

THE FAMILY-GROUP NAME OF THE LEAF-EATING MONKEYS  
(MAMMALIA, PRIMATES): A PROPOSAL TO GIVE COLOBIDAE BLYTH,  
1875, PRECEDENCE OVER SEMNOPITHECIDAE OWEN, 1843, AND  
PRESBYTINA GRAY, 1825. Z.N. (S.) 2094

By Eric Delson (*Department of Anthropology, Lehman College, City  
University of New York, Bronx, New York 10468, U.S.A.*)

The Old World monkeys, family CERCOPITHECIDAE, are usually divided into two groups; the cheek-pouched monkeys, including guenons (*Cercopithecus*), baboons (*Papio*), macaques (*Macaca*) and related forms in the subfamily CERCOPITHECINAE Gray, 1821; and the leaf-eaters, including the African *Colobus* Illiger, 1811 (Official List No. 552, Opinion 122, Directions 10, 22, 24) and the Asian *Presbytis* Eshscholtz, 1821 (including *Semnopithecus* Desmarest, 1822) and other genera in the subfamily COLOBINAE. Some authors consider these two groups of family rank within a superfamily CERCOPITHECOIDEA. The name COLOBINAE (or COLOBIDAE) has generally been used for the leaf-eating monkeys; it is cited with various authors, but formally derives from Blyth, 1875, who first used it in the family-group (as COLOBIDAE: 9). A problem arises because this usage is antedated by two older family-group names for the leaf-eating monkeys.

2. In 1821, Gray included all Old World monkeys known to him in the family CERCOPITHECIDAE, divided into two unnamed "races". In 1825, Gray divided a very broadly construed family HOMINIDAE into several tribes, including CERCOPITHECINA, CYNOCEPHALINA (based on a junior synonym of *Papio*) and PRESBYTINA, with *Presbytis* in the latter. As Kuhn (1967: 38) noted, PRESBYTINA has not been used since its definition (except sporadically by Gray himself, e.g. 1870: 4 but not Gray, 1843).

3. A second name provides more difficulty because it has continued to be used, although rarely. Owen (1843: 55) divided the Old World monkeys into two families, MACACIDAE and SEMNOPITHECIDAE, basing the latter on *Semnopithecus*. From his context, it is clear that he meant these to be equivalent to modern interpretations of CERCOPITHECINAE and COLOBINAE, respectively. SEMNOPITHECIDAE (or SEMNOPITHECINAE) Owen appears to have been used quite infrequently, and then as an alternative to COLOBINAE or in nearly vernacular form. Genet-Varcin (1963) calls the group SEMNOPITHECINAE or COLOBINAE in a heading citing no authorship. Piveteau (1957) uses SEMNOPITHECINAE, but cites the author as Elliot, 1913. This authorship is erroneous, because Elliot was in fact the first to use a *Colobus*-based name (COLOBINAE) at the subfamily level and did not use SEMNOPITHECINAE at all. Jeannin (1936), Bigourdan and Prunier (1937) and Rode (1937) all use the semi-formal "Famille des Semnopithécidés" without citing an author.

4. The vernacular "Semnopithèque" was first used by Cuvier in 1821. He was followed by Desmarest who in 1822 formally proposed *Semnopithecus* for a group of five species, none of which was designated as type. Then, in 1825, Cuvier, in a work on dentition, referred to the Semnopithèque as a new genus. He indicated that the same five species which Desmarest used were included and further said that the "maure" (*S. maurus*) formed the type for this system of dentition (no mention of generic type-species). Pocock (1935) mentioned in a footnote that "The latinized form of F. Cuvier's 'Semnopithèque' which although it contained *entellus* and *melalophus* was obviously from its meaning principally applicable to *entellus* the sacred monkey of the Hindoos.". This statement may not be sufficient to qualify as a type-species designation, but in his book on the *Fauna of British India* (Pocock, 1939: 88), he included only *entellus* in *Semnopithecus* and specifically called it the type-species. Ellerman and Morrison-Scott (1951) accepted this designation. On the other hand, under 'Semnopithecus Cuvier, 1825' Palmer (1904) wrote "Species (in 1821): l'Entelle (*Simia entellus* Dufresne) from India; and 'le Cimepaye' (*Simia melalophus* Raffles, type) from Sumatra." It has long been accepted that Cuvier is not the author of this genus, nor would a type-"fixation" in 1821 pertain to a later-named taxon. Given the general acceptance of *entellus* as the type-species of the nominal genus *Semnopithecus*, it is best to request the Commission to confirm this designation, as of Pocock, 1939, overruling Palmer's ambiguous indication.

