

PODALONIA SPINOLA, 1853 (HYMENOPTERA, SPHECIDAE):
PROPOSED SUPPRESSION UNDER PLENARY POWERS IN
FAVOUR OF *PODALONIA* FERNALD, 1927, WITH *AMMOPHILA*
VIOLACEIPENNIS LEPELETIER, 1845, AS TYPE SPECIES.¹ Z.N.(S.) 1735

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1. The aim of this application is to request the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature to use its plenary powers to ensure that continued usage of the well established generic name *Podalonia* Spinola, 1853, sensu Fernald (1927) will not be endangered. Continued use of the name is threatened because it appears certain that the type species, *Ammophila bocandei* Spinola, 1853, has been mistakenly interpreted as being congeneric with the species usually placed under the genus *Podalonia* by modern workers.

History of the name *Podalonia*

2. In a paper primarily devoted to describing new species of wasps from Pará, Brazil, Spinola (1853, pp. 52–53) presented a short discourse on the merits of basing new genera on peculiarities of wing venation, a practice of which he plainly disapproved. To demonstrate how easily (and unwisely) a person could establish a new genus for a species with aberrant wing venation, he described a new wasp species from “Guinée”, Africa, which had a petiolate second marginal cell. Spinola interpreted this species, *bocandei*, as a member of the genus *Ammophila* Kirby, 1798, a taxon in which the second submarginal cell is normally four sided. After the description of *Ammophila bocandei*, Spinola returned to his discourse on the describing of new genera for species that had peculiar wing venation by stating that he could just as easily propose the generic name *Podalonia* for *bocandei*.

3. It is obvious that Spinola did not intend the name *Podalonia* to be accepted as a valid generic name since he was only using it as an example to demonstrate the undesirability of naming genera solely for species with different wing venation. Nevertheless, under the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature Spinola's name is valid even though conditionally proposed (Art. 17(8)). The problem then is to determine the identity of the type species, *bocandei*.

4. F. F. Kohl (1890, pp. 101–102), the greatest authority on the subfamily Sphecinae, was the first person to deal with Spinola's genus, but he did not attempt to identify it. He merely listed *Podalonia* as belonging to the subfamily Sphecinae and related it to *Ammophila* Kirby, 1798, sensu lato, without mentioning *bocandei*. Later in his monumental work on the genera of the Sphecidae, Kohl (1896, pp. 242, 308) listed *Podalonia* as a synonym of *Ammophila* in the broad sense without any discussion of his reasons for doing so. It should be pointed out that Kohl's interpretation of *Ammophila* was very con-

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servative, and today up to six genera are recognized for the species Kohl lumped under the name *Ammophila*.

5. In his revision of the Palearctic *Ammophila* s. l. Kohl (1906, pp. 240–241) divided *Ammophila* into two “Hauptartengruppe”, *Ammophila* Kirby, 1798, and *Psammophila* Dahlbom, 1842. He tentatively identified *bocandei* Spinola as a *Psammophila* with aberrant wing venation but stated that the species was unknown to him.

6. The only other author to deal with *Podalonia* during this period was Dalla Torre. In his *Catalogus Hymenopterorum*, vol. 8, 1897, which deals with the Sphecidae, Dalla Torre listed (p. 396) *bocandei* as a species of *Ammophila* in the broad sense of Kohl. The only noteworthy item in connection with this citation is that the species was erroneously listed as occurring in “Am.: Brasilia” instead of the type locality given by Spinola: “Guinée”, Africa. It is probable that this error caused all subsequent European taxonomists to ignore *bocandei* completely. Note for example, that *bocandei* is not listed in Leclercq’s (1955) catalog of the Sphecinae of Africa.

7. In 1927 H. T. Fernald published a revision of the North American species of a genus of wasps which up to that time had been placed under the generic name *Psammophila* Dahlbom, 1842, a taxon which it will be remembered was considered as a “Hauptartengruppe” of *Ammophila* by Kohl. Fernald was the first author to note that *Psammophila* Dahlbom was a junior homonym of *Psammophila* Brown, 1827, a genus of Mollusca. The only available replacement name for Dahlbom’s preoccupied name was *Podalonia* Spinola, which Fernald used with some misgivings, pointing out the conditional nature of Spinola’s name. Fernald’s reason for accepting *Podalonia* as congeneric with *Psammophila* was based on Spinola’s statement that the abdominal petiole of *bocandei* was similar to that of “*Ammoph. arenaria* Latr.” [= *hirsuta* Scopoli], a species commonly recognized as a *Psammophila*.

