A recurrent mistake in Frost’s (1985) checklist, endorsed by Savage (1986), is to believe that family-group names based on generic names which are currently treated as junior synonyms are not valid. This mistake led Frost & Lynch (in Frost, 1985, p. 439) to consider PETRONEDETEINÆ the valid name for the taxon. They deliberately ignored the most senior synonym, HEMIMANTIDÆ.

In their remaining argument for the use of the name PETRONEDETEINÆ, Frost & Savage (BZN 52: 270) stated that the author of the name PHRYNABRACHINÆ, R. Laurent, ‘was one of the contributing reviewers to the PETRONEDETEINÆ section’. However, an examination of the references cited in my application for the uses by Laurent of the names PHRYNABRACHINÆ and PETRONEDETEINÆ demonstrates that this author ‘changed his mind several times’ (para. 5) and showed ‘inconsistency in the usage of the name for this subfamily’ (para. 6). This points to Laurent’s lack of interest in nomenclatural matters and it is therefore pointless to call upon his implied agreement in support of a preferred family-group name.

Additional references


Comments on the proposed conservation of the specific name of *Phyllophis carinata* Günther, 1864 (Reptilia, Serpentes)

(Case 2850: see BZN 52: 166–169)

1) James R. Dixon

*Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences, Texas A & M University, Nagle Hall, College Station, Texas 77843–2258, U.S.A.*

I have read the application to conserve the specific name of *Phyllophis carinata*, which has had stability in the literature for some 65 years.

I believe, as most biologists do, that stability in the use of a scientific name in the literature is paramount if the usage of a name has shown stability for more than 50 years. It would render considerable confusion to change a well established name for one in disuse.

I therefore support the application by Smith, Ota & Wallach to reject the specific name of *Coluber phyllophis* Boulenger, 1891 and to accept Günther’s (1864) name *carinata* as being valid.

2) Tsutomu Hikida

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I write in support of the application by Smith, Ota & Wallach to conserve the specific name of *Phyllophis carinata* Günther, 1864. The combination *Elaphe carinata* (Günther, 1864) has been used for the species in all revisional works in East Asian
https://doi.org/10.5962/bhl.part.6820.

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