

PROPOSED USE OF THE PLENARY POWERS TO DESIGNATE A TYPE SPECIES FOR THE GENUS "ANCYLUS" MÜLLER, 1774 (CLASS GASTROPODA) IN HARMONY WITH ESTABLISHED NOMENCLATORIAL PRACTICE

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The object of the present application is to seek the assistance of the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature, through the use of its plenary powers, in securing that the type species of the genus *Ancylus* Müller (O.F.), 1774 (Class Gastropoda), shall be the species commonly accepted as such and to avoid the confusion which would result from the strict application of the normal rules in this case. That confusion would be extremely serious, for under the normal rules it would be necessary to abandon the term "*Ancylus*-See" which is universally used to denote a well-known former limnic stage of the Baltic and is so deeply entrenched in the literature of European geology that its abandonment would be open to the strongest possible objection and must, indeed, be regarded as entirely impracticable.

2. The generic name *Ancylus* was first published in 1767 by Geoffroy on pages 13 and 124 of his *Traité sommaire des Coquilles . . . qui se trouvent aux Environs de Paris*. Geoffroy placed what he regarded as one species only in this genus but he did not cite it under a binominal name. The description which he gave is so vague that the species which he had in mind might have been either the species now commonly treated as having already been named *Patella lacustris* Linnaeus, 1758 (*Syst. Nat.* (ed. 10) 1 : 783) or the later named species *Ancylus fluviatilis* Müller (O.F.), 1774 (*Verm. terrestr. fluviat. Hist.* 2 : 201). Geoffroy stated however that the species in question was the only one known in the neighbourhood of Paris and this suggests that that species was the common *Ancylus fluviatilis* Müller. This inference is supported by the fact that Geoffroy cited (1) Lister (1678, *Hist. Anim. Angl.* : 151, pl. 2, fig. 32), (2) Gualtieri (1742, *Index Test. Conch.* : pl. 2, fig. AA), and (3) d'Argenville (1780, *Conch.* 2 : 1, pls. 8, 27), for the figures given by all of these authors appear to represent the foregoing species. On the other hand, Geoffroy cited also the description of *Patella lacustris* published by Linnaeus in 1746 (*Faun. svec.* (ed. 1) : 369) and again in 1758 (*Syst. Nat.* (ed. 10) 1 : 783). There has however been discussion in the past as to the identity of the species to which Linnaeus applied this name. Jeffreys (1862, *Brit. Conch.* 1 : 123), for example, and Woodward (B.B.) (1903, *J. Conch.* 10 : 361) pointed out that the description given by Linnaeus applied as well to the species *Ancylus fluviatilis* Müller as to that to which the name *Patella lacustris* Linnaeus, 1758, is commonly applied; the figures cited by Linnaeus appear to depict *Ancylus fluviatilis* Müller, and that species alone is represented in the Linnean collection. It was for reasons of this order that nearly one hundred years ago Forbes & Hanley (1852, *Hist. Brit. Moll.* 4 : 188) and Hanley (1855, *Ipsa Linnaei Conchyliæ* :



426) applied the trivial name *lacustris* Linnaeus to the species named *fluviatilis* by Müller. In recent times other authors, including Kennard & Woodward (1920, *J. linn. Soc. Lond. (Zool.)* **34**: 210) have taken the opposite view, holding either that the species which Müller identified as *Ancylus lacustris* (Linnaeus) was in fact the species to which Linnaeus in 1758 had given the name *Patella lacustris* or that, notwithstanding the dissimilarity of that species from *Ancylus fluviatilis*, Linnaeus had confused the two species together and therefore that his nominal species *Patella lacustris* was a composite species. It may, therefore, be the case that Geoffroy had in mind only one species, namely *Ancylus fluviatilis* Müller, when in 1767, he used the generic name *Ancylus*. As we shall see, however, the name *Ancylus*, as used by Geoffroy, is an invalid name. The sense in which he applied it has, therefore, no nomenclatorial significance, being of historical interest only. As to the trivial name *lacustris* Linnaeus, there is no doubt that Müller (1774) applied it to the first of the two species which may have been comprised in it by Linnaeus, for to the second of those species he then gave the name *Ancylus fluviatilis*. It is in accordance with the interpretation of Müller that the name *lacustris* Linnaeus is now generally used and it is in this sense that the nominal species *Patella lacustris* Linnaeus is today accepted as the type species of *Acroloxus* Beck, 1837 (see paragraph 7 below).

