COMMENT ON THE PROPOSAL CONCERNING BAGRUS BOSC, 1816, WITH REQUESTS TO PLACE BAGRE CLOQUET, 1816 ON THE OFFICIAL LIST AND TO SUPPRESS PORCUS GEOFFROY SAINT-HILAIRE, 1808

Z.N.(S.) 2371

(see vol. 40, pp. 167-172)


Bailey & Stewart, 1983, asked that Bagrus Bosc, September 1816, be placed on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology. They presented evidence to show that Bagrus and Porcus Etienne Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire in Bosc, September 1816 were described on the same date with Bagrus having page priority. Because Bagrus provides the stem of a well-known family name, and because it has had somewhat more usage, they requested its conservation by the Commission.

2. Aside from dates given by Sherborn, 1897, workers have not generally known the actual dates of publication of the contributions by Etienne and Isidore Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire to the Description de l’Egypte. The son, Isidore (1847), listed the significant contributions by his father and himself to this work and gave dates of publication. It is now clear that Porcus should be attributed to Etienne Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire and that it has several years’ priority over Bagrus Bosc. Porcus first appeared on plate 15 of the Poissons du Nil issued in 1808; but the description of the genus was completed from his father’s notes and published by Isidore in 1827. The folio-sized natural history plates in Description de l’Egypte were in many cases published years before written descriptions appeared; but the names on the plates are available by indication (Article 12a(7)).

3. Evidence that all the plates of Poissons du Nil were published and available to Bosc, Cuvier, etc., prior to 1816 is as follows:

(a) Isidore Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire stated (1847, p. 425): ‘La part de collaboration de Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire dans le grand ouvrage sur l’Egypte, se compose des parties suivantes: Dans l’atlas, t. Ier de la partie relative à l’histoire naturelle: 1° 7 planches de Mammifères (17 espèces); 2° 8 de Reptiles (25 espèces); 3° 17 de Poissons du Nil (29 espèces); 4° 10 de Poissons de la Méditerranée et de la mer Rouge (28 espèces). Ces magnifiques planches, dessinées par Redouté jeune, . . . en Egypte, . . . à Paris de 1802 à 1807, ont été publiées, partie en 1808 (Poissons du Nil), partie en 1813 (Mammifères et Reptiles), partie en 1817 (Poissons de la mer Rouge et de la Méditerranée).

‘Dans le tome Ier du texte de l’Histoire naturelle . . . 1° Histoire naturelle des Poissons du Nil, 1809 [part]; . . . 2° Description des Reptiles qui se trouvent en Egypte, 1809 [part]; . . . 3° Description des Crocodiles d’Egypte, 1829. — Le texte des autres planches de Poissons et de Reptiles a été publié, en 1827, par l’auteur de cet ouvrage, d’après les notes de Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire.

‘Dans le tome II . . . Description des Mammifères qui se trouvent en Egypte, 1813 [part]. . . ’

(b) In general agreement with Isidore’s summary, Jomard in Monglond, 1957, columns 323-330, indicated that the 27 plates illustrating fishes were published from 1809-1817. I believe, however, that some of the dates for the text given by Jomard are probably in error. These dates were correctly stated by Isidore Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire.
The 17 plates depicting Nile fishes, aside from three illustrating only anatomical details, were all cited by Cuvier, November 1816, in Le Règne animal, ed. 1, vol. 2. Plates 18 to 27 illustrating Red Sea and Mediterranean fishes were not cited in that edition because they were not published till 1817. At least six of the plates 18 through 27 were cited in the second edition of Le Règne animal, published in 1829.

Thus it appears certain that the 17 plates of fishes of the Nile appeared in 1808 or at the latest 1809, and that plates 18–27 of Mediterranean and Red Sea fishes were published in 1817.

