HISTORICAL REVIEW

Linnaeus (1758) described braconids, ichneumonids and other Terebrantia under the genus *Ichneumon* L. Gravenhorst & Nees ab Esenbeck (1818) divided the Ichneumonidous genera into two stirpes - the Ichneumones Genuini and the Ichneumones Adsciti. These two stirpes being further divided into numerous genera; the Adsciti being primarily divided into two groups named, Bracones and Bassi.

The family Braconidae was erected by Stephens (1829)*. Later, he (1835) separated the Ichneumonidae into four families mainly on the basis of the number of joints in the maxillary palpi: Ichneumonidae, Braconidae (5-jointed), Alysiidae (6-jointed) and Aphidiidae (4-jointed). Wesmael (1835) named the Ichneumones Genuini and Asciti as Ichneumonides characterised by having two recurrent (m-cu) veins and Braconides having only one recurrent vein in the fore wing, respectively. He further divided the Braconides into two groups viz., ‘braconides endodontes’ (having the teeth of the mandibles directed inwardly; the mandibles meeting together when shut) and ‘braconides exodontes’ (having the teeth of the mandibles directed outwards; the mandibles when closed, not touching each other). The latter group is now called the Alysinae (Achterberg, 1993). The endodontes being further divided into four subdivisions viz., (i) Polymorphi (clypeus entire, abdomen 6- to 7-jointed, posterior part of the vertex convex, second submarginal cell (when present) large) (ii) Cryptogastri (clypeus entire, posterior part of vertex convex, abdomen dorsally presenting not more than two transverse sections, second submarginal cell (when present) large) (iii) Areolarii (clypeus entire, vertex more or less emarginate behind, abdomen 6- to 7-jointed, second submarginal cell (when present) very small) and (iv) Cyclostomi (clypeus deeply notched, leaving a circular aperture between it and the jaws, abdomen generally 6- to 7-jointed, second submarginal cell (when present) large). The "polymorphes" contain the subfamilies Aphidiinae, Cercoceiliinae, Euphorinae, Helconinae, Ichneutinae, Macrocentrinae, Opiinae and Orgilinae. The "cryptogastres" contain Cheloninae and Sigalphinae. The "areolaires" contain

* After Shaw (1985).
Agathidinae and Microgastrinae. The "cyclostomes" contain Braconinae, Doryctinae, Hormiinae, Rogadinae and Rhyssalinae.

Haliday (1838)* divided Ichneumonideous genera into five families including, Evaniidae, Ichneumonidae, Agriotypidae, Braconidae and Aphidiidae on the basis of the nature of connexion between the second and third dorsal segments (tergites) of the abdomen (metasoma) and outer discoidal (second discal) cell of the fore wing. Westwood (1840) followed the system of Wesmael (1835) and added a sixth division i.e. "Flexiliventres" for the Aphidiinae. Foerster (1862) divided the family Braconidae into 26 subfamilies, adding the suffix "-oidae". Marshall (1891) added a seventh division "Pachylommatidae" to the family termed Hybrizontinae by Achterberg (1976). Marshall further divided these large groups into 26 subfamilies, for the Palaearctic region and used the suffix "-ides". Dalla Torre (1898) compiled the world list of Braconidae. Ashmead (1900) provided the first general key to the subfamilies of Braconidae. He separated Alysiinae as family Alysiidae, while the remaining genera were placed in 17 subfamilies.


* After Westwood (1840).

The term 'Cheloni' was first used by Nees von Esenbeck (1816) for chelonines. Later, Foerster (1862) and Parfitt (1881) used the terms Chelonoidae and Chelonides, respectively for the chelonine wasps. Marshall (1885) followed Parfitt and provided a key to the genera under the name Chelonides. Cameron (1887) gave the subfamily name 'Cheloninae' to the 'Cheloni' of Nees (1816), followed by Cresson (1887). Marshall (1889) promoted the subfamily to the rank of family as Cheloniidae which was followed by Ivanov (1896, 1899), Morley (1907) and Lyle (1923a). Later, Handlirsch (1925), Baker (1926), Brues (1926), Sonan (1932), Fahringer (1934), Watanabe (1937), Granger (1949), Baltazar (1962), Tobias (1971), Shenefelt (1973), Ackerberg (1976, 1993) and Sharkey (1993) followed Cameron (1887) considering Cheloniinae as a subfamily of Braconidae. However, De Saeger (1948) placed the cheloniine genera in the subfamily Sigalphinae. Hellen (1958) treated Cheloniini as a tribe of the subfamily Helconinae.