3. There have in the past been differences of opinion among specialists on the question whether in his *Traité sommaire* of 1767 Geoffroy applied the principles of "nomenclature binaire" (as prescribed, up to 1948, by Proviso (b) to Article 25 of the *Règles*) and therefore as to whether new names published by Geoffroy in the foregoing work acquired thereby any rights under the Law of Priority. Fortunately, all scope for further argument regarding the meaning to be attached to the above Proviso to Article 25 was put an end to in Paris in 1948 when the Thirteenth International Congress of Zoology, on the recommendation of the International Commission, (1) gave a ruling that the expression "nomenclature binaire," as hitherto used in the *Règles*, had a meaning identical with that attaching to the expression "nomenclature binominale," and (2) decided to substitute the latter entirely unambiguous expression for the expression "nomenclature binaire," wherever that expression had formerly appeared in the *Règles* (1950, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **4**: 63-66). During the same session the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature decided that, in accordance with the foregoing decision, another work by Etienne Louis Geoffroy [1727-1810], his *Histoire abrégée des Insectes qui se trouvent aux Environs de Paris*, failed to comply with the requirements of Proviso (b) to Article 25, by reason of the fact that in that work Geoffroy had not "appliqué les principes de la nomenclature binominale" (1950, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **4**: 366-369). The system of nomenclature in the *Traité sommaire* is identical with that used both earlier (in 1762) and later (in 1799-1800) in the two editions of the *Histoire abrégée*. It follows, therefore, that under the decisions cited above new names in the *Traité sommaire* possess no rights under the Law of Priority in virtue of having been so published. In order however to put a stop to the risk of further discussion on this subject, it would be convenient if the International Commission were now to give a formal ruling to the foregoing effect, so that the *Traité sommaire* may be added to the list of works rejected for non-compliance with Proviso (b) to Article 25.



4. Having now established that the name *Ancylus* Geoffroy, 1767, is not an available name, we have to determine what was the next subsequent occasion on which the name *Ancylus* was published as a generic name. This was in 1774, when it was so used by O. F. Müller (*Ancylus* Müller, 1774, *Verm. terrestr. fluviat. Hist.* **2**: 199). Müller, who employed the Linnean binominal system of nomenclature, cited two nominal species as belonging to this genus, namely: (1) *Ancylus lacustris* (Linnaeus, 1758) (= *Patella lacustris* Linnaeus, 1758), and (2) the new nominal species *Ancylus fluviatilis* Müller (: 201). One or other of these two nominal species must therefore be the type species of *Ancylus* Müller.

5. It is now known that the first type selection for this genus was made in 1823 by Children (*Quart. J. Sci. Lit. Arts* **15**: 231), who so selected the nominal species *Ancylus lacustris* (Linnaeus). This selection was completely overlooked at the time and this species later became one of the originally included species of the nominal genus *Acroloxus* Beck, 1837 (*Index Moll. Mus. Christ. Freder.*: 124), to which it is still commonly referred and of which it was selected as the type species by Herrmannsen in 1846 (*Indic. Gen. Malacoz. Primordia* **1**: 16).

6. The next selection of a type species for the genus *Ancylus* Müller was by Gray in 1847 (*Proc. zool. Soc. Lond.* **15**: 181), when the nominal species *Ancylus fluviatilis* Müller, 1774, was so selected. Ever since that date, the name *Ancylus* has been generally used for the genus which includes this species. Moreover, it is upon the basis of this type selection that the name *Ancylus* has been employed in the term "*Ancylus*-See" by Baltic geologists to denote the stage of the Baltic Sea when this genus occurred in that area. Among the important recent authors by whom the name *Ancylus* has been used in the foregoing sense may be noted Thiele (1931, *Handbuch der syst. Weichtierkunde* **1** (Pt. 2): 482; 1935, *ibid.* **2** (Pt. 4): 1151), who maintained that this usage was correct.

