

# The identity of some unrecognized Neotropical Bombycoidea (Lepidoptera) described by Francis Walker

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ABSTRACT. Three genera and four species of Neotropical Bombycoidea described by Francis Walker, formerly unrecognized, are here identified. Six genera and five species are synonymized, one genus is revalidated, and one reinstated, and five new combinations are established.

KEY WORDS. Bombycoidea, Neotropical, nomenclature, Walker

The taxa discussed below, described by Francis Walker, were treated in HEPPNER (1996) as "INCERTAE SEDIS". As the type material belonging to these taxa, collected from Brazil, has not been traced either in the Natural History Museum, London (BMNH), or in the University Museum, Oxford (UMO) which houses Walker's types, their identities have remained uncertain since their descriptions. Part of these taxa were described from material originally in Fry's collection. This material is presumably lost. According to M. HONEY (BMNH) (pers. comm.), in the front page of a copy of vol. 1 of Walker's catalogue, belonging to the set in the Lepidoptera Section of that museum, there is a note by HAMPSON stating that "*The species described by Walker (in the Catalogue) as in Fry Coll (from Rio de Janeiro) when returned by Walker were rejected by Fry as having been broken and damaged and are in Mus. Oxon. [UMO] (presented by his brother-in-law but many are lost) (some of the types are in B. M. register No. [18]74-20) except the Tineidae which are in B. M.*". SCHAUS (1896: 634-650) did not list them either, except for *Hyerchiria vagans* Walker, 1855. After careful interpretation of the original descriptions and examination of the vast material collected in Brazil, in the author's collection (VOB), all the taxa were recognized, as treated here.

## NOMENCLATURAL SUMMARY

### Saturniidae

#### Hemileucinae

*Hylesia* Hübner, [1820]

*Batatarata* Walker, 1862 **syn. n.** (Ex Lasiocampidae)

*metabus* (Cramer, 1775)

*fusifascia* (Walker, 1862), **syn. n.** (Ex Lasiocampidae)

*Cerodirphia* Michener, 1949

*rubripes* (Draudt, 1930)

*vagans* (Walker, 1855), **syn. n.**

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## Bombycidae

## Apatelodinae

*Prothysana* Walker, 1855*Compsa* Walker, 1862 **syn. n.***Mesotages* Felder, 1874 **syn. n.***Tarchon* Druce, 1887 **syn. n.***Zolessia* Biezanko & Monné, 1968 **syn. n.***terminalis* Walker, 1855*trilunula* (Herrich-Schäffer, [1856]), **syn. n.***saturata* (Walker, 1862), **syn. n.***felderi* (Druce, 1887), **comb. n.**

## Lasiocampidae

## Macromphaliinae

*Lebedera* Walker, 1855 **gen. rev.***Phaedria* Walker, 1855 **syn. n.***fuscicaudata* (Schaus, 1905), **comb. n.***hirtipes* Walker, 1855 **comb. rev.***serralta* (Jones, 1912), **comb. n.***undulosa* (Walker, 1855), **comb. n.***moderata* (Walker, 1855), **syn. n.**

## Saturniidae

## Hemileucinae

*Batatara* Walker, 1862*Batatara* Walker, 1862: 86. Type species: *B. fusifascia* Walker, 1862, by monotypy.

The original description of *Batatara* says: "Body thick, very densely pilose. Proboscis obsolete. Palpi very short. Antennae very short, very broadly pectinated. Legs short, very densely pilose. Wings broad, densely clothed with long, thick-set lanuginous hairs along the interior border. Fore wings sub-falcate, not acute; exterior border straight. Hind-wings rounded, extending much beyond the abdomen."

There is little doubt that the above description applies only to *Hylesia* Hübner, [1820] a widespread genus throughout the neotropics, and not to any of the known Lasiocampidae genera, the family where *Batatara* Walker, **syn. n.**, has been placed.

