

OPINION 1107

CONSERVATION OF *DERMACENTOR ANDERSONI* STILES,
1908 (ACARINA: IXODIDAE)

RULING.- (1) Under the plenary powers, the specific name *venustus* Marx MS. in Neumann, 1897, as published in the binomen *Dermacentor venustus*, is hereby suppressed for the purposes of the Law of Priority but not for those of the Law of Homonymy.

(2) The specific name *andersoni* Stiles, 1908 (July), as published in the binomen *Dermacentor andersoni*, is hereby placed on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology with the Name Number 2639.

(3) The following specific names are hereby placed on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology with the Name Numbers mentioned:

- (a) *venustus* Marx MS. in Neumann, 1897, as published in the binomen *Dermacentor venustus*, and as suppressed under the plenary powers in (1) above (Name Number 1035);
- (b) *venustus* Banks, 1908 (June), as published in the binomen *Dermacentor venustus* (a junior primary homonym of *Dermacentor venustus* Marx MS. in Neumann, 1897) (Name Number 1036).

HISTORY OF THE CASE Z.N.(S.) 260

In 1920 the Commission was asked to rule on the specific name of the Rocky Mountain spotted fever, or wood tick. In Opinion 78 (*Smiths. misc. Colls.* vol. 73 (2): 261–274, 1924), which was written by Dr L.J. Stejneger, the Commission did not give the ruling requested but designated the type-specimens of *Dermacentor venustus* Marx MS. in Neumann, 1897, and of *D. andersoni* Stiles, 1908. This Opinion was found to be unsatisfactory and, in response to requests from specialists, the Commission decided at its Paris meeting in 1948 (*Bull. zool. Nom.* vol. 4: 338) to review it as soon as possible. At the same time, specialists were invited to send their views to the Commission.

From 1949 to 1961 correspondence passed between a number of specialists and the Commission's Secretariat until, in the latter year, an application by Dr Cornelius B. Philip and Dr Glen M. Kohls (*Rocky Mountain Laboratory, Hamilton, Montana, USA*) was published in *Bull. zool. Nom.* vol. 18: 316–318 seeking the same objectives as those attained in the present Ruling. Professor Mayr

asked for reassurance on a zoological aspect of the case - the identification of *venustus* and *andersoni* as conspecific - but unfortunately the original specimens in the Marx Collection could not then be traced.

FIRST VOTE BY THE COMMISSION

On 11 December 1963 the members of the Commission were invited to vote under the Three-Month Rule on Voting Paper V.P. (63)36 for or against the proposals published on p. 318 of vol. 18 of the *Bulletin*. At the close of the voting period on 11 March 1964, there were 25 votes in favour and two against, with two voting papers not returned. The two members voting against were Dr Carl L. Hubbs and Dr C.W. Sabrosky, and they commented as follows:

Dr Hubbs.- "Though I am fully in sympathy with the proposal to give preference to the name *andersoni* over that of *venustus*, if the two are held to be synonymous, I find sufficient objection to the proposals stated on p. 318 of vol. 18 of the *Bulletin* to call for a restatement of the proposals.

"The most vital objection I have is the implied decision by the Commission that *Dermacentor andersoni* is the vector of Rocky Mountain spotted fever, and that *D. venustus*, as of Neumann, 1897, or of Banks, 1908, or of both, is synonymous with *D. andersoni*. In my opinion, such questions are basically taxonomic and not nomenclatural, and are the prerogatives of working zoologists, not of the Commission (except in so far as the importance of the case may call for the use of the plenary powers).

"A much more satisfactory statement, I feel, would be along such wording as: 'If the two names are regarded as specifically synonymous, *Dermacentor andersoni* Stiles, July 1908, takes precedence over *D. venustus* Neumann, 1897 (based on Marx MS) and over *D. venustus* Banks, June 1908.' This would be a proper nomenclatural, rather than taxonomic decision.

"Then *D. andersoni* can be put on the Official List, but there will be no need, or reason, to dispose further of *venustus*. The name *venustus* would then retain validity, and theoretically could be used for a related species, if held to be distinct, or for a subspecies.

