



***Coris sandageri*, an unjustified emendation of *Coris sandeyeri* (Hector 1884) (Pisces, Labridae)**

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Confusion has surrounded the correct spelling of the species name of the labrid fish *Cymolutes* (= *Coris*) *sandeyeri* Hector 1884. In his original description, Hector (1884a) stated the specimen from Tiritiri Island was “collected by Mr. S. Sandeyer”, a misspelling of the surname of F.S. (Andreas Fremming Stewart) Sandager, who was then Assistant Lighthouse Keeper at Tiritiri Matangi Island, Hauraki Gulf, New Zealand, from June 1881 to May 1883 (Phillips 2011), and after whom the species was named.

In a paper on the fishes of the Mokohinau Islands, Sandager (1888) lists *Cymolutes sandageri*, using an emended spelling for the species named after him. Notwithstanding this, Hutton (1890) followed Hector in using *sandeyeri*; but almost contemporaneously Thompson (1892) used the emended spelling, *sandageri*.

Phillips (1927: 41) pointed out that “... ‘sandeyeri’ is obviously a misprint for ‘sandageri’, the species being named after the light-house keeper Sandager”. Hardy (1990: 11) also specifically reported “*Cymolutes sandeyeri* Hector, 1884: 323 = *Coris sandageri* (Hector, 1884)”.

Randall (1999), in his revision of the genus *Coris*, regarded *sandeyeri* as the valid name for this species, citing Article 18 of the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature (ICZN) (International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature 1999), relating to inappropriateness or tautonymy, and which refers to Article 23.3.7 which states “An available name ... is not to be rejected ... for a reason such as ... incorrect spelling”. However, Parenti and Randall (2000) recognised the original spelling as incorrect and accepted Sandager’s (1884) emendation of the name to *sandageri*.

Eschmeyer (1998: 1503) in his ‘Catalog of Fishes’ and Eschmeyer & Fricke (2011) in the on-line version, give its current status “valid as *Coris sandeyeri*”. Eschmeyer & Fricke (2011) considered *sandageri* “an unjustified emendation but in prevailing usage”, but nonetheless suggest “using the prevailing spelling *sandageri* — the correct name of the collector for which the species was named.”

A far from exhaustive search of the recent literature shows both the spellings *sandeyeri* (e.g., Eschmeyer 1998; Randall 1999; Allen *et al.* 2006; Fricke & Kulbicki 2006; Eschmeyer & Fricke 2011) and *sandageri* (e.g., Allen *et al.* 1976; Paulin *et al.* 1989; Francis 1993; Kuitert 1997; Parenti & Randall 2000; Eddy 2011) have been widely used up to the present day.

Article 32 of the ICZN (International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature 1999), which deals with original spellings and provides for the correction of incorrect spellings plainly states (Article 32.5.1) that “If there is in the original publication itself, without recourse to any external source of information, clear evidence of an inadvertent error, such as a lapsus calami or a copyists or printer’s error, it must be corrected.”

Although it is clear that Hector (1884a) intended to name the species after its collector, he mistakenly spelled Sandager’s name as “Sandeyer”, not just once but four times in the same paper. Moreover, elsewhere in the same volume, Hector (1884b: 537) also misspelled Sandager’s name. There is no clear evidence in Hector’s original publication of an inadvertent error: the name “Sandeyer” is consistently misspelled throughout the paper and the indication is that his spelling of the species name *sandeyeri*, even though incorrect, was nonetheless intentional.

In this case, according to the ICZN (Article 32.2) the “correct original spelling” must be used, and change of the species name to *sandageri* is an “unjustified emendation” (Article 33.2.3). Because both spellings of the name have been widely applied in the literature, prevailing usage cannot be used to justify continued use of the name *sandageri*, and the name *Coris sandeyeri* (Hector) should be followed for this species.

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