*Batatara* was originally described in the Bombycidae, included in the Lasiocampidae by FLETCHER & NYE (1982: 21), but not in any of the bombycoid families treated in SEITZ (1913-1940).

*Batataria fusifascia* Walker, 1862

*Batataria fusifascia* Walker, 1862: 87. Holotype male, BRAZIL: [AM] "Amazon Region" (ex Saunders Col.) [presumably lost].

*Batataria fusifascia* was described as follows: "Cinereous brown. Antennae luteous. Abdomen pale luteous. Wings with three whitish-cinereous, diffuse, oblique bands, which are more distinct but less regular in the fore-wings than in the hind-wings; 3<sup>rd</sup> band undulating and sub-marginal in the fore-wings, marginal in the hind-wings. Fore-wings with a dark brown indistinct discal mark."

Two Amazonian species fit this description: *H. metabus* (Cramer, 1775), and *H. olivenca* Schaus, 1927. However, as Walker described it as "cinereous brown" what agrees with a series of the former in VOB collected in the Amazon region, and identified by Dr. C. LEMAIRE, and the last is more "grey", it indicates that *B. fusifascia* Walker, **syn. n.**, is a synonym of *H. metabus*, not of *H. olivenca*. Also, this synonymy has the advantage of not upsetting current usage, as *H. metabus* is older than *H. fusifascia*, while *H. olivenca* Schaus is much younger. LEMAIRE (1996: 42) listed five more names as synonyms of *H. metabus*.

*Hyperchiria vagans* Walker, 1855

*Hyperchiria vagans* Walker, 1855c: 1312. Holotype female, BRAZIL: [no further data] [Rio de Janeiro] (ex Saunders Col.) [presumably lost].

WALKER (1855c) described two species of Saturniidae from Brazil with the same species name: *Hyperchiria vagans* (p. 1312) and *Dirphia vagans* (p. 1369). The second is a species of *Cerodirphia* Michener, 1949 (LEMAIRE 1996: 44), while the first remains unrecognized. The type of *H. vagans* was examined by SCHAUS (1896: 635) in UMO, who transferred it to *Dirphia* Hübner, [1819], however, this species was not treated again by any subsequent author, except for LEMAIRE (1996: 47), who listed it in "INCERTAE SEDIS" as a "nom. oblit.". Unfortunately the type was not traced either in UMO (G. MacGavin, pers. comm.) or in BMNH (M. Honey, pers. comm.).

The original description is as follows: "Female. Fawn-colour. Antennae whitish straw-colour, much longer and stouter than those of *H. myops*. Thorax rosy towards the abdomen. Abdomen dark brown, with white bands. Legs partly clothed with rosy hairs. Fore wings with a straight slender oblique brown band by the whitish discal mark, and with two very diffuse and indistinct whitish bands. Hind wings with the fringe mostly white; an indistinct darker band before the middle; under side with indistinct undulating whitish bands. Length of the body 9 lines; of the wings 30 lines." This description fits the females of both *C. opis* (Schaus, 1892) and *C. rubripes* (Draudt, 1930), two species from Southern Brazil. However, the "stouter antennae" as illustrated by DRAUDT (in SEITZ 1930: pl. 117D, row b) indicate that the type is the female of *C. rubripes*. Consequently *H. vagans* Walker, 1855c: 1312, becomes a secondary homonym of *C. vagans* (Walker, 1855c: 1369). Despite the fact that the former has page and year precedence over the second, *Hyperchiria vagans* Walker, 1855c: 1312, **syn. n.**, is here synonymized under *C. rubripes* (Draudt) (ICNZ, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, 69A.7). This synonymy does not upset current usage.

Bombycidae  
 Apatelodinae

*Prothysana* Walker, 1855

*Prothysana* Walker, 1855b: 1175. Type species: *P. terminalis* Walker, 1855, by monotypy.

