

虫 己

第二十二卷・第十六號

昭和二十六年四月十五日

九州大學農學部昆蟲學教室發行

(28)

ON THE PUBLICATION DATE OF
POLYHOMOA ITOI AZUMA
(Hymenoptera, Formicidae)

By. W. L. Brown, Jr.¹ and K. Yasumatsu²

In a recent article in *Psyche* (Vol. 54, pp. 93-94; 1950), Dr. W. S. Creighton discusses the confusion over the true publication date of *Polyhomoa itoi* Azuma. Although we are reluctant to notice this wretched synonym because of the added burden it places upon cataloguers, we find that Dr. Creighton has misinterpreted the facts regarding date of acceptance of the separate. He can scarcely be blamed for so doing, for evidence at hand indicates that Azuma's paper *as issued in reprint form* has been deliberately predated. The true date of publication of *Hyogo Biology*, Vol. 1, No. 4, is, as Dr. Creighton has verified independently, January 10, 1950; this is the date for *Polyhomoa itoi* Azuma. The date printed on the bottom of the cover of the reprint (August 30, 1949) cannot refer to acceptance date, as the acceptance date is clearly given in Japanese under the Japanese subtitle as July 25, 1949. In reply (dated 24/vi/1950) to a letter by Yasumatsu inquiring about the date of publication of the part of *Hyogo Biology* in question, the editor of the journal, Mr. Yutaka Murai of Koyo High School, stated that it was issued precisely on January 10, 1950. So much for *Polyhomoa*.

In a letter from Azuma to Brown, dated 24/xi/1950, the former reaffirmed the date August 30, 1949 as that on which *Polyhomoa itoi* first appeared in print, and suggested that *Kyidris mutica* Brown was a

¹ 39 Alfred Road, Burwood E 13, Melbourne.

² Entomological Laboratory, Kyushu University, Fukuoka.

synonym. We take this statement of synonymy to be correct, but insist that *K. mutica* is the *senior* synonym, as we cannot accept Azuma's statement of the publication date in the face of the evidence to the contrary. We therefore suggest the following formal synonymy:

Kyidris mutica Brown (Sept. 20, 1949), *Mushi*, XX, pp. 3-6, fig. 1, A, B, C, worker.

=*Polyhomoa itoi* Azuma (Jan. 10, 1950), *Hyogo Biology*, I, pp. 35-37, figs., worker. (New Synonymy.)

Azuma's behavior in this matter has been irregular, to say the least. Furthermore, in recent exchanges, he has offered "paratypes," so labelled, of Japanese Formicidae, which, when they have arrived, prove to bear labels bearing a date *after* that of the original publication of the species concerned and are from localities other than the type locality. In view of this set of irregularities on the part of Azuma, and considering his very widely propagated requests for material in the form of literature and exchanges, etc. of specimens, we consider that full exposure of his activity may prevent confusion in the future. The authors deplore the great amount of aberrant publication on ant taxonomy issued in the recent past by several authors who, in our opinion, should not have access to scientific journals under any circumstances. In our opinion, the International Commission would do well to consider possible steps to be taken in the direction of nullifying the works of authors publishing in bad faith or in extreme naiveté, and should certainly be ready to condemn the publication of those suffering strong mental aberration.

The publication of new species, genera and even tribes of ants continues to flow faster than does that of revisionary matter. While this is due partly to the "mihi too" inclinations of myrmecologists, it must also be said that many editors of entomological publications will jibe at frank criticism and new synonymy while at the same time freely and uncritically publishing impossibly diagnosed novelties from the pens of the wildest authors. The time has come to remove criticism from the realm of discreet whispers. If the work of a specialist is consistently and continuously very poor and confusing taxonomically, the facts and opinions concerning it, providing they are fair, should be published widely. In the past, entomological specimens have often continued to flow to authors long after their "eccentricity" (often amounting to sheer, indisputable dementia) had been noted and passed over in discreet silence. In consequence, very many thousands of genera and species of insects remain as little more than published names. Mental aberrants

have a way of being extremely prolific writers, and they have often wrecked the taxonomy of entire families while saner, but overcautious fellow-specialists have stood aside, sadly shaking their heads and withholding their pens.

The only way poor work can be stopped lies in its exposure *before it has gone too far*. In systematics, which depends necessarily on the rule of priority, some positive action must sooner or later be taken to stop the flood of crippling publication.