commission has voted in the meantime and has given P. marginata relative precedence over P. maxima.

When Dr. MELVILLE, Secretary of ICZN, prepared an Opinion giving effect to the vote he discovered that the name marginata PANZER which had just been chosen had first been published as Semblis marginata PANZER, 1799. It is therefore a junior primary homonym of the unused Semblis marginata FABRICIUS, 1793 and as such is invalid. The type of FABRICIUS' species was studied and proved to be what is presently known as Marthamea vitripennis (BURMEISTER, 1839), type species of Marthamea. To avoid that, two well-known species will have to change their names because they are junior homonyms or synonyms of FABRICIUS' overlooked name and to maintain the long established and generally accepted nomenclature, DR. MELVILLE has now made an additional application to ICZN asking it to suppress and reject Semblis marginata FABRICIUS, 1793, and to place Marthamea KLAPALEK, 1907 (type: Perla vitripennis BURMEISTER, 1839) and Perla vitripennis BURMEISTER, 1839 on the Official List of Generic or Specific Names in Zoology, respectively. For details see Bull. Zool. Nom. 38 (3):221-224.

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