5. The vast majority of modern classifications, both primatological and more broadly-based, employ a *Colobus*-based family-group name for the leaf-eaters, all citing Blyth (or Elliot before the present Code came into effect) for authorship. Among these classifications can be listed those of Chasen, 1940; Simpson, 1945; Ellerman and Morrison-Scott, 1951; Vallois, 1955; Dekeyser, 1955 (Colobidés, no author); Romer, 1966; and Thenius, 1969 (all general classifications). Primatologists employing COLOBIDAE or COLOBINAE include Fiedler, 1956; Hill, 1966; Jolly, 1966; Kuhn, 1967; Napier and Napier, 1967; Dandelot, 1968; Maier, 1970; Thorington and Groves, 1970; and Delson, 1975. It is thus clear that validation of COLOBIDAE as a 'nomen conservandum' rather than preservation of SEMNOPITHECIDAE Owen will encourage universality and preserve general usage. Such validation may therefore be justifiably requested under Article 79b and Article 23d(ii). A similar suggestion was made by Thorington and Groves (1970: 639).

6. In order to preserve the greatest freedom of choice for zoologists without recourse to new names, it is wisest to preserve family-group names based on both *Semnopithecus* and *Presbytis* for use at infra-subfamilial ranks if required. *Presbytis* especially is a well-known and important genus, while *Semnopithecus*-based names have been shown to be still employed by some authors. I suggest that any zoologist who considers that these genera belong to one family-group taxon employ a *Colobus*-based name (COLOBIDAE, COLOBINAE, COLOBINI) in preference to one based on

*Semnopithecus*, and at lower ranks, a *Semnopithecus*-based name in preference to one based on *Presbytis*, thus preserving not only the availability of those names but also common usage. It is further necessary or valuable to formally place on the relevant Official List the latter two generic names and those of their type-species.

7. I therefore request the Commission to:

1. use its plenary powers
  - (a) rule that COLOBIDAE Blyth, 1875 be given precedence over SEMNOPITHECIDAE Owen, 1843, which is in turn to be given precedence over PRESBYTINA Gray, 1825, by any zoologist who considers that any two of these names denote a single family-group taxon of relevant rank;
  - (b) set aside all previous designations of type-species for the genus *Semnopithecus* Desmarest, 1822, made prior to the designation by Pocock (1939) of *Simia entellus* Dufresne, 1797, as the type-species of that genus;
2. place the following generic names on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology:
  - (a) *Semnopithecus* Desmarest, 1822 (gender: masculine), type-species, by designation under the plenary powers in (1) (b) above, *Simia entellus* Dufresne, 1797;
  - (b) *Presbytis* Eschscholtz, 1821 (gender: feminine), type-species by monotypy *Presbytis mitrata* Eschscholtz, 1821;
3. place the following specific names on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology:
  - (a) *entellus* Dufresne, 1797, as published in the binomen *Simia entellus* (specific name of type-species of *Semnopithecus* Desmarest, 1822);
  - (b) *mitrata* Eschscholtz, 1821, as published in the binomen *Presbytis mitrata* (specific name of type-species of *Presbytis* Eschscholtz, 1821);
4. place the following family-group names on the Official List of Family-group Names in Zoology:
  - (a) COLOBIDAE Blyth, 1875 (type-genus *Colobus* Illiger, 1811) with the endorsement that it is to be given precedence over SEMNOPITHECIDAE Owen, 1843, which in turn is to be given precedence over PRESBYTINA Gray, 1825 by any zoologist who considers that any two of these names denote a single family-group taxon of relevant rank;
  - (b) SEMNOPITHECIDAE Owen, 1843 (type-genus *Semnopithecus* Desmarest, 1822) with the endorsement that it is not to be used at a given rank by any zoologist who considers that *Colobus* Illiger, 1811 and *Semnopithecus* Desmarest, 1822, belong to the same family-group taxon of that rank and that *Semnopithecus*-based family-group names are to be given precedence over *Presbytis*-based family-group names by any

- zoologist who considers that *Semnopithecus* Desmarest, 1822 and *Presbytis* Eschscholtz, 1821 belong to the same family-group taxon;
- (c) PRESBYTINA Gray, 1825 (type-genus *Presbytis* Eschscholtz, 1821) with the endorsement that it is not to be used at a given rank by any zoologist who considers that *Presbytis* Eschscholtz, 1821, belongs to the same family-group taxon of that rank as either *Colobus* Illiger, 1811 or *Semnopithecus* Desmarest, 1822, or both.

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