

*PARAONIS* GRUBE, 1872 (POLYCHAETA, PARAONIDAE): PROPOSED  
SUPPRESSION UNDER THE PLENARY POWERS IN FAVOUR OF  
*PARAONIS* CERRUTI, 1909. Z.N.(S.) 1993

By V. Strelzov (*Murmansk Institute of Marine Biology, Academy of Sciences,  
Dalnie Zelentsy, Murmansk, USSR*) and  
P. Uschakov (*Institute of Zoology, Academy of Sciences, Leningrad, USSR*)

The object of the present application is to ask the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature to use its plenary powers to preserve the present usage of a well-established name, *Paraonis* Grube, 1872, sensu Cerruti, 1909. Future usage of this name is in danger in consequence of the fact that, since it was established, the type-species *Paraonis tenera* Grube, 1872, was erroneously interpreted as congeneric with species which modern authors see as belonging to the genus *Paraonis*. To preserve the present usage of this name is also desirable because its rejection would put in danger stability of the nomenclature of the family PARAONIDAE which has existed without change since 1909.

*History of the name Paraonis*

2. The name *Paraonis* was first established by Grube for the genus in which he placed *Paraonis tenera* Grube, 1872, described from the Adriatic. Grube included the genus in the family SPIODEEN (more correctly SPIONIDAE).

3. Seven years later, Webster (1879) who, as it appears knew nothing of the work of Grube, having described a new species from the Atlantic (Virginia), established for it the new generic name *Aricidea* and placed this genus in the family ARICIIDAE.

4. In 1897 Mesnil, basing himself on the study of the type-specimens of two species: *Aonides fulgens* Levinsen, 1883, and *Aonides gracilis* Tauber, 1879, excluded them from the family SPIONIDAE and established for them a new genus *Levinsenia*. Having once more carefully examined *Levinsenia fulgens* (Levinsen, 1883) and made a detailed description of this species, Mesnil & Caullery (1898) joined the genera *Levinsenia* Mesnil, 1897, and *Aricidea* Webster, 1879, in a new family LEVINSENIENS, for which they used a non-latinized name. Grube's work, where the description had been given of the species of the genus *Paraonis*, escaped their notice. Mesnil & Caullery rejected for this family the name ARICIDIENS (although the genus *Aricidea* had been described before *Levinsenia*) because the word "ARICIDIENS" too much resembled "ARICIENS", and that would lead to a confusion in terminology. The difference between the genera *Levinsenia* and *Aricidea* consists, according to Mesnil & Caullery, in that the former lacks the dorsal antenna on the prostomium, whilst the second possesses it.

5. Having taken notice of the work of Grube (1872), Cerruti (1909) contested that the genus *Paraonis* rightly belonged in the same family as *Levinsenia* and *Aricidea*. Cerruti was the first to establish for this family a latinized name—PARAONIDAE. As type-genus he chose not *Levinsenia* but *Paraonis* as having been established earlier. Moreover, he considered the genera *Levinsenia* and *Paraonis* as identical and consequently *Paraonis* as the senior synonym.



Since that time all the paraonids lacking the dorsal antenna on the prostomium have been allocated to *Paraonis*, as it was established by Cerruti. This practice continues to the present day.

*The identity of Paraonis tenera*

6. Cerruti (1909) identified the genera *Levinsenia* and *Paraonis* accepting for the former the interpretation of Mesnil & Caullery and for the latter taking as a basis a passage in the work of Grube where, in describing *Paraonis tenera*, he noted: "Fühler und Füllercirren nicht bemerkbar". According to this remark the identity of *Paraonis* with *Levinsenia*, whose representatives are also without the dorsal antenna, would be incontestable if in this definition of *Paraonis tenera*, Grube, 1872, had not said: "Auf dem halbkreisförmigen Kopflappen . . . eine kleine, platte, längliche, bis auf's zweite Segment reichende Karunkel, jederseits neben ihr ein schwarzer Längsstrich" (Grube, 1872: 58).

Cerruti, concerning this, wrote: "Io credo di esser nel vero paragonando i due "Längsstriche" agli organi nicali, e nel ritenere che per l'essere questi profondamente contratti nell'esemplare studiato dal Grube la porzione di capo compresa fra essi si presentava prominente e distinta come una caruncola" (Cerruti, 1909: 497-498).

Such a way of looking at the "caruncule" is not worth criticism since according to Grube this caruncule extends as far as the second segment. Going by actual knowledge of the characters of different representatives of the family, one can affirm that, without doubt, this caruncule is nothing but the dorsal antenna.

7. It is all too obvious that Cerruti committed an error of identification with regard to the genera *Paraonis* Grube and *Levinsenia* Mesnil. In reality *Paraonis* is a senior subjective synonym of *Aricidea*, because the two genera are characterized by a dorsal antenna on the prostomium.

8. The type-species of *Paraonis* Grube is *Paraonis tenera* Grube, 1872 (monotypy). The description of it is very brief, without drawings and based on a single specimen—"nach einem sehr zarten und schwer zu behandelnden, hinten nicht vollständigen Exemplar" (Grube, 1872: 58). Since Grube no worker has rediscovered this species. Because of the weakness of the original description, *Paraonis tenera* is not identifiable with any of the numerous species of *Aricidea* known today. We are therefore reduced to listing *Paraonis tenera* among the nomina dubia.

9. We therefore ask the Commission:

(1) to use its plenary powers:

- (a) to suppress the generic name *Paraonis* Grube, 1872, and all other uses of this name prior to Cerruti, 1909, for the purposes of the Law of Priority and the Law of Homonymy;
- (b) to accord to Cerruti authorship of the generic name *Paraonis* as he characterised the genus in 1909;
- (c) to designate as type-species of this genus *Aonides fulgens* Levinsen, 1882, as the species which best corresponds to the present conception of the genus *Paraonis*;



- (2) to place the generic name *Paraonis* Grube, 1872 (suppressed under the plenary powers above) on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Generic Names in Zoology;
- (3) to place *Paraonis* Cerruti, 1909 (as validated under the plenary powers above) on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology;
- (4) to conserve the family name PARAONIDAE Cerruti, 1909 (latinized before LEVINSENIDAE) by placing it on the Official List of Family-Group Names in Zoology;
- (5) to place the specific name *fulgens* Levinsen, 1882, as published in the binomen *Aeonides fulgens*, on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology.

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Strelzov, V and Uschakov, Pavel Vladimirovich. 1972. "Paraonis Grube, 1872 (Polychaeta, Paraonidae): Proposed suppression under the Plenary Powers in favour of Paraonis Cerruti, 1909. Z.N.(S.) 1993." *The Bulletin of zoological nomenclature* 29, 209–211.

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