

**PROBLEMS OF NOMENCLATURE,
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE ODONATA**

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The author's involvement from 1934 in problems of odonate nomenclature is briefly described, and a plea is made to the Editors of entomological periodicals and to the authors of taxonomic papers to carefully affix the accurate date of appearance to their publications.

Since 1934 I have been closely involved with the Odonata nomenclature. In that year the Royal Entomological Society of London appointed a committee of six eminent British entomologists to prepare lists of specific names to be fixed as genotypes of genera of British insects. They delegated, to small sub-committees, the duty of discharging this task for the particular Orders or groups of Orders. They made the rules and principles that they asked us to adopt. They also selected the members of the different sub-committees.

Four of us were chosen to list the Neuropteroid group (*s.l.*) and we got to work at once on the Odonata, Mr. John COWLEY M.A., Mr. F.J. KILLINGTON B.Sc., Mr. D.E. KIMMINS and myself (Miss C.E. LONGFIELD). Cowley was already engaged in the preparation of the generic names of the Odonata of the world. He was able to complete the list of proposed generic and specific types for the British Odonata (*s. str.*) which we presented and had published by 15 July 1935 (Part 3).

Kimmings was in charge of the Neuropteroid Collections at the British Museum of Natural History and I was working on the Classification and Taxonomy of the Odonata of the World. The department of entomology of the B.M. assisted throughout.

Killington had the longest task. He was already engaged in preparation of "A Monograph of the British Neuroptera". This was published in two volumes, 1

and 2, (1936/37. London. Ray Society). He completed his list of the generic and specific names of the Neuroptera (*s. str.*) represented in the British fauna, and this was published by our sub-committee 30 June 1937 (Part 4).

This briefly accounts for my involvement from 1934 in problems of nomenclature. At intervals during the succeeding decades, I have written or spoken on the subject, but nothing has been published since 1960.

Now in July 1975, I have taken this opportunity to warn you, current workers on and authors of new genera and species, of the danger of relapsing into the nomenclatorial chaos that I hoped you had been saved from. This danger is being caused by several entomological publications from several countries (including Great Britain). They are allowing the dates of authorship to vary from the dates of publication. Mostly this seems to be happening with serial volume numbers. In some cases the actual year appearing on the separata are as much as two years before or behind the numbers and dates on the bound volume in a series. All the separata have only paper covers. However detailed the serial numbers and publishing dates on these covers, there is nothing on the inside pages to identify the date of the contents. Should the librarians of either National or Scientific Libraries throw away the paper covers during binding into volumes, then there is nothing left to show the true date.*

I do not consider any author's priority is safe, nor even the name he gave the insect, without the date of the valid publication being affixed to his paper. I do not have to preach this to our editors of the "*Odonatologica*" separate parts; nothing could be more exemplary. But I do beg all the different nationalities here today, to impress on their entomological editors the extreme importance of remedying these omissions.

* Miss LONGFIELD passed round a few examples, and begged the audience to see that this practice ceased. Quite a discussion followed her remarks. — *Eds.*