*Prothysana* was established in the Drepanulidae [Drepanidae]; it was transferred to the Bombycidae by KIRBY (1892: 932), and to the Apatelodidae by FLETCHER & NYE (1982: 133). *P. terminalis* is the senior synonym of *Mimallo trilunula* Herrich-Schäffer, [1856] and *Compsa saturata* Walker, 1862 [see below], thus making *Compsa* Walker, 1862, **syn. n.**, *Mesotages* Felder, 1874, **syn. n.**, *Tarchon* Druce, 1887, **syn. n.**, and *Zolessia* Biezanko & Monné, 1968, **syn. n.**, junior subjective synonyms of it. *P. felderi* (Druce, 1887), **comb. n.**, formerly in *Tarchon* Druce, also belongs here.

*Prothysana terminalis* Walker, 1855

*Prothysana terminalis* Walker, 1855b: 1175. Holotype male, [BRAZIL]: Rio de Janeiro [ex Fry Col.] [presumably lost].

The description of *P. terminalis*, especially the "...testaceous apical spot, which is intersected by lunules,..." and the "...slender undulating hardly oblique hoary band.", leaves no doubt that this is the same species described later as *Mimallo trilunula* Herrich-Schäffer, [1856], **syn. n.** and *Compsa saturata* Walker, 1862, **syn. n.** The latter was also described from a male collected in Rio de Janeiro, belonging to Fry's collection. It would not be a surprise if both descriptions were based on the same specimen, as it is known that Walker did such thing before, describing twice, in the same work, one Noctuidae specimen as *Casandria emittens* and *Agrotis emittens* (NYE 1975: 104-105).

Lasiocampidae  
 Macromphaliinae

*Phaedria* Walker, 1855

*Phaedria* Walker, 1855c: 1501. Type species: *P. moderata* Walker, 1855c: 1501, by monotypy.

*Phaedria* was established in the Bombycidae and was transferred to the Lasiocampidae by KIRBY (1892: 788), where it has remained as an unrecognized taxon. The description of *P. moderata* indicates that it belongs to a complex of closely related species currently in *Tolyte* Hübner, [1820] [see below]. In reality, this complex is congeneric with *Labedera hirtipes* Walker, 1855 thus making *Phaedria* Walker, **syn. n.**, a junior subjective synonym of *Labedera* Walker, 1855.

*Labedera* was established in the Psychidae and transferred to the Lasiocampidae by KIRBY (1892: 843), and has been wrongly treated as a synonym of *Titya* Walker, 1855 (BECKER & HEPPNER 1996: 24). The genitalia of the type-specimen of *L. hirtipes*, the type-species of *Labedera*, show several differences from those of the male of *T. noctilux* Walker, 1855, the type-species of *Titya*. According to these

characters, *Labedera* Walker, **gen. rev.** is closer to *Macromphalia* Felder, 1874, while *Titya* belongs to the *Tolype*-complex.

### *Phaedria moderata* Walker, 1855

*Phaedria moderata* Walker, 1855c: 1501. Holotype male: [BRAZIL: RJ], Rio de Janeiro [ex Fry Col.] [presumably lost].

According to the description, *P. moderata* is closely related to a complex of sympatric forms currently in *Tolype* Hübner which are not, however, congeneric with *T. vellea* (Stoll, 1790), the type-species of this genus. This complex is congeneric with *Labedera hirtipes* Walker, and includes *L. fuscicaudata* (Schaus, 1905), **comb. n.**, *L. serralta* (Jones, 1912), **comb. n.** and *L. undulosa* (Walker, 1855), **comb. n.** The description, especially the “*antennae shorter than the thorax, rather deeply pectinated to nearly half the length, slightly pectinated from thence to the tips. ...Wings rather narrow. ...Blackish gray. ...Antennae and legs tawny, the latter with blackish gray hairs.*” fits better the male of the latter, thus making *P. moderata* Walker, **syn. n.**, a junior subjective synonym of *L. undulosa* (Walker). It is very likely that, after a thorough revision, it will be proved that all these four names belong to a single species.

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