

## THE VALIDITY OF THE GENERIC NAMES OF PENAEID PRAWNS

by

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***Penaeus* Fabricius 1798**

In *Opinion* 104 (1928) the generic name *Penaeus* Weber 1795 (Class Crustacea, Order Decapoda) was placed on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology. Hemming (*Bull. Zool. Nom.* Vol. 6, Pt. 10, 1952) pointed out that the entry of the generic name *Penaeus*, so spelt, made on the Official List was in itself an error, *Penaeus* being a cheironym of *Penaeus* Weber 1795. The name *Peneus* was used first by Weber on page 94 of his *Nomencl. Ent. Syst. Fabr.* (1795). In that work Weber cited three specific names as the names of species regarded as belonging to the nominal genus *Peneus*, but in each case the specific name cited was a *nomen nudum*. It was proposed by Hemming (*op. cit.*) that the generic name *Peneus* is itself therefore a *nomen nudum* having been published (1) without any verbal indication, and (2) without any previously published nominal species referred to it, and in consequence is invalid.

Weber's *Nomencl. Ent. Syst. Fabr.* was but an advance announcement of the system of classification devised by Fabricius. When Fabricius published his *Supplementum Entomologiae Systematicae* (1798) the generic name in question was spelt *Penaeus*. Fabricius provided his genus *Penaeus* with a verbal diagnosis, and in addition referred validly described nominal species to that genus. At that time *Penaeus* was an available generic name, and is therefore the valid name of the genus. Hemming (*op. cit.*) recommended that the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature should delete from the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology the invalid name *Penaeus* (emend. of *Peneus*) Weber, 1795, and insert the name *Penaeus* Fabricius, 1798. This recommendation was accepted, and embodied in *Direction* 16.

***Sicyonia* H. Milne-Edwards 1830**

Up to 1914 the generic name *Sicyonia* Milne-Edwards was used regularly for the well known genus of penaeid prawn. In 1914, as is well known, Stebbing (*Ann. S. Afr. Mus.* Vol. 15) pointed out that the generic name *Sicyonia* was preoccupied, having been applied to a genus of Lepidoptera by Hübner in 1816 [*Verz. bekannt. Schmett.* (1)], and he proposed for Milne-Edwards' genus the new name *Eusicyonia*. However, Holthuis, 1952, (*Bull. Zool. Nom.* Vol. 6, Pt. 11, pp. 339-341) noted that

the earliest synonym of *Sicyonia* Milne-Edwards is *Ruvulus* De Natale 1850, (*Descriz. zool. Plojaria Crost.* Messina, p. 20). The generic name *Ruvulus* was used first by Cocco in 1832 (*Effem. Sci Lett. Sicilia.* Vol. 2, p. 204) but it was published as a *nomen nudum*. De Natale (*loc. cit.*) made clear the synonymy of *Ruvulus*, and *Sicyonia* Milne-Edwards by placing the former name in parentheses behind the latter, and in consequence, were the Règles to be adhered to strictly, *Ruvulus* De Natale, 1850, would be the correct name for the genus in question.

Holthuis (*loc. cit.*) pointed out that the name *Ruvulus* is practically unknown: that the name *Eusicyonia* is invalid, precedence being taken by *Ruvulus*: that the name *Sicyonia* Hübner 1816 is no longer used for the genus of Lepidoptera to which it was applied: that the name *Sicyonia* Milne-Edwards 1830 was adopted universally from 1830 till 1914, and that even after 1914 many carcinologists continued to use it. He proposed therefore that the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature should use its plenary powers to suppress the generic names *Sicyonia* Hübner 1816, and *Ruvulus* De Natale 1850, and validate the generic name *Sicyonia* Milne-Edwards 1830. This proposal was accepted, and embodied in *Opinion* 382.

***Parapeneopsis* (Wood) Mason, M. S., Alcock 1901, and *Xiphopeneus* Smith 1886.**

The valid spelling of the two above cited compound generic names, as of all other generic names of penaeid prawn, is that published by the first authors. There has as yet (16 August 1955) been no proposal to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature recommending the use of the plenary powers of the Commission to adjust the spelling of *Parapeneopsis* and *Xiphopeneus* to conform to the more barbaric spelling of the root name *Penaeus* Fabr. 1798, although Mr. Francis Hemming, the Secretary to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature, with whom the present writer has recently been in communication, is sounding carcinologists on this subject. It is suggested that those who are interested should forward their opinion direct to Mr. Hemming whose full address is: "F. Hemming Esq., C.M.G., C.B.E., Secretary to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature, 28, Park Village East, Regent's Park, London, N.W. 1."

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