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On the Gender of Some Genera of Insects

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The specific name of an animal, if an adjective in the nominative singular, must agree in gender with the generic name. Therefore the gender of the genus is of special concern to taxonomists. The *International Code of Zoological Nomenclature (1964* ; 1985) rules the method of determination of the gender of the genus (Article *30).* For example, "names ending in *-ides, -istes, -ites, -odes,* or *-oides* are masculine." However, some modern entomologists ignore the rule and still treat generic names ending in *-oides* or *-odes* as feminine, as if they are following the *International Code of Botanical Nomenclature,* which states that generic names ending in *-odes* or *-oides* are feminine. Thus, it should be clearly understood that **generic names ending in -odes or *-oides* are masculine in zoology but feminine in botany.**

Accordingly, for example, an American bee genus *Melissodes* should be treated as masculine, but is considered feminine (for example, *Melissodes rustica* or *Melissodes bimaculata*) in the American literature today. Very lately F. H. Rindge (1985) also failed to treat the moth genus *Acronyctodes* as masculine, and combined specific names as *Acronyctodes colorata, Acronyctodes eximia,* etc. (Amer. Mus. Novitates, No. 1807, pp. 1-24).

I like to cite another example. In an interesting paper on the Neotropical Cerambycidae that recently appeared in PAN-PACIFIC ENTOMOLOGIST (Vol. 60, No. 4, pp. 279-288 ; 1984), J. A. Chemsak and E. G. Linsley erected four new genera ; *Lycoplasma, Noctileptura, Oraphanes* and *Gesbertia.* The original authors did not state both the etymology and gender of the new genera, unfortunately. However, it is clear that, judging from the specific names, the authors treated *Lycoplasma* as feminine and *Oraphanes* as neuter. I cannot understand the reason. To my knowledge, *Lycophsma* should be of neuter gender because the last component *-plasma* is derived from the Greek neuter noun plasma (*πλάσμα*). Also, *Oraphanes* should be of masculine gender because *-phanes* corresponds to the Greek masculine noun Phanēs (*Φανης*). Therefore, the type species of the two genera should be corrected as *Lycoplasma formosum* (not *Lycoplasma formosa)* and *Oraphanes binotatus* (not *Oraphanes binotatum),* respectively.

In regard to the gender of generic names, I think that zoological taxonomists, who erect new genera, should be very careful in following the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature. We should either follow Article 30 of the Code or eliminate it.

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