PODALONIA SPINOLA, 1853 (HYMENOPTERA, SPHECIDAe):
PROPOSED SUPPRESSION UNDER PLENARY POWERS IN
FAVOUR OF PODALONIA FERNALD, 1927, WITH AMMOPHILA
VIOLACEIPENNIS LEPELETIER, 1845, AS TYPE SPECIES.¹ Z.N.(S.) 1735

By A. S. Menke, R. M. Bohart (University of California, Davis, California, U.S.A.) and J. van der Vecht (Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie, Leiden, Holland)

1. The aim of this application is to request the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature to use its plenary powers to ensure that continued usage of the well established generic name Podalonia Spinola, 1853, sensu Fernald (1927) will not be endangered. Continued use of the name is threatened because it appears certain that the type species, Ammophila bocandei Spinola, 1853, has been mistakenly interpreted as being congeneric with the species usually placed under the genus Podalonia by modern workers.

History of the name Podalonia

2. In a paper primarily devoted to describing new species of wasps from Pará, Brazil, Spinola (1853, pp. 52–53) presented a short discourse on the merits of basing new genera on peculiarities of wing venation, a practice of which he plainly disapproved. To demonstrate how easily (and unwisely) a person could establish a new genus for a species with aberrant wing venation, he described a new wasp species from “Guinée”, Africa, which had a petiolate second marginal cell. Spinola interpreted this species, bocandei, as a member of the genus Ammophila Kirby, 1798, a taxon in which the second submarginal cell is normally four sided. After the description of Ammophila bocandei, Spinola returned to his discourse on the describing of new genera for species that had peculiar wing venation by stating that he could just as easily propose the generic name Podalonia for bocandei.

3. It is obvious that Spinola did not intend the name Podalonia to be accepted as a valid generic name since he was only using it as an example to demonstrate the undesirability of naming genera solely for species with different wing venation. Nevertheless, under the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature Spinola’s name is valid even though conditionally proposed (Art. 17(8)). The problem then is to determine the identity of the type species, bocandei.

4. F. F. Kohl (1890, pp. 101–102), the greatest authority on the subfamily Sphecinae, was the first person to deal with Spinola’s genus, but he did not attempt to identify it. He merely listed Podalonia as belonging to the subfamily Sphecinae and related it to Ammophila Kirby, 1798, sensu lato, without mentioning bocandei. Later in his monumental work on the genera of the Sphecidae, Kohl (1896, pp. 242, 308) listed Podalonia as a synonym of Ammophila in the broad sense without any discussion of his reasons for doing so. It should be pointed out that Kohl’s interpretation of Ammophila was very con-

¹ Research supported in part by a grant from the National Science Foundation GB-3074.
servative, and today up to six genera are recognized for the species Kohl lumped under the name Ammophila.

5. In his revision of the Palearctic Ammophila s. 1. Kohl (1906, pp. 240–241) divided Ammophila into two "Hauptartengruppe", Ammophila Kirby, 1798, and Psammophila Dahlbom, 1842. He tentatively identified bocandei Spinola as a Psammophila with aberrant wing venation but stated that the species was unknown to him.

6. The only other author to deal with Podalonia during this period was Dalla Torre. In his Catalogus Hymenopterorum, vol. 8, 1897, which deals with the Sphecidae, Dalla Torre listed (p. 396) bocandei as a species of Ammophila in the broad sense of Kohl. The only noteworthy item in connection with this citation is that the species was erroneously listed as occurring in "Am.: Brasilia" instead of the type locality given by Spinola: "Guinée", Africa. It is probable that this error caused all subsequent European taxonomists to ignore bocandei completely. Note for example, that bocandei is not listed in Leclercq's (1955) catalog of the Sphecinae of Africa.

7. In 1927 H. T. Fernald published a revision of the North American species of a genus of wasps which up to that time had been placed under the generic name Psammophila Dahlbom, 1842, a taxon which it will be remembered was considered as a "Hauptartengruppe" of Ammophila by Kohl. Fernald was the first author to note that Psammophila Dahlbom was a junior homonym of Psammophila Brown, 1827, a genus of Mollusca. The only available replacement name for Dahlbom's preoccupied name was Podalonia Spinola, which Fernald used with some misgivings, pointing out the conditional nature of Spinola's name. Fernald's reason for accepting Podalonia as congeneric with Psammophila was based on Spinola's statement that the abdominal petiole of bocandei was similar to that of "Ammoph. arenaria Latr." [=hirsuta Scopoli], a species commonly recognized as a Psammophila.

