

## Case 2586

### ***Dytiscus ater* De Geer, 1774 (currently *Ilybius ater*) and *Dytiscus planus* Fabricius, 1781 (currently *Hydroporus planus*; Insecta, Coleoptera): proposed conservation of the specific names**

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**Abstract.** The purpose of this application is the conservation of the name *Dytiscus ater* De Geer, 1774 for a species of water diving beetle. It is threatened by *Dytiscus ater* Forster, 1771, an unused senior homonym of the De Geer name which is also an unused senior synonym of another commonly used beetle name, *Dytiscus planus* Fabricius, 1781 (currently *Hydroporus planus*).

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1. Forster (1771, p. 54) established the name *Dytiscus ater* for an aquatic beetle from 'Anglia'. However, in spite of its priority, Schönherr (1808, p. 35) listed this name only as a synonym of *Hyphydrus planus* (Fabricius, 1781, p. 501).

2. Stephens (1828, p. 61) described a species, *Hydroporus ater*, which he clearly thought might be Forster's *Dytiscus ater*. Schaum (1847, p. 1892) concluded that both *Dytiscus ater* Forster and *Hydroporus ater* Stephens were synonyms of *Hydroporus planus* (Fabricius). Later, both Gemminger & Harold (1868, p. 439) and Zimmermann (1920, p. 99) confirmed this synonymy.

3. Zaitsev (1908, p. 120) noted that *ater* Forster had priority, but in his later works (e.g. Zaitsev, 1953, p. 164) continued to use *planus* Fabricius as the valid name with no reference to Forster. Zimmermann (1931, p. 132) noted Zaitsev's action but also found it unnecessary to change the name. All subsequent authors have accepted this opinion and used *Hydroporus planus* as the valid name. A list of 10 representative references is held by the Commission's Secretariat.

4. De Geer (1774, p. 401) also established the name *Dytiscus ater* for an aquatic beetle. Erichson (1832, p. 34) included this species (erroneously attributing it to Fabricius) in his new genus *Ilybius*.

5. The name *Ilybius ater* (De Geer) has since been in continuous use (a list of representative references is held by the Commission's Secretariat). Only Zaitsev (1908, p. 121) noted the homonymy with *Dytiscus ater* Forster, 1771 and suggested that *Ilybius ater* (De Geer) should be replaced by *I. quadrinotatus* (Stephens, 1828, p. 83). However, Zaitsev in his later works (e.g. 1953, p. 278) still used *I. ater* (De Geer) as the valid name.

6. The identity of Stephens' *Colymbetes quadrinotatus* is in doubt and Schaum's statement (1847, p. 1895) that it was described from a specimen of *I. ater* is contradicted by, amongst others, Zimmermann & Gschwendtner (1935, p. 86) who list *quadrinotatus* as a synonym of *Ilybius guttiger* (Gyllenhal). As Stephens' type material cannot be identified from his collection and the original description does not fit *Ilybius ater* (De Geer), this would not be a suitable replacement name. As far as I can ascertain



there are no other names available for replacement and a nomen novum would also upset stability. Since Forster's senior homonym is unused it would seem preferable, for stability of nomenclature, to suppress that name thereby retaining the more familiar *ater* De Geer and at the same time conserving *planus* Fabricius.

7. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary powers to suppress the name *ater* Forster, 1771, as published in the binomen *Dytiscus ater*, for the purposes of both the Principle of Priority and the Principle of Homonymy;
- (2) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the following names:
  - (a) *ater* De Geer, 1774, as published in the binomen *Dytiscus ater*;
  - (b) *planus* Fabricius, 1781 as published in the binomen *Dytiscus planus*;
- (3) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology the name *ater* Forster, 1771, as published in the binomen *Dytiscus ater* and as suppressed in (1) above.

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