8. Fernald did not pursue the identity of *bocandei* further, and until recently (Bohart and Menke, 1963, p. 163) no one has questioned his interpretation of *Podalonia*. The name *Podalonia* has gained world wide popular acceptance as the proper name for the genus formerly known under the name *Psammophila* Dahlbom. Several regional revisions and considerable biological work have been published under the name *Podalonia*.

The identity of *Ammophila bocandei*

9. Searches by Menke in the museums in Paris and Turin for the holotype of *bocandei* proved fruitless, and probably it is no longer in existence. Therefore, the identity of *bocandei* rests solely on an interpretation of the original description. Spinola’s description consists mainly of color, but even so it is sufficient to cast strong doubts on the correctness of interpreting *Podalonia* as congeneric with *Psammophila* Dahlbom. Several color features mentioned by Spinola are of particular importance in this regard: head reddish yellow, abdomen shiny blue black, wings cloudy and shiny blue. It is significant that none of the Old World species currently assigned to *Podalonia*, sensu Fernald, display any of these color characters, and although a few New World species do have dark wings and abdomens, none have a reddish head, eliminating the

possibility that the locality data for *bocandei* were incorrect. Of further importance are the reddish legs mentioned by Spinola. Red legs are found in very few species of *Podalonia*, sensu Fernald, and when the legs are red, the wings are invariably clear and the abdomen is largely red. None of the species of *Podalonia*, sensu Fernald, have a petiolate second submarginal cell, except perhaps an occasional aberrant individual and the authors have never seen such a specimen.

10. At present it appears likely from the description of *bocandei* that it is a species in the genus *Chalybion* Dahlbom, or perhaps less likely, either the genus *Parapsammophila* Taschenberg or *Chlorion* Latreille.* All three genera possess African species with color patterns which come close to matching that of *bocandei*. However, *Chalybion* seems most likely to be the genus to which *bocandei* belongs, because there are species in this genus which have the second submarginal cell petiolate.

11. The conclusion one draws from these facts is that *bocandei* cannot possibly be congeneric with *Podalonia*, sensu Fernald, and that therefore, *Podalonia* Spinola cannot be considered as an available name for the pre-occupied name *Psammophila* Dahlbom. Since no other name is available for *Psammophila* Dahlbom, it is now necessary to propose a new name for this taxon. However, this course of action would serve no useful purpose because *Podalonia*, sensu Fernald, has enjoyed popular world wide usage for nearly forty years and is a name around which a considerable literature has accumulated. To offer a new generic name now would only cause more confusion than uniformity and therefore we propose that *Podalonia* be conserved in the sense of Fernald.

12. Several alternative methods for conserving the name *Podalonia* exist:

- A. Throw out *bocandei* as the type of *Podalonia* Spinola and select a well known African species of *Podalonia*, sensu Fernald, to be designated under the plenary powers as the type species of Spinola's genus. An argument against such a move is that Spinola never intended *Podalonia* to be accepted as a genus. The name was at best a conditional one.
- B. Under the plenary powers arbitrarily synonymize *bocandei* with some well known African *Podalonia* species (sensu Fernald). This sort of action would be absolutely contrary to the published description of *bocandei* as we have pointed out in paragraphs 9 and 10 above.
- C. Suppress *Podalonia* Spinola under the plenary powers for purposes of synonymy and homonymy, and credit Fernald, 1927, as having authored and described the genus *Podalonia*; and at the same time designate the oldest and best known species treated in Fernald's revision as the type of *Podalonia* Fernald. We favor this last method since it in no way affects the validly described species *bocandei* and the name *Podalonia* is insured of continued usage. The Commission is therefore requested to:

* specifically, *Chalybion fuscipenne* (Smith), *Parapsammophila cyanipennis* (Lepeletier), and *Chlorion ciliatum* (Fabricius) [= *xanthocentrum* Illiger].

- (1) use its plenary powers:
 - (a) to suppress the generic name *Podalonia* Spinola, 1853, and all other uses of that name before that by Fernald, 1927, for the purposes of the Law of Priority and the Law of Homonymy;
 - (b) to accord H. T. Fernald authorship of the generic name *Podalonia* as characterized by him in 1927, and to designate *Ammophila violaceipennis* Lepeletier, 1845, as type-species of the genus.
- (2) place the generic name *Podalonia* Spinola, 1853, (as suppressed under the plenary powers in (1) (a) above) on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Generic Names in Zoology;
- (3) place *Podalonia* Fernald, 1927 (as validated under the plenary powers in (1) (b) above) on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology;
- (4) place the specific name *violaceipennis* Lepeletier, 1845, as published in the binomen *Ammophila violaceipennis* (type-species of *Podalonia* Fernald, 1927) on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology.

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