



The distinction between introduction of a new nomen and subsequent use of a previously introduced nomen in zoological nomenclature

Alain DUBOIS

Reptiles & Amphibiens, UMR 7205 OSEB, Département de Systématique & Evolution, Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, CP 30, 25 rue Cuvier, 75005 Paris, France. <adubois@mnhn.fr>.

Abstract

In order to avoid or at least reduce the number of mistakes and confusions due to the indiscriminate use of imprecise categories and terms which too often occur in publications dealing with zoological nomenclature, a precise terminology is provided for the distinction between different categories of terms designating the *erection* of new taxa and their subsequent *modification*, and the *introduction* of new nomina, their subsequent *use* or *modification*, and their *replacement* by other nomina.

Key words: taxon's establishment, taxon's erection, taxon's emendation, taxon's amendment; nomen's establishment, nomen's introduction, nomen's citation, nomen's emendation, nomen's first-use, nomen's replacement; neonym, paronym, chresonym, homonym, homograph; new terms

Introduction

In order to communicate about organisms that they study, biologists refer them to formal units of classification or *taxa* (species, genera, families, etc.), which they designate by scientific names or *nomina*. The *nomenclatural availability*, *taxonomic allocation* and *nomenclatural validity* of the latter are regulated by sets of official Rules, presented in the international Codes of biological nomenclature. In the recent zootaxonomic literature, the first of these three steps, availability of nomina, including their subsequent modification, has been the matter of terminological confusion and this has sometimes important consequences not only concerning the clarity of communication among specialists but sometimes also the interpretation of the availability and validity of nomina, and is therefore a threat to nomenclatural universality and stability. Despite the terminological clarifications presented already elsewhere (Dubois 2000, 2005*b*, 2010*b*, 2011*a*), some ambiguities remain, and it is the purpose of the present article to remove them.

New taxa are permanently erected by taxonomists and new nomina introduced for them. Besides, the definitions (intensions) and contents (extensions) of already erected taxa are also often modified, and this has sometimes consequences on their nomina. Any nomen that appears in a scientific publication can be either a new nomen or a previously introduced nomen that is “cited” or re-used, either unchanged or after modification in its spelling, rank or onymorph (association of terms that compose a multi-word nomen such as a specific or subspecific nomen). Dubois (2010*b*) presented a detailed analysis of these situations in zoological nomenclature and (p. 28–30) a dichotomic key to the different kinds of nomina and spellings that occur in publications. The first dichotomy in this key is the distinction between introduction of a new nomen and subsequent use of a previously introduced nomen. In recent zoological publications, the distinction