"I see no need to go further. This action would avoid the need to cancel Opinion 78, which in effect it would supersede, but without negating the well taken point that 'the Commission as such is incompetent to express an Opinion as to the name of the spotted fever tick'."

[Dr Hubbs also drew attention to the effect on the proposals of the Washington (1963) Congress decision concerning Article 11d on names first published in synonymy.]

Dr Sabrosky: "I vote against the application as stated, partly for procedural and partly for factual reasons. I object to cancelling Opinion 78, partly because the reasons given are not justified (see below) and partly because it necessitates use of plenary powers to suppress *D. venustus* Banks. If Opinion 78 is left in force, *D. venustus* Banks falls as a junior homonym, if indeed it is not merely a subsequent usage of *D. venustus* Marx in Neumann. If it is desired to suppress the latter and validate *andersoni*, then this issue should be met directly and clearly, and usage cited to justify it. I note, for example, that *D. venustus* Marx in Neumann has always been used by the Parasitological Laboratory of the U.S. Department of Agriculture in their identifications of ticks, that at least some literature has been based on it, and that Cooley's action of 1938 violated the Code and Opinion 78, then in force. Acceptance of *andersoni* would mean in essence that if an Opinion is disregarded long enough and often enough the Commission will reverse it.

"Several points need to be made on the application:

"(1) Philip & Kohls (para 7) state that in Opinion 78 the Commission 'by taking a type-locality as an indication for *D. venustus* (Marx MS) Neumann, completely reversed its previous decision in Opinion 52 [recte 53, CWS]. I disagree with their statement. Opinion 78 is filled with data on localities, specimens, labels and collections, but all that was primarily concerned with the question of identity, and simply obfuscated the nomenclatural points involved. Stejneger's discussion saw through the smoke-screen. The Commission did *not* take the type-locality as an indication. Stejneger clearly states (Opinion 78, page 10, para 1) that the case is 'absolutely comparable' to that of *Halicampus grayi* in Opinion 53, that *H. grayi* was considered available as of its 1856 publication in synonymy because it was published with a bibliographic reference and a description [that of the senior synonym, *H. conspicillatus* Kaup], and that because Opinion 53 was in force 'it is clear that *Dermacentor venustus* as a published and available name dates from 1897'. Type-locality was not the reason for regarding *venustus* as available from 1897; the reason was that it was published 'in connection with' the description of the species under which it was synonymized.

"(2) In the same para 7, Philip & Kohls state that at the time of Opinion 78 'there was no definite provision in the Code covering names published in synonymies'. There was not in the Rules proper, but the wording of Stejneger in Opinion 78 is significant: 'As Opinion 53 is in force and consequently is *part of the Code*. . .' [italics mine, CWS].

“(3) Philip & Kohls correctly note that the London Congress adopted a rule that a name published in synonymy is not an available name, but that Congress also adopted a ‘saving clause’ to protect decisions and actions taken in good faith under the Rules previously in force. Because of certain drafting difficulties this saving clause was not used in the published Code (1961), but specific provisions protected all but names published in synonymy. This lack was remedied at the recent Washington Congress, and their decision must also be considered in connection with this case.

“Even more to the point, however, *Dermacentor venustus* Marx in Neumann is still an available name, unless specifically set aside by the Commission.

“(4) The Copenhagen Decision that a name originally published in synonymy is a junior objective synonym of the name under which it was originally synonymized was based on an editorial interpretation by Secretary Hemming which, while logical, was nevertheless contrary to the consistent position of the Commission in Opinion 53 and Opinion 78. In these opinions, *Halicampus grayi* Kaup in Kaup, and *Dermacentor venustus* Marx in Neumann, were resurrected from synonymy and applied to the species represented by the particular specimens with which they were associated. I do not disagree in principle with the Copenhagen decision, but I do point out that it was a reversal of the practice recognised in Opinion 53 and reaffirmed in Opinion 78 with undeniable clarity by reference to vial and specimen numbers.

