



The nomenclatural status of some generic nomina of Megophryidae (Amphibia, Anura)

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The use of scientific names or nomina (Dubois 2000) in the scientific literature requires attention to the international nomenclatural rules of the *Code* (Anonymous 1999). Articles 7 to 20 of this *Code* put precise conditions for the availability of nomina, which must be respected if these are to be used as valid in taxonomy. Similarly, Articles 52 to 60 concern the situation of homonymous nomina. Lack of attention to these rules may create nomenclatural instability and confusion and should be avoided, or corrected when discovered.

The Oriental frog family Megophryidae Bonaparte, 1850 accommodates about 10 genera, according to the taxonomy adopted (Dubois 1980; Duellman & Trueb 1985; Frost 1985; Lathrop 1997; Dubois & Ohler 1998; Inger 1999; Zhao 1999; Xie & Wang 2000; Delorme *et al.* 2006; Frost *et al.* 2006; Vitt & Caldwell 2009). One of them, long confounded (e.g., Inger 1966) with the genus *Leptobrachium* Tschudi, 1838, has received several nomina in the recent years: *Leptolalax*, *Carpophrys* and *Paramegophrys*. According to the rules of the *Code*, the two latter nomina are not nomenclaturally available, for reasons summarized below, and should not be used in the scientific literature.

The generic nomen *Paramegophrys*, for the species *Leptobrachium pelodytoides* Boulenger, 1893, first appeared in an abstract (Liu 1964) distributed at the 30th annual congress of the Chinese Society of Zoology in Beijing, in a volume given to meeting delegates. This volume was not listed in the catalogues of Chinese herpetological literature of Zhao & Zhao (1994) and Zhao *et al.* (2000), as it is not properly a publication. Article 9.9.9 of the *Code* reads: “(...) none of the following conditions constitutes published work within the meaning of the Code: (...) abstracts of articles, papers, posters, texts of lectures, and similar material when issued primarily to participants at meetings, symposia, colloquia or congresses”. The nomen *Paramegophrys* is therefore nomenclaturally unavailable and should not be used in the scientific literature. Its recent substitution to the generic nomen *Leptolalax* by Fei *et al.* (2008), Jiang *et al.* (2008) and Mo *et al.* (2008) is therefore unwarranted and should not be followed.

The nomen *Carpophrys*, for the species *Megophrys oshanensis* Liu, 1950, first appeared in two anonymous papers (Anonymous 1976a: 6, 1976b: 20). Article 14 of the *Code* reads: “A new name or nomenclatural act published after 1950 with anonymous authorship (...) is not thereby made available; such publication before 1951 does not prevent availability”. The nomen *Carpophrys* is thus also, although for a different reason, unavailable, as first noted by Dubois (1981: 191). This nomen was mentioned again in several publications (Anonymous 1977: 27; Hu, Fei & Ye 1978: 23; Hu & Tian 1978: 30; Ye & Fei 1978: 39; Shen 1983: 52; Tian & Hu 1983: 41; Yang, Su & Li 1983: 40; Frost 1985: 413; Wu, Dong & Xu 1988: 38), but never complying with all criteria for nomenclatural availability, so it remains a *nomen nudum* and should not be used as valid.

The valid nomen for the genus at stake remains *Leptolalax* Dubois, 1980 (type-species by original designation *Leptobrachium gracile* Günther, 1872), first erected (Dubois 1980) for a subgenus of *Leptobrachium* and later raised to generic rank (Dubois 1983).

Delorme *et al.* (2006) proposed a phylogenetic analysis of the family which led them to subdivide this genus in two subgenera. The nomen *Leptolalax* applies to the subgenus mostly distributed in the Sunda archipelago. For the Asian continental subgenus, the subgeneric nomen *Lalax* Delorme, Dubois, Grosjean & Ohler, 2006 (type-species by original designation *Leptolalax bourreti* Dubois, 1983) proves to be twice preoccupied, by *Lalax* Hamilton, 1990 (Insecta, Hemiptera) and *Lalax* Holloway & Lane, 1998 (Trilobitomorpha). We therefore propose hereby a *nomen novum* (new replacement nomen) for the amphibian nomen *Lalax*: *Lalos* nov., from the Greek *λάλος* (*lalos*), “talkative”, the Greek adjective from which was derived the root “*lalax*” first used in this family by Myers & Leviton (1962) when they coined