

**OPINION 2081** (Case 3248)***Prositala* Germain, 1915 (Mollusca, Gastropoda): given precedence over *Massaihelix* Germain, 1913**

**Abstract.** The Commission has ruled that the generic name *Prositala* Germain, 1915 for a group of African land snails (family CHAROPIDAE) is conserved by giving it precedence over the little used senior subjective synonym *Massaihelix* Germain, 1913 whenever the two are considered to be synonyms.

**Keywords.** Nomenclature; taxonomy; Mollusca; Gastropoda; Pulmonata; CHAROPIDAE; *Massaihelix*; *Prositala*; *Massaihelix butumbiana*; *Prositala fernandopoensis*; African land snails.

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**Ruling**

- (1) Under the plenary power it is hereby ruled that the name *Prositala* Germain, 1915 is given precedence over the name *Massaihelix* Germain, 1913 whenever the two are considered to be synonyms.
- (2) The following names are hereby placed on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology:
  - (a) *Prositala* Germain, 1915 (gender: feminine), type species by original designation *Sitala* (*Prositala*) *fernandopoensis* Germain, 1915, with the endorsement that it is to be given precedence over the name *Massaihelix* Germain, 1913 whenever the two are considered to be synonyms;
  - (b) *Massaihelix* Germain, 1913 (gender: feminine), type species by monotypy *Helix butumbiana* von Martens, 1895, with the endorsement that it is not to be given priority over the name *Prositala* Germain, 1915 whenever the two are considered to be synonyms.
- (3) The following names are hereby placed on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology:
  - (a) *fernandopoensis* Germain, 1915, as published in the binomen *Sitala* (*Prositala*) *fernandopoensis* (specific name of the type species of *Prositala* Germain, 1915);
  - (b) *butumbiana* von Martens, 1895, as published in the binomen *Helix butumbiana* (specific name of the type species of *Massaihelix* Germain, 1913).

**History of Case 3248**

An application to conserve the generic name *Prositala* Germain, 1915 for a group of African land snails (family CHAROPIDAE), by giving it precedence over the little used senior subjective synonym *Massaihelix* Germain, 1913 whenever the two are considered to be synonyms, was received from Bernard Verdcourt (*Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, U.K.*) and A.C. van Bruggen (*clo National Museum of Natural History, Leiden, The Netherlands*) on 19 June 2002. After correspondence the case was published in BZN 59: 239–241. The title, abstract and keywords of the case were published on the Commission's website. No comments on this case were received.

### Decision of the Commission

On 1 March 2004 the members of the Commission were invited to vote on the proposals published in BZN 59: 240. At the close of the voting period on 1 June 2004 the votes were as follows: 14 Commissioners voted FOR the proposals, 7 Commissioners voted AGAINST, Bouchet, Calder and Ng were on leave of absence, no vote was received from Macpherson.

Voting against, Alonso-Zarazaga commented that he could not see in this case the 'widespread use' of any of the genus-group names in question. The genera and species mentioned are recent and of little interest except for pure systematists, so the Principle of Priority must stand in this case. Štys made the same point and further questioned the statement in para. 1 of the application '*Massaihelix* is a misleading name . . .', since the facts are nomenclaturally irrelevant, but psychologically persuasive. Mahnert, also voting against, commented that application of the Principle of Priority will concern few specialists, since only a few papers deal with these animals.

### Original references

The following are the original references to the names placed on Official Lists by the ruling given in the present Opinion:

*butumbiana*, *Helix*, von Martens, 1895, *Nachrichtsblatt der Deutschen Malakozoologischen Gesellschaft*, **27**: 179.

*fernandopoensis*, *Sitala* (*Prositata*), Germain, 1915, *Bulletin du Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris*, **21**: 283.

*Massaihelix* Germain, 1913, *Bulletin du Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris*, **19**: 352.

*Prositata* Germain, 1915, *Bulletin du Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris*, **21**: 283.



International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature. 2004. "(Case 3248).  
Prositala Germain, 1915 (Mollusca, Gastropoda): Given Precedence Over  
Massaihelix Germain, 1913." *The Bulletin of zoological nomenclature* 61,  
184–185.

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