

Case 3687

***Phrynus mexicanus* Poinar & Brown, 2004 (Arachnida, Amblypygi, PHRYNIDAE): proposed conservation of the specific name as a junior primary homonym of *Phrynus mexicanus* Bilimek, 1867**

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Abstract. The purpose of this application, under Article 23.9.5 of the Code, is to conserve the specific name *Phrynus mexicanus* Poinar & Brown, 2004 which was proposed for a fossil whip spider (Arachnida, Amblypygi, PHRYNIDAE) preserved in Chiapas (Mexican) amber. This fossil species was initially described under the grammatically erroneous combination *Phrynus mexicana*. However, correcting the species epithet to *mexicanus* renders it a junior primary homonym of a Recent Mexican whip spider, *Phrynus mexicanus* Bilimek, 1867. The Recent species was subsequently transferred to the genus *Paraphrynus* Moreno, 1940, to give the current combination *Paraphrynus mexicanus* (Bilimek, 1867), and neither species has ever been considered congeneric with the other.

Keywords. Nomenclature; taxonomy; Amblypygi; PHRYNIDAE; *Phrynus*; *Paraphrynus*; *Phrynus mexicanus*; whip spider; Mexico; Chiapas amber; Miocene.

1. Dominik Bilimek was a priest and professor of natural history at the Austrian imperial military academy. He travelled with Archduke Maximilian to Mexico in 1865, remaining in his service after Maximilian was crowned Emperor of Mexico until the latter's death in 1867, after which Bilimek returned to Vienna with his collections of Mexican zoological and botanical material. Among other studies, Bilimek described a Recent species of whip spider (Arachnida, Amblypygi, PHRYNIDAE) from the Cacahuamilpa cave in the State of Guerrero, Mexico as *Phrynus mexicanus* Bilimek, 1867.

2. The arachnologist Reginald Pocock created a new genus of Neotropical whip spider which he named *Hemiphrynus* Pocock, 1902. This was later recognised as a

homonym of the beetle genus *Hemiphrynus* Horn, 1889 (Insecta, Coleoptera), and Abelardo Moreno Bonilla proposed a replacement name, *Paraphrynus* Moreno, 1940, for the preoccupied whip spider genus (Moreno, 1940). In a revision of *Paraphrynus*, Mullinex (1975) transferred Bilimek's species to Moreno's genus, forming the new combination as *Paraphrynus mexicanus* (Bilimek, 1867). This combination has been adopted in all subsequent taxonomic works – see e.g. the catalogue of Harvey (2003); and references therein – and is the current name for this species, which occurs only in southern Mexico (Armas, 2012)

3. Poinar & Brown (2004) described a fossil whip spider from the Miocene Chiapas (Mexican) amber as *Phrynus mexicana* Poinar & Brown, 2004. In a review of fossil and living Mexican whip spiders, Armas (2006, p. 356) pointed out that according to Article 31.2 of the Code the correct orthography for this name should have been *Phrynus mexicanus* Poinar & Brown, 2004, such that the species-group name matches the gender of the genus. The name *mexicana* is taken to be an adjective and is not regarded as a noun in apposition meaning [characteristic] Mexican objects. This rendered Poinar & Brown's name a junior primary homonym of *Phrynus mexicanus* Bilimek, 1867. Both names are in use. The fossil and Recent species have not been considered congeneric after 1899, and there is no junior synonym of *P. mexicanus* that could be used in its place. Thus following Article 23.9.5 of the Code we refrain from replacing the junior homonym and request a ruling from the Commission on this issue.

4. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary power to rule that the name *mexicanus* Poinar & Brown, 2004, as published in the binomen *Phrynus mexicana*, is not invalid by reason of being a junior primary homonym of *mexicanus* Bilimek, 1867, as published in the binomen *Phrynus mexicanus*;
- (2) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name *mexicanus* Poinar & Brown, 2004, as published in the binomen *Phrynus mexicana*, with the endorsement that it shall not be invalid by reason of being a junior primary homonym of *mexicanus* Bilimek, 1867, as published in the binomen *Phrynus mexicanus*.

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Comments on this case are invited for publication (subject to editing) in the *Bulletin*; they should be sent to I.C.Z.N., Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD, U.K. (e-mail: iczn@nhm.ac.uk).



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