“(5) The existence of *D. andersoni* in the literature undoubtedly stems from Stiles’s belief that under Opinion 78 the correct name for the Rocky Mountain spotted fever tick is *andersoni* as long as it was considered that there were two species, but that statement cannot be used to justify *andersoni* when the zoological conclusion is that there is only one species.”

In view of the force of these comments, no Opinion was then prepared on the case. Owing to pressure of other work, it was not until 1967 that the applicants were told of these developments; by that time, neither of them was concerned to follow the matter further.

FURTHER ACTION BY THE COMMISSION

In 1968 and 1969 correspondence passed between Dr Conrad E. Yunker (*Rocky Mountain Laboratory*) and the Secretary on re-opening the case. This led to no immediate result, but in March 1975 a fresh application was received from Dr James E. Keirans (*Rocky Mountain Laboratory*). This, after discussions with the

author and with Dr Sabrosky, was sent to the printer on 14 October 1975 and was published on 30 January 1976 in *Bull. zool. Nom.* vol. 32: 261–264. Notice of the possible use of the plenary powers in the case was given in the same part of the *Bulletin* and was sent to the prescribed serials (Constitution, Art. 12b) as well as to seven general and seven entomological serials.

The names of ten zoologists who supported the proposals were printed in the application. Support was also received from Miss J.B. Walker (*Veterinary Research Institute, Onderstepoort, South Africa*) and from Dr Omar M. Amin (*University of Wisconsin*). No adverse comment was received.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

On 22 November 1977 the members of the Commission were invited to vote under the Three-Month Rule on Voting Paper (77)16 for or against the proposals published on p. 263 of *Bull. zool. Nom.* vol. 32. At the close of the voting period on 22 February 1978 the state of the voting was as follows:

Affirmative Votes - fifteen (15) received in the following order: Melville, Holthuis, Eisenmann, Alvarado, Vokes, Tortonese, Welch, Bayer, Corliss, Starobogatov, Cogger, Dupuis, Nye, Heppell (a conditional vote for the majority), Ride

Negative Votes - none (0)

Abstention - Sabrosky

Leave of Absence - Bernardi.

Late affirmative votes were returned by Brinck, Habe and Mroczkowski. No voting papers were returned by Binder, Kraus and Willink.

The following comments were sent in by members of the Commission with their voting papers:

Eisenmann: "I vote for the proposal because it would seem that no specialists are opposed. What troubles me is that the name having priority has had considerable usage judging from the application; but the synonymy was not realised. Majority usage alone should not ordinarily be enough to justify preference of a junior name where such usage is not overwhelming in the recent literature."

Sabrosky: "I will not oppose the obviously overwhelming majority that favours *D. andersoni*. However, I cannot refrain from noting, with reference to the applicant's statement (para 13) that 'the strict application of the Code in this case continues to cause confusion in the literature' that the 'endless confusion' would have been avoided if a large segment of workers on ticks for the last half century had chosen to follow the Commission's Opinion 78, published in 1924."

ORIGINAL REFERENCES

The following are the original references for the names placed on an Official List and an Official Index by the ruling given in the present Opinion:

andersoni, *Dermacentor*, Stiles, 1908 (July), *U.S. Pub. Health Rep.*, vol. 23 (27): 949

venustus, *Dermacentor*, Marx MS. in Neumann, 1897, *Mém. Soc. zool. France*, vol. 10: 365

venustus, *Dermacentor*, Banks, 1908 (June), *U.S. Dept. Agric. tech. Ser.*, No. 15: 46–47.

CERTIFICATE

I certify that the votes cast on Voting Paper (77)16 were cast as set out above, that the proposal contained in that Voting Paper has been duly adopted under the plenary powers, and that the decision so taken, being the decision of the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature, is truly recorded in the present Opinion No. 1107.

R.V. MELVILLE

Secretary

International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature

London

31 March 1978



International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature. 1978. "Opinion 1107."
The Bulletin of zoological nomenclature 35, 88–93.

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