

Comments on the proposed suppression of *Belemnites* Lamarck, 1799, and the conservation of BELEMNITIDAE d'Orbigny, 1845

(Case 2571: see BZN 43: 355–359; 44: 48 and 194)

(1) G. Hahn

Fachbereich Geowissenschaften, Universitäts Lahnberg, 355 Marburg (Lahn), W. Germany

In the present situation I do not support the suppression of *Belemnites*. As the family name BELEMNITIDAE is widely used the suppression of the name-bearing genus *Belemnites* should be considered only if a real attempt has been made to select a neotype for its type species, and been proved to have failed.

(2) M. K. Howarth

Department of Palaeontology, British Museum (Natural History), London, SW7 5BD, U.K.

I support the application by Doyle and Riegraf for suppression of the generic name *Belemnites* Lamarck, 1799, and the specific name *paxillosa* Lamarck, 1801, as published in the binomen *Belemnites paxillosa*. Doyle & Riegraf (BZN 43: 356) have pointed out that the lectotype of the species (which is now lost) was both generically and specifically indeterminate, and a senior belemnite specialist has admitted (Jeletzky, 1966) that selection of another type specimen from amongst the syntypes would lead to the replacement of one of the best known Upper Cretaceous generic names by *Belemnites*. The alternative course, to select a Lower Jurassic specimen as neotype, would therefore be in conflict with the remaining syntypes, and would not lead to an interpretation of *Belemnites paxillosa* that would be widely accepted. The suppression of both names, as advocated by Doyle & Riegraf, is a better solution, and is the only way to achieve long-term stability.

The second reason for the suppression of *Belemnites* is to avoid a clash with the widespread vernacular use of the word. This is especially appropriate in this case, because, unlike some other conflicts between vernacular words and generic names, the spelling is exactly the same for both 'belemnites' and *Belemnites*, and leads to very similar pronunciations. The possibilities for confusion are very real, and are better avoided by suppression of the generic name *Belemnites*. I also support the proposals for conservation of the family-group name BELEMNITIDAE, which is widely used and understood.

Reference

Jeletzky, J. A. 1966. Comparative morphology, phylogeny and classification of Coleoidea. *Paleontological Contributions, University of Kansas, Mollusca*, Art. 7, 162pp.

(3) T. I. Nal'nyaeva

Institute of Geology and Geophysics, Novosibirsk-90, 630090, U.S.S.R.

I support the application of Doyle & Riegraf to suppress the binomen *Belemnites paxillosa*.

I have previously (Saks & Nal'nyaeva, 1970, pp. 68–69) discussed in some detail the

names *Belemnites* and *Passaloteuthis*, and reached the same conclusions as Doyle & Riegraf have more recently. In particular, I agree that it would not be possible to designate a type specimen of '*Belemnites paxillosa*' that would not add to confusion, whereas *Passaloteuthis bruguieranus* (d'Orbigny, 1843) has been widely accepted since the work of Lissajous in 1915. I do not support the use of *Belemnites* as a generic name, any more than I would the analogous names *Ammonites*, *Trilobites* and *Graptolites*.

Reference

- Saks, V. N. & Nal'nyaeva, T. I. 1970. *Early and Middle Jurassic belemnites of the northern part of the U.S.S.R.* 228 pp. Leningrad. [In Russian].

Comment on the proposed conservation of *Conus floridanus* Gabb, 1869 (Mollusca, Gastropoda)

(Case 2563: see BZN 44: 21–22)

M. G. Harasewych & R. E. Petit

National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC 20560, U.S.A.

We wish to express our opposition to Cernohorsky's proposed conservation of the specific name *floridanus* Gabb, 1869, as this would require the use of the plenary powers to suppress the senior synonym *Conus anabathrum* Crosse, 1865, a taxon that was validly proposed in a major malacological journal, was adequately illustrated, and for which a holotype exists and has always been available for study in a museum noted for its care and curation of type material. Vink (1985, p. 3) gives a history of the names involved, and makes it clear that previous misidentifications of *Conus anabathrum* Crosse stem from an initial misidentification by Smith (1884, p. 489), which was cited by Tomlin (1937, p. 211). Tomlin's listing in a catalogue of species-level names of *Conus*, not intended to be a taxonomic revision, was blindly accepted by later workers. Evidently, the first recent workers to examine the holotype of *Conus anabathrum* were Coomans, Moolenbeek & Wils (1980, p. 34), who recognised this taxon as a senior synonym of *Conus floridanus*.

Nomenclatural stability may be achieved by the strict application of the rule of priority or by the conserving of a 'metastable' species name, one used incorrectly but consistently for some period of time. With the increasing use of computerised data bases that can be cross-referenced, the need for fixing such metastable names for purposes of information retrieval will steadily diminish.

The suppression of *Conus anabathrum* Crosse would, we feel, endorse the uncritical perpetuation of previously published taxonomic opinions, accurate or not, without reference to primary type material. Although recognition of *Conus anabathrum* will upset existing usage to some extent, the nomenclature of the genus *Conus* is so confused at this time that only major taxonomic revisions will achieve real stability.



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