

Provisional checklist of genera of the Pieridae (Lepidoptera: Papilionoidea)

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ABSTRACT

A provisional list of lower taxa (genera, subgenera) for the butterfly family Pieridae is provided based on review of the literature. A total of 98 taxa (83 genera, 15 subgenera) is recognised. Most of the genera appear in relatively good order but there is considerable doubt concerning the monophyly of *Eurema sensu lato*, *Eurema sensu stricto*, *Catantix sensu lato* and *Appias sensu lato*. Systematic revision of *Eurema sensu lato*, *Phoebis sensu lato*, *Hesperocharis sensu lato* and *Appias sensu lato* is also required to determine the status or taxonomic rank (i.e. genera or subgenera) of taxa currently or previously included in these genera in the broad sense. The status of subgenera currently assigned to *Colias sensu stricto* appears doubtful. It is recommended that future systematic studies on lower classification focus on recognition of species-groups rather than subgenera within monophyletic genera.

Key words: Pieridae, Coliadinae, Dismorphiinae, Pierinae, Anthocharidini, Pierini, Aporiini, genera, subgenera, checklist

INTRODUCTION

The Pieridae are perhaps one of the most poorly understood butterfly families within the Papilionoidea in terms of their higher-level systematics and classification. Currently there is no up-to-date standard checklist of genera (including subgenera) of the Pieridae worldwide and, apart from a limited, unpublished study (Venables 1993), the family and its putative subfamilies and tribes have never been subjected to rigorous, modern phylogenetic analyses of morphological or molecular data. The family is cosmopolitan, contains over 1000 species (Robbins 1982; Ackery *et al.* 1999), has played a pivotal role in evolutionary biology (Courtney 1986), and includes species of major economic significance such as the cabbage whites (*Pieris*) and sulphurs (*Colias*). The adult butterflies are of medium size,