

cepted into zoological nomenclature, such as valid names, synonyms, homonyms, and *nomina inquirendae*.

The word *occupied* in this sense has an unfamiliar ring and may at first glance seem inappropriate. However, if one imagines that there is theoretically a niche for each possible combination of letters that could form a name under the *Rules*, and that when a name is published it would occupy its particular niche, the concept of occupation becomes clearer. Note also that the common use of the familiar term *preoccupied* makes it easier to understand the corresponding term *occupied*.

In the third category names have been described as *valid* or *available*. They are available for use, but they are not valid in the more common sense of that word, as being the one acceptable name. The numerous ways of using *valid* make it unsuitable for a sharply defined concept. We may then apply the term *available* to all names that were published in accordance with the requirements of the *Rules* (legally published) and which have not been so published previously for some other genus of animal or for some other species of the same genus. If any of them has been so published previously, the later name is said to be preoccupied and is called a homonym, or more significantly, a junior homonym, and is not available. Thus all names are available which are now properly in use or which may at any future time be properly used.

Finally the one name under which the species or genus is to be known has also been called the *valid* or *available* name. *Available* seems more appropriate in the third

category, and *valid* has the disadvantage of being commonly used with several meanings. We suggest that the simple and self-expressive term *correct* be applied in a technical sense to the oldest available name for a genus or for a species within a genus. If the oldest available name has been set aside by the International Commission using its plenary powers, then the next oldest name or the one designated by the commission is the correct name.

The categories may then be defined and named as follows, according to these conclusions: Any name that is printed and circulated is *published*; any published name that meets the publication requirements of the *Rules* is *occupied* in zoological nomenclature (if it fails to meet the requirements it is an outlaw name, i.e., unpublished, illegally published, or a *nomen nudum*); any occupied name that is not preoccupied by an older name of the same spelling is *available* (if it is preoccupied it is a junior homonym and is not available); the oldest available name is the *correct* name, unless it has been specifically set aside by the commission under the plenary powers. (The correct name will, of course, vary with changes in our knowledge of subjective synonymy or discovery of unknown facts in the history of the names, such as homonymy and objective synonymy. An available name whose genus cannot be identified is a *nomen dubium*.)

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