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John Edward Gray (1800–1875): his malacological publications and molluscan taxa

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Abstract

John Edward Gray was a major figure in zoology in the middle of the 19th Century. An annotated bibliography of his molluscan publications is given with all works collated and dated, with questions of authorship discussed. Genus-group and species-group molluscan taxa introduced by, or incorrectly attributed to, Gray are listed. Family level names are not included as most, gastropods and bivalves, have been recently treated by Bouchet & Rocroi (2005, 2010). The included lists treat 937 genus-group nomina and 1,649 species-group nomina associated with Gray.

Action is taken to conserve three names in current use found to be junior synonyms. The genus-group name *Basterotia* Hörnes, 1859 is declared a *nomen protectum* over *Harlea* Gray, 1842, a *nomen oblitum*. The species-group names *Trochus pellisserpentis* W. Wood, 1828 and *Trochus armillatus* W. Wood, 1828 are declared *nomina protecta* over *Trochus emma* Gray, 1827 and *Trochus henslowi* Gray, 1828 respectively, which become *nomina oblita*.

The type species of five genus-group names introduced by Gray are fixed under Article 70.3.2: *Euthria*, *Pirenella*, *Pusionella*, *Rissoella*, and *Tagelus*.

First Reviser action is taken regarding *Anapa* Gray, 1842 and *Placobranchus euchlorus* Gray, 1850. Recurring nomenclatural issues and those too complex to treat within the regular catalogue are discussed in 57 Taxa Notes. The lists are fully referenced with 743 literature titles in addition to the 307 listed for Gray.

Key words: John E. Gray, biography, bibliography, W. E. Leach, J. G. Children, taxa, nomenclature, dates of publication, Mollusca, *nomen protectum*, *nomen oblitum*.

Introduction

From 1840 until 1875 John Edward Gray was Keeper of Zoology at the British Museum, later the British Museum (Natural History) and now The Natural History Museum [London]. He is known to malacologists as a prolific writer who introduced hundreds of new families, genera, and species in Mollusca. As Gray was knowledgeable in all fields of zoology, his publications on Mollusca are only a portion of his production. He published more on vertebrates than on invertebrates. Only his works involving Mollusca are treated herein. Gray's life and his devotion to the Museum has been the subject of, or treated in, four works by A. E. Gunther (1974, 1975, 1980a, 1980b) which makes it difficult to offer the same information in different words. There may be stray sentences that reiterate Gunther's published work that are not attributed. Due to this extensive treatment by Gunther, biographical information herein will be minimal.

Included are lists of molluscan taxa introduced by Gray, or incorrectly attributed to him by later authors. In the older literature many names were attributed to Gray which are now correctly attributed to others. The reason for this is discussed. In text before each list the names are assigned to various categories. A number of names require lengthy discussion that would detract from the list format. Such names are treated in 57 Taxa Notes immediately following the species-group list. Some of these Taxa Notes apply to numerous taxa.

Conventions and abbreviations

Spelling, capitalization, and punctuation within quotes are as published unless noted. The acronym I.C.Z.N. refers to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature. Official Index refers to the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid [Generic or Specific] Names in Zoology. Official List refers to the Official List of [Generic or Specific] Names in Zoology. Other conventions utilized for genus-group names and species-group names are listed at the beginning of those sections.

John Edward Gray (1800–1875)—Early life

Gray's autobiographical manuscripts are extensively quoted with insightful annotations by Gunther (1974). Most of this section is taken from that paper, often in Gunther's words or, if in quotes, in Gray's words. This is much abbreviated and Gunther's work is recommended for a better understanding of the early history of our subject.

For some years Gray's survival was in question. He wrote: "I was a very delicate child until I was six years old. ... I lived on bread and butter and a little butter pudding made in a cup until I was nearly 8 years old. It required a great struggle to overcome my repugnance to animal food." He further stated that he learned to eat every article gradually added to his menu and it was not until he was grown and married that he overcame his repugnance to fish. Even the list of articles he could eat was very limited and "does not include most of the articles which are generally regarded as delicacies."

John Edward Gray was the second of five children born to Elizabeth Forfeit Gray (1777–1852) and Samuel Frederick Gray VI (1766–1828), an editor, author, botanist and pharmacist. His siblings were Samuel Forfeit Gray (1798–1872), George Robert Gray (1808–1872) and Charlotte Frances Gray (1811–1885). The fifth child, a daughter, was said by Gray to have died before her mother and was a spinster.