Two species of Porcus were illustrated by H. J. Redouté for Etienne in plate 15: Le Bayad fitile, Porcus bayad, and Le Bayad docmac, Porcus docmac. The type species of Porcus Etienne Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire is Silurus bajad Forskål, 1775 (= Porcus bayad Etienne Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire; it is clear from Isidore's text, Hist. nat., vol. 1, p. 303, that Etienne’s bayad is an unjustified emendation of Forskål’s bajad), by subsequent designation by Jordan & Evermann, 1917, Genera of Fishes, vol. 1, p. 107. Jordan & Evermann incorrectly said that the description and/or plates were published ('dated') in 1817 or 1818.

Bagrus Bosc, 1816, with type species Silurus bajad Forskål by subsequent designation by Bailey & Stewart, 1983, op. cit., is a junior objective synonym of Porcus Etienne Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, 1808.

Bagre Cloquet, 1816. Bagre is to be treated as masculine because it is latinised from the Spanish and Portuguese masculine noun bagre, denoting catfish throughout much of tropical America. Its origin is probably from the Arabic bāghir or baghār. The type species is Silurus bagre Linnaeus, 1766, by absolute tautonymy, through listing in the synonymy of Bagre pimelodinus Cloquet. The descriptions, in part, of B. pimelodinus, and of the other included synonym, Pimelodus bagre Lacépède, apply not to Silurus bagre Linnaeus but to Silurus marinus Mitchell. I suspect that Mitchell's species belongs to another genus and that Bagre bagre (Linnaeus) is the only taxonomic species in the genus Bagre.

I support the proposal to place Bagridae Bleeker, 1858 on the Official List. Bleeker, 1858, pp. V, 49, etc., first used a subfamily 'Bagrichthyoidei' and 'cohors Bagrini' to include Bagrus and other siluroid fishes. It happens that Bleeker had previously described a bagrid fish as Bagrichthys, leading to the false impression that that name provides the stem of Bagrichthyoidei. I believe that Bagrus provides this stem, by analogy with Bleeker's 'subfamily Plotosichthyoidei and 'phalanx Plotosini', both based on the generic name Plotosus.

Because of the long uncertainty as to the dates of publication of Porcus and Bagrus, because the latter name has in recent years become widely accepted as the generic name for a group of African bagrid fishes, and because it provides the stem of its family name, I ask the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature:

(a) to use its plenary powers to suppress the generic name Porcus Etienne Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, 1808, for the purposes of the Principle of Priority, but not for those of the Principle of Homonymy;
(b) to place on the Official List of Generic names in Zoology:
   (i) Bagre Cloquet, 1816 (gender: masculine), type species, by absolute tautonymy, Silurus bagre Linnaeus, 1766;
(ii) Bagrus Bosc, 1816 (gender: masculine), type species, by subsequent designation by Bailey & Stewart, 1983, Silurus bajad Forskål, 1775;
(c) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology:
   (i) bagre Linnaeus, 1766, as published in the binomen Silurus bagre
       (specific name of type species of Bagre Cloquet, 1816);
   (ii) bajad Forskal, 1775, as published in the binomen Silurus bajad
       (specific name of type species of Bagrus Bosc, 1816);
   (d) to place bagridae Bleeker, 1858 (type genus, Bagrus Bosc, 1816) on
       the Official List of Family-Group Names in Zoology.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

GEOFFROY SAINT-HILAIRE, ISIDORE. 1847. Vie, travaux, et doctrine


MONGLOND, A. 1957. La France révolutionnaire et impériale. Annales de bibliogra-
phie méthodique et description des livres illustrés, vol. 8 (années
https://doi.org/10.5962/bhl.part.847.

View This Item Online: https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/44484
DOI: https://doi.org/10.5962/bhl.part.847
Permalink: https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/847

Holding Institution
Natural History Museum Library, London

Sponsored by
Natural History Museum Library, London

Copyright & Reuse
Copyright Status: In copyright. Digitized with the permission of the rights holder.
Rights Holder: International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature
License: http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/
Rights: https://biodiversitylibrary.org/permissions

This document was created from content at the Biodiversity Heritage Library, the world’s largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org.