

PROPOSED USE OF THE PLENARY POWERS TO VALIDATE THE GENERIC NAME "ODONTODACTYLUS" BIGELOW, 1893 (CLASS CRUSTACEA, ORDER STOMATOPODA)

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(Commission's reference Z.N.(S.)475)

The present application relates to a generic name *Odontodactylus* Bigelow, 1893, which is in universal use for a well-known genus of Stomatopoda, but which is technically invalid, being a homonym of an earlier generic name which has hitherto been completely overlooked in the literature. The substitution of a totally unknown name for the well-established name *Odontodactylus* would give rise to great confusion and would serve no useful purpose of any kind. I accordingly ask the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature to prevent the ruthless application of the Law of Priority in this way by using their plenary powers to validate the generic name *Odontodactylus* Bigelow, 1893.

The following are the references to the generic names dealt with in the present application :—

Odontodactylus Bigelow, 1893, *Johns Hopkins Univ. Circ.* **12**: 100 (type species, by subsequent selection by Bigelow, 1931 (*Bull. Mus. comp. Zool.* **72**: 144) : *Cancer scyllarus* Linnaeus, 1758, *Syst. Nat.* (ed. 10) **1**: 633).

Gamaris [H.S.], 1876, *Ceylon*, **2**: 275 (type species, by monotypy: *Cancer scyllarus* Linnaeus, 1758, *Syst. Nat.* (ed. 10) **1**: 63).

In the second volume of a work published in 1878 under the title "Ceylon, a general Description of the Island, historical, physical, statistical, Containing the most recent information, by an Officer, late of the Ceylon Rifles. London. 1876," the author, whose identity is unknown and who wrote over the initials "H.S.", gave, at the end of the twenty-ninth chapter, a list of the species of Crustacea recorded by H. Milne Edwards (1837, *Hist. nat. Crust.* **2**) as occurring in the Indian seas. In this list "H.S." inserted the entry "*Gamaris scyllarus*, Rump." There is no doubt that the species so referred to is the species *Cancer scyllarus* Linnaeus, 1758.

The above species is, however (as shown above), the type species of the well-known genus *Odontodactylus* Bigelow, 1893.) Accordingly, under the Law of Priority, the name *Odontodactylus* Bigelow is invalid, being an objective junior synonym of the name *Gamaris* [H.S.], 1876. It would, however, be ridiculous to abandon so well established a name as *Odontodactylus* in a favour of a name (*Gamaris*) that has never been in use, is quite unknown and was published by an author who was almost certainly not a carcinologist. I accordingly ask the International Commission to use their plenary powers

to prevent the quite unnecessary confusion which follow such a change. The concrete proposals which I therefore submit for consideration are that the Commission should :—

- (1) use their plenary powers (a) to suppress the generic name *Gammaris* [H.S.], 1876, for the purposes of the Law of Priority, but not for those of the Law of Homonymy, and (b) to validate the generic name *Odontodactylus* Bigelow, 1893 ;
- (2) place on the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology* the generic name *Odontodactylus* Bigelow, 1893 (type species, by subsequent selection by Bigelow, 1931 : *Cancer scyllarus* Linnaeus, 1758), as validated in (1) (b) above ;
- (3) place the generic name *Gammaris* [H.S.], 1876, as suppressed under (1) (a) above, on the *Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Generic Names in Zoology* ;
- (4) place on the *Official List of Specific Trivial Names in Zoology* the trivial name *scyllarus* Linnaeus, 1758 (as published in the binominal combination *Cancer scyllarus*).

I should add, with reference to the decision by the Thirteenth International Congress of Zoology, that in future the gender of every generic name added to the *Official List* is to be specified therein (1950, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **4** : 341), that the gender of the generic name *Odontodactylus* is masculine.



Holthuis, L. B. 1951. "Proposed use of the plenary powers to validate the generic name " *Odontodactylus* " Bigelow, 1893 (Class Crustacea, Order Stomatopoda)." *The Bulletin of zoological nomenclature* 2, 86–87.

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