

**OPINION 2279** (Case 3488)***Papilio danae* Fabricius, 1775 (currently *Colotis danae*; Insecta, Lepidoptera, PIERIDAE): usage conserved by the suppression of *Papilio danae* Hufnagel, 1766**

**Abstract.** The combination *Papilio danae* Fabricius, 1775 (Lepidoptera, PIERIDAE) has been conserved by suppression of the primary homonym *Papilio danae* Hufnagel, 1766. The current combination *Colotis danae* is well-established as the valid name for a common and widespread butterfly with many subspecies in Africa, Arabia, and Asia.

**Keywords.** Nomenclature; taxonomy; Insecta; Lepidoptera; PIERIDAE; *Papilio*; *Colotis*; *Colotis danae*; *Papilio eborea*; butterflies; Asia; Arabia; Africa.

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**Ruling**

- (1) Under the plenary power it is hereby ruled that the name *danae* Hufnagel, 1766, as published in the binomen *Papilio danae*, is suppressed for the purposes of both the Principle of Priority and the Principle of Homonymy.
- (2) The name *danae* Fabricius, 1775, as published in the binomen *Papilio danae*, is hereby placed on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology.
- (3) The name *danae* Hufnagel, 1766, as published in the binomen *Papilio danae*, is hereby placed on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology.

**History of Case 3488**

An application to conserve the combination *Papilio danae* Fabricius, 1775 (Lepidoptera, PIERIDAE) by suppression of the primary homonym *Papilio danae* Hufnagel, 1766 was received from Torben B. Larsen (Denmark), R.I. Vane-Wright (Natural History Museum, London, U.K. and Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology, University of Kent, Canterbury U.K.), Krushnamegh Kunte (Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, U.S.A.) and Vazrick Nazari (University of Guelph, ON, Canada) on 17 February 2009. After correspondence the case was published in BZN 66: 250–255 (September 2009). The title, abstract and keywords of the case were published on the Commission's website. A comment in support was published in BZN 67: 65.

**Decision of the Commission**

On 1 September 2010 the members of the Commission were invited to vote on the proposals published in BZN 66: 253. At the close of the voting period on 1 December 2010 the votes were as follows:

Affirmative votes – 24: Ballerio, Bogutskaya, Bouchet, Brothers, Fautin, Grygier, Halliday, Harvey, Kojima, Kottelat, Krell, Kullander, Lamas, Minelli, Pape, Papp, Patterson, Rosenberg, Štys, van Tol, Winston, Yanega, Zhang and Zhou.

Negative votes – 1: Lim.

Alonso-Zarazaga, Ng and Pyle were on leave of absence.

Voting FOR, Halliday said the Case presented an overwhelming argument for the protection of the name *danae* Fabricius, 1775. The use of the name *Papilio eborea* was a clear example of the over-zealous and pedantic application of the letter of the Code, in a way that was inconsistent with stability. However, he felt it was unfortunate that the Case depended heavily on the use of Google as evidence of usage. He said he thought the Commission should make an explicit statement that they strongly discourage the use of Google because it produces spurious and misleading results. This point was made very eloquently in a Comment entitled ‘Googleology’: *Powerful tool or unreliable evidence* by Lawrence, Pelkey & Soares (BZN 67: 246–254). In the future authors should be instructed not to use Google, but instead to base their arguments on a more thoughtful and critical analysis of the genuine scientific literature. Štys said that although he was voting FOR, he regretted that the published Case had not used the terminology of the Code. The authors’ ‘replacement name *Papilio eborea*’ (paragraph 10) is actually a ‘substitute name’ (cf. Glossary of the Code). Moreover, Štys also felt that the number of hits in Google should not be used in nomenclatural argumentation (paragraphs 9 & 10). For example, the authors of the Case gave 3,700 hits for *Colotis danae* while only 12 for “*Hipparchia danae* Hufnagel and *Papilio danae* Hufnagel” (as from 30 September 2009); whereas Štys’ subsequent search (25 September 2010) provided 19,700 for “*Colotis danae*”, 64,300 for “*Hipparchia danae*” and 3,020 for “*Papilio danae*” using the names without authors, 4,630 for “*Colotis danae* Fabricius”, 5,380 for “*Colotis danae* Hufnagel”, 1,290 for “*Hipparchia danae* Fabricius”, 998 for “*Hipparchia danae* Hufnagel”, 2,620 for “*Papilio danae* Fabricius” and 1,800 for “*Papilio danae* Hufnagel”. Štys said the utility and reliability of such data needed no further comment. Voting FOR, Yanega felt it should not, in principle, have been necessary to vote on this Case. He suggested that Article 29.3.5 is sufficient to indicate that the two names are not homonyms. However, the inappropriate actions of Koçak would seem to make a Commission ruling desirable to prevent further confusion.

### Original references

The following are the original references to the names placed on Official Lists and Indexes by the ruling given in the present Opinion:

- danae*, *Papilio*, Fabricius, 1775, *Systema entomologiae, sistens insectorum classes, ordines, genera, species, adiectis synonymis, locis, descriptionibus, observationibus*. [xxxii], Officina Libraria Kortii, Flensburgi & Lipsiae, p. 476.
- danae*, *Papilio*, Hufnagel, 1766, *Berlinisches Magazin, oder gesammelte Schriften und Nachrichten für die Liebhaber der Arzneywissenschaft, Naturgeschichte und der angenehmen Wissenschaften überhaupt*, 2(1): 82.