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LEPTODACTYLUS LABIALIS, THE VALID NAME FOR THE AMERICAN WHITE-LIPPED FROG (AMPHIBIA: LEPTODACTYLIDAE).—For many years, a species in the *Leptodactylus fuscus* group, commonly collected from Texas in the United States to northern Venezuela, was known as *L. labialis* based on Cope's *Cystignathus labialis*. In a revision of the *fuscus* group, *C. fragilis* Brocchi was shown to represent the same species as *C. labialis* Cope (Heyer, 1978:31-32). In that revision, Heyer considered Brocchi's name to have been published in 1877 and Cope's name in 1878; hence *fragilis* was the appropriate name for the species.

C. W. Myers pointed out to one of us (WRH) the following (Myers, in litt.): "Agreed that *fragilis* Brocchi is an 1877 name, but your assumption that *labialis* Cope dates from 1878 is incorrect. The last name was validated in a preprint of Cope's 'Tenth Contribution to the Herpetology of Tropical America.' Page 98 of the preprint bears (as a last line) the notice 'Published August 15, 1877,' so the *labialis* name seems quite precise. The problem now is clearly when in 1877 was *fragilis* published." Myers was unable to determine the date of publication for Brocchi's *fragilis* from the resources available to him.

In a search of the "Comptes rendus hebdomadaires de l'Académie des Sciences de Paris" for 1877, one of us (AD) looked for titles received by the French Academy of Sciences but

did not find any dates of receipt for the issue with Brocchi's article. The librarian at the Laboratoire des Reptiles et Amphibiens of the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, J.-J. Escarra, located an unbound collection of the "Bulletin de la Société philomathique de Paris" in which Brocchi's article was published. The name *C. fragilis* appears on page 182 of issue 4, volume 1, series 7, in a paper which starts in the middle of page 175 and stops in the middle of page 197. The unbound collection shows that, in spite of appearances, volume 1 of series 7 was published in four trimestral issues (the end of the first three issues cut papers and even sentences in two, only issue 4 ends normally at the end of a paper). The dates of the meetings where the communications were read which comprise the contents of issue 4 are the end of the meeting of 23 June 1877 (pages 145-153), followed by 14 July 1877 (pages 154-169), 28 July 1877 (pages 170-197, with Brocchi's paper), and 11 Aug. 1877 (pages 197-205). Each issue title page of volume 1 bear the double date "1876-1877," which means that the period covered by the volume was 1876 and 1877; appearing separately and below on each issue title page, is the year 1877, which is the year of publication of the issue.

Issue 1 of volume 2 of series 7 bears the double dates of "1877-1878" (dates of meetings covered) and the publication date of 1878. The first issue contained pages 1-64 covering the meetings from 27 Oct. 1877 to 8 Dec. 1877. Thus, a minimum of 24 days elapsed between the last meeting included in issue 1, volume 2, series 7 and its earliest possible publication. Applying the same minimum period from the last meeting within an issue to its publication indicates that issue 4 of volume 1 of series 7 would have been published well later (4 Sept.) than the 15 Aug. 1877 publication date of Cope's article.

We conclude from the available data that Brocchi's paper was published sometime between 11 Aug. and 31 Dec. 1877. For nomenclatural purposes, in the absence of more precise evidence, the date of publication must be considered to be 31 Dec. 1877 [Article 21 (c) of the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature, 1985].

Cystignathus labialis Cope, 1877, thus predates *C. fragilis* Brocchi, 1877, and as the oldest available name should be used in the following combination for the species involved: *L. labialis* (Cope, 1877).

Acknowledgments.—We thank C. W. Myers for pointing out the original problem and turning it over to us for resolution. J.-J. Escarra found the unbound volumes in the reserve collection at the Paris Museum library, without which it would have been impossible to determine whether the volumes were published as individual issues or not. R. I. Crombie and R. W. McDiarmid reviewed the manuscript.

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