8. Fernald did not pursue the identity of bocandei further, and until recently (Bohart and Menke, 1963, p. 163) no one has questioned his interpretation of Podalonia. The name Podalonia has gained world wide popular acceptance as the proper name for the genus formerly known under the name Psammophila Dahlbom. Several regional revisions and considerable biological work have been published under the name Podalonia.

The identity of Ammophila bocandei

9. Searches by Menke in the museums in Paris and Turin for the holotype of bocandei proved fruitless, and probably it is no longer in existence. Therefore, the identity of bocandei rests solely on an interpretation of the original description. Spinola's description consists mainly of color, but even so it is sufficient to cast strong doubts on the correctness of interpreting Podalonia as congeneric with Psammophila Dahlbom. Several color features mentioned by Spinola are of particular importance in this regard: head reddish yellow, abdomen shiny blue black, wings cloudy and shiny blue. It is significant that none of the Old World species currently assigned to Podalonia, sensu Fernald, display any of these color characters, and although a few New World species do have dark wings and abdomens, none have a reddish head, eliminating the
possibility that the locality data for bocandei were incorrect. Of further importance are the reddish legs mentioned by Spinola. Red legs are found in very few species of Podalonia, sensu Fernald, and when the legs are red, the wings are invariably clear and the abdomen is largely red. None of the species of Podalonia, sensu Fernald, have a petiolate second submarginal cell, except perhaps an occasional aberrant individual and the authors have never seen such a specimen.

10. At present it appears likely from the description of bocandei that it is a species in the genus Chalybion Dahlbom, or perhaps less likely, either the genus Parapsammophila Taschenberg or Chlorion Latreille.* All three genera possess African species with color patterns which come close to matching that of bocandei. However, Chalybion seems most likely to be the genus to which bocandei belongs, because there are species in this genus which have the second submarginal cell petiolate.

11. The conclusion one draws from these facts is that bocandei cannot possibly be congeneric with Podalonia, sensu Fernald, and that therefore, Podalonia Spinola cannot be considered as an available name for the pre-occupied name Psammophila Dahlbom. Since no other name is available for Psammophila Dahlbom, it is now necessary to propose a new name for this taxon. However, this course of action would serve no useful purpose because Podalonia, sensu Fernald, has enjoyed popular world wide usage for nearly forty years and is a name around which a considerable literature has accumulated. To offer a new generic name now would only cause more confusion than uniformity and therefore we propose that Podalonia be conserved in the sense of Fernald.

12. Several alternative methods for conserving the name Podalonia exist:

A. Throw out bocandei as the type of Podalonia Spinola and select a well known African species of Podalonia, sensu Fernald, to be designated under the plenary powers as the type species of Spinola’s genus. An argument against such a move is that Spinola never intended Podalonia to be accepted as a genus. The name was at best a conditional one.

B. Under the plenary powers arbitrarily synonymize bocandei with some well known African Podalonia species (sensu Fernald). This sort of action would be absolutely contrary to the published description of bocandei as we have pointed out in paragraphs 9 and 10 above.

C. Suppress Podalonia Spinola under the plenary powers for purposes of synonymy and homonymy, and credit Fernald, 1927, as having authored and described the genus Podalonia; and at the same time designate the oldest and best known species treated in Fernald’s revision as the type of Podalonia Fernald. We favor this last method since it in no way affects the validly described species bocandei and the name Podalonia is insured of continued usage. The Commission is therefore requested to:

* specifically, Chalybion fuuscipenne (Smith), Parapsammophila cyanipennis (Lepeletier), and Chlorion ciliatum (Fabricius) [=xanthocerum Illiger].
(1) use its plenary powers:
   (a) to suppress the generic name *Podalonia* Spinola, 1853, and all other uses of that name before that by Fernald, 1927, for the purposes of the Law of Priority and the Law of Homonymy;
   (b) to accord H. T. Fernald authorship of the generic name *Podalonia* as characterized by him in 1927, and to designate *Ammophila violaceipennis* Lepeletier, 1845, as type-species of the genus.

(2) place the generic name *Podalonia* Spinola, 1853, (as suppressed under the plenary powers in (1) (a) above) on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Generic Names in Zoology;

(3) place *Podalonia* Fernald, 1927 (as validated under the plenary powers in (1) (b) above) on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology;

(4) place the specific name *violaceipennis* Lepeletier, 1845, as published in the binomen *Ammophila violaceipennis* (type-species of *Podalonia* Fernald, 1927) on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology.

**Literature Cited**


