

MELITHAEA MILNE EDWARDS & HAIME, 1857 AND
 ISIS OCHRACEA LINNAEUS, 1758
 (COELENTERATA, ANTHOZOA): PROPOSED CONSERVATION
 Z.N.(S.)2150

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The name *Melitea* was first published for a genus of octocorals by Lamouroux, 1812, p. 188, including one valid species, *Isis ochracea* Ellis (= *Isis ocracea* Linnaeus, 1758), and three nomina nuda. The name *Melithaea* was published for the same genus of octocorals by Lamarck, 1816, p. 297, an erroneous subsequent spelling of *Melitea* Lamouroux.

2. *Melitea* Lamouroux, 1812, is preoccupied by *Melitea* Péron & Lesueur, 1810, proposed for a genus of Scyphozoa. The spelling *Melithaea* as incorrectly used by Lamarck, 1816, for *Melitea* Lamouroux, 1812, has been used before, viz. by Fabricius, 1807, for a new genus of Lepidoptera. Therefore, even if *Melithaea* Lamarck, 1816 was an available name, it would be preoccupied by the available *Melithaea* Fabricius, 1807.

3. The name *Melithaea* was first used by Milne Edwards & Haime, 1857, p. 199, for the genus of octocorals called *Melitea* by Lamouroux, 1812. Owing to the absence of any specific statement, and to the numerous errors demonstrable in this work, the name *Melithaea* must be interpreted as an incorrect subsequent spelling of *Melitea* Lamouroux, 1812, not a replacement name for a homonym, and is therefore unavailable under Art. 33(b) of the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature.

4. A.E. Verrill, 1864, p. 38, recognized the homonymy of *Melitea* Lamouroux, 1812, which Verrill spelled *Melithaea*, and expressly proposed the name *Melitodes* as a replacement.

5. Subsequent to 1864, all workers accepted *Melitodes* Verrill, except Kölliker, 1865; Gray, 1870; and Klunzinger, 1877. At least 10 usages of *Melitodes* appeared between 1864 and 1956, including Hickson's extensive study of the family MELITODIDAE in 1937.

6. Utinomi, 1956a, p. 226, resurrected *Melithaea* Milne Edwards & Haime, 1857, for the octocoral, saying: 'Since the emendation by Verrill (1864), the name *Melitodes* has long been used for the genus as a substitute for *Melitea* or *Melithaea*. However, the older name *Melithaea* which has been used by H. Milne Edwards

(1857), Kölliker (1865) and Gray (1870) but not by later workers, is not to be treated as a homonym of such names according to the latest Copenhagen Decisions on Nomenclature (1953). There is no decisive evidence to prove whether it is a substitute name for *Melitaea* or the result of only an inadvertent error in spelling, but the new genus name *Melitodes* was not accepted by Gray (1870) merely quoting a suggestion of Verrill without comment. For the above reasons it seems better to retain the name *Melithaea* for the genus instead of *Melitodes*'.

7. Utinomi's action was legal under Article 34 of the *Règles Internationales de Nomenclature Zoologique* because Opinion 147 (which would have rendered *Melithaea* Milne Edwards & Haime, 1857, a homonym of *Melitaea* Fabricius, 1807, *Melitea* Péron and Lesueur, 1810, and *Melitheia* Selys de Longchamps, 1837) was repealed by the Copenhagen Decisions. However, it was illegal under additions to Article 19, promulgated at Copenhagen, since it is an incorrect subsequent spelling and so not available as a replacement name.

8. Since 1956, all workers have followed Utinomi's reintroduction of *Melithaea* Milne Edwards & Haime, 1857, for the genus of octocorals in preference to *Melitodes* Verrill, 1864. At least 14 usages have appeared, including Utinomi 1956a, 1956b, 1958, 1964, 1969; Bayer 1956a, 1956b, 1957, 1959; Uchida in Okada 1960; Tixier-Durivault 1966; Mai Bao Thu 1970; Faulkner, 1974; Faulkner & Chesher, 1979; and Muzik & Wainwright, 1977. Among these works is the *Treatise on Invertebrate Paleontology* (Bayer, 1956a), which is a work that has received wide distribution and application outside the immediate limits of systematics.

9. In view of the preponderance of usage of *Melithaea* for the well-known genus of octocorals since its reintroduction by Utinomi, it seems desirable to retain it rather than to return to the use of *Melitodes* after its abandonment for nearly twenty years.

10. The name *Melitea* Péron & Lesueur, 1810, has never been used for a scyphozoan since its original publication, although it was misspelled *Melitaea* by Gistel, 1848. Both Mayer, 1910, and Kramp, 1961, fail even to mention it in their comprehensive works on medusae.

11. The name *Melitaea* Fabricius, 1807, is in current use for a genus of butterflies, a group so far removed from the Octocorallia that little likelihood of confusion with it exists.

12. The specific name *ocracea*, as published in the combination *Isis ocracea* Linnaeus, 1758, is the valid original spelling of the name of the type-species of the genera *Melitea* Lambouroux, 1812, and *Melithaea* Milne Edwards & Haime, 1857, in spite of Linnaeus' emendation to *ochracea* in the 12th edition of the *Systema Naturae*,



1767, p. 1287. From then until 1956, when Bayer employed the original spelling, *ochracea* was the predominant spelling for the species. Since 1956, both spellings have been used without a clear-cut majority for either. Therefore, it seems preferable to accept the incorrect subsequent spelling *ochracea* in view of its overall predominance since 1767, and its evident derivation from the Greek word *ochros*.

13. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is therefore requested:

- (1) to use its plenary powers to rule that:
 - (a) the name *Melithaea* as used by Milne Edwards & Haime, 1857, vol. 1, p. 199, for the genus *Melitea* Lamouroux, 1812, is available and is to be treated as an unjustified emendation of *Melitea* Lamouroux, 1812;
 - (b) the spelling *ochracea*, *Isis*, as used by Linnaeus, 1767, p. 1287, is to be treated as a justified emendation of the specific name *ocracea*, (an incorrect original spelling published in the binomen *Isis ocracea* Linnaeus, 1758, p. 799);
- (2) to place on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology the name *Melithaea* Milne Edwards & Haime, 1857, made available by use of the plenary powers in (1) (a) above (gender: feminine), type species through *Melitea* Lamouroux, 1812, *Isis ochracea* Linnaeus, 1758, as validated by use of the plenary powers in (1) (b) above;
- (3) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name *ochracea* Linnaeus, 1758, as published in the binomen *Isis ocracea*, and as validated by use of the plenary powers in (1) (a) above (specific name of type species of *Melithaea* Milne Edwards & Haime, 1857);
- (4) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Generic Names in Zoology;
 - (a) *Melitea* Lamouroux, 1812, a junior homonym of *Melitea* Péron & Lesueur, 1810 (Medusae).
 - (b) *Melitodes* Verrill, 1864, a junior objective synonym of *Melithaea* Milne Edwards & Haime, 1857.
- (5) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology, the name *Isis ocracea* Linnaeus, 1758, ruled by use of the plenary powers in (1) (b) above to be an incorrect original spelling of *Isis ochracea* Linnaeus, 1758.



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