CESTRACION PHILLIPI VAR. JAPONICA DUMÉRIL 1865
(SELACHII, HETERODONTIFORMES): REQUEST FOR
SUPPRESSION UNDER THE PLENARY POWERS. Z.N.(S.) 1951

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Dumeril in his treatment of heterodontid sharks (1865: 426) stated that “Cestr[acion]. zebra Gray 1831” (now known in the combination Heterodontus zebra) was not a species distinct from “Cestr[acion]. phillipi Blainville 1816”, which is now known in the combination Heterodontus portusjacksoni (Meyer) 1793, and synonymized the two names. He regarded the Japanese population as a “variété de climat constante” and therefore proposed thename “Cestr[acion]. phillipi var. Japonica”. This name is clearly an objective synonym of C. zebra since it is to be interpreted as based on the original description of Gray.

2. Maclay and Macleay (1884: 428) subsequently named a third species Heterodontus japonicus. H. portusjacksoni, H. zebra, and H. japonicus are all currently recognized as distinct species within a single genus. However under Article 17 (9) and Article 52, Heterodontus japonicus Maclay and Macleay, 1884, is a junior secondary homonym of Cestracion phillipi var. Japonica Duméril, 1865, which in turn is a synonym of Centracion zebra Gray 1831.

3. The species-group name japonicus Maclay and Macleay is well established in the zoological literature; for example, the classic works of Bashford Dean on selachian embryology were based in part on specimens of Heterodontus japonicus Maclay and Macleay. In addition, all primary taxonomic works and faunal encyclopedias of Japan, other than Jordan and Hubbs (1925: 99) who attributed the species group name to Dumeril, list the name japonicus Maclay and Macleay. Cestracion phillipi var. Japonica Duméril has not been recognized in the literature as a junior synonym of Heterodontus zebra.

4. The existence of the obscure and obsolete senior synonym of Duméril threatens the existence of the well-known, widely used combination Heterodontus japonicus Maclay and Macleay. The interests of stability and universality would seem to plead for the preservation of the name of Maclay and Macleay through the rejection of Duméril’s name. Therefore the Commission is asked:

(i) to use its plenary powers to suppress the species-group name japonica Duméril, 1865, as published in the combination Cestracion phillipi var. Japonica, for the purposes of the Law of Priority and the Law of Homonymy;

(ii) to place the species-group name suppressed in (i) on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology;

(iii) to place the species-group name japonicus Maclay and Macleay 1884, as published in the binomen Heterodontus japonicus, on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology.

This species was named by Gray as Centracion zebra but Dumeril called it “Cestr(acion). zebra Gray.”

REFERENCES