7. Some modern authors have however used the name *Ancylus* for the species selected as the type species by Children. This has led to great confusion, for it has not only involved the transfer of the generic name *Ancylus* from the genus containing *Ancylus fluviatilis* Müller, for which it is so well known as a name, to the genus hitherto always known as *Acroloxus* Beck, but, in addition, has deprived of its meaning the term "*Ancylus*-See," since *Patella lacustris* Linnaeus, which, on this transfer, becomes the type species of *Ancylus*, did not occur in the limnic stage of the Baltic to which the term "*Ancylus*-See" is always applied. It is for the purpose of putting an end to this state of confusion that the International Commission is now asked to use its plenary powers to designate *Ancylus fluviatilis* Müller, 1774, as the type species of the genus *Ancylus* Müller, 1774.

8. For the reasons set forth above, the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is asked to stabilise the nomenclature of the two genera here under discussion in the following manner, that is, that the Commission should:—

- (1) give a ruling that in the work entitled *Traité sommaire des Coquilles . . . qui se trouvent aux Environs de Paris*, published in 1767 (as



- in the *Histoire abrégée des Insectes qui se trouvent aux Environs de Paris*, published in 1762 and republished in 1799-1800) Geoffroy (E.L.) did not apply the principles of binominal nomenclature, as required by Proviso (b) to Article 25 of the *Règles*, as amended by the Thirteenth International Congress of Zoology, Paris, 1948, and therefore that no name acquired availability under the Law of Priority in virtue of being so published ;
- (2) use its plenary powers (a) to set aside all type selections for the genus *Ancylus* Müller (O.F.), 1774, made the decision now proposed prior to to be taken, and (b) to designate *Ancylus fluviatilis* Müller (O.F.), 1774, to be the type species of the foregoing genus ;
  - (3) place the under-mentioned generic names on the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology* ;—
    - (a) *Ancylus* Müller (O.F.), 1774 (gender of generic name : masculine) (type species, by designation, as proposed under (2) (b) above, under the plenary powers: *Ancylus fluviatilis* Müller (O.F.), 1774) ;
    - (b) *Acroloxus* Beck, 1837 (gender of generic name : masculine) (type species, by selection by Herrmannsen 1846) : *Patella lacustris* Linnaeus, 1758, as interpreted by Müller (O.F.), 1774 : 199-200) ;
  - (4) place the under-mentioned trivial names on the *Official List of Specific Trivial Names in Zoology* ;—
    - (a) *fluviatilis* Müller (O.F.), 1774 (as published in the binominal combination *Ancylus fluviatilis*) (trivial name of species proposed, under (2) (b) above, to be designated, under the plenary powers, as the type species of *Ancylus* Müller (O.F.), 1774) ;
    - (b) *lacustris* Linnaeus, 1758 (as published in the binominal combination *Patella lacustris*), the species so named to be interpreted as specified in (3) (b) above (trivial name of type species of *Acroloxus* Beck, 1837) ;
  - (5) place on the *Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Generic Names in Zoology* the generic name *Ancylus* Geoffroy, 1767 (name published in a work rejected as not complying with the requirements of Proviso (b) to Article 25 of the *Règles*).

**PROPOSED ADDITION OF THE NAME "ANCYLASTRUM"  
BOURGUIGNAT, 1853 (CLASS GASTROPODA) TO THE  
"OFFICIAL LIST OF GENERIC NAMES IN ZOOLOGY"**

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The purpose of the present application is to ask the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature to place the well-known generic name *Ancylastrum* Bourguignat, 1853 (type species, by subsequent selection : *Ancylus* (*Ancylastrum*) *cumingianus* Bourguignat, 1853) on the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology*.



Hubendick, B. 1952. "Proposed use of the plenary powers to designate a type species for the genus *Ancylus* Muller, 1774 (Class Gastropoda) in harmony with established nomenclatorial practice." *The Bulletin of zoological nomenclature* 6, 227–230. <https://doi.org/10.5962/bhl.part.16038>.

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