OPINION 1672

*Muraena* Linnaeus, 1758 and *Anguilla* Schrank, 1798 (Osteichthyes, Anguilliformes): placed on the Official List of Generic Names

**Ruling**

(1) The following names are hereby placed on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology:

(a) *Muraena* Linnaeus, 1758 (gender: feminine), type species by subsequent designation by Bory de Saint-Vincent (1827) *Muraena helena* Linnaeus, 1758;

(b) *Anguilla* Schrank, 1798 (gender: feminine), type species by monotypy *Muraena anguilla* Linnaeus, 1758.

(2) The following names are hereby placed on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology:

(a) *helena* Linnaeus, 1758, as published in the binomen *Muraena helena* (specific name of the type species of *Muraena* Linnaeus, 1758);

(b) *anguilla* Linnaeus, 1758, as published in the binomen *Muraena anguilla* (specific name of the type species of *Anguilla* Schrank, 1798).

**History of Case 1173**

An application for the confirmation of *Muraena helena* Linnaeus, 1758 as the type species of *Muraena* was received from Miss Ruth A. Cooper (Secretariat, International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature) and Mr Oliver A. Crimmen (The Natural History Museum, London, U.K.) on 21 September 1989. After correspondence the case was published in *BZN* 46: 259–261 (December 1989). Notice of the case was sent to appropriate journals.

The generic name *Muraena*, consistently used for moray eels, was placed on the Official List of Generic Names in Opinion 77 (January 1922) with the universally accepted type species *M. helena* Linnaeus, 1758. However, in 1958 *Muraena* was withdrawn from the List for further investigation: the earliest designation of a type species was believed to be that by Bleeker (1865) of *M. anguilla* Linnaeus, 1758. *M. anguilla* is the type species by monotypy of *Anguilla* Schrank, 1798, the common river eel, and strict adherence to the Règles [Code] would have resulted in the transfer of the name *Muraena* from the moray to the common eel and the loss of the name *Anguilla* as a junior objective synonym.

The application by Cooper & Crimmen (BZN 47: 259–261) sought to set aside Bleeker's (1865) designation of *anguilla* as the type of *Muraena* and accept that by Jordan & Gilbert (1882) of *helena*, thereby conserving both generic names, *Muraena* and *Anguilla*, in their accustomed usages.

A comment from Mr Alwyne Wheeler (Epping Forest Conservation Centre, Loughton, Essex, U.K.), published in BZN 47: 138 (June 1990), noted that the name *Anguilla* dated from Schrank (1798), and not Shaw (1803) as cited in the application. Comments from Dr F.C. Thompson (United States Department of Agriculture, Washington D.C., U.S.A.) and from one of the authors of the application (Ruth Cooper), published in BZN 47: 139, pointed out that Commission action was not required to conserve the name *Muraena* in its accustomed sense: the designation by
Bory de Saint-Vincent (1827) of *helena* as the type species predated that by Bleeker (1865) and *helena* is thus the valid type species of the genus.

The Commission was asked to agree to place both *Muraena* Linnaeus, 1758 and *Anguilla* Schrank, 1798 on the Official List, with *Muraena helena* and *M. anguilla*, both of Linnaeus, 1758, the respective type species.

**Decision of the Commission**

On 1 September 1991 the members of the Commission were invited to vote. At the close of the voting period on 1 December 1991 the votes were as follows:

Affirmative votes — 26: Bayer, Bock, Cocks, Corliss, Dupuis, Hahn, Halvorsen, Heppell, Holthuis, Kabata, Kraus, Lehtinen, Macpherson, Mahnert, Martins de Souza, Minelli, Nielsen, Nye, Ride, Savage, Schuster, Starobogatov, Thompson, Trjapitzin, Uéno, Willink

Negative votes — none.

No vote was received from Cogger.

**Original references**

The following are the original references to the names placed on Official Lists by the ruling given in the present Opinion:


The following is the reference for the designation of *Muraena helena* Linnaeus, 1758 as the type species of the nominal genus *Muraena* Linnaeus, 1758:

**Bory de Saint-Vincent, J.B.G.M.** 1827, *in* Audouin, [J.V.] et al. (Eds.), *Dictionnaire classique d'Histoire naturelle*, vol. 11, p. 305.
_The Bulletin of zoological nomenclature_ 49, 93–94.

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