

disruption caused by moving the collection from Esnandes to Paris, many of the tubes containing d'Orbigny's specimens were lost and others became detached from their labels during the 1912 flooding of the Muséum basements. Unfortunately d'Orbigny's sediment collection held in the Muséum does not contain any material from Siena.

In addition to the proposed suppression of the name *Cassidella* in order to conserve *Fursenkoina*, stability would be further enhanced by the availability of type material for *V. squamosa*. The publication of my paper in the *Bulletin of the Natural History Museum, London*, in which I proposed to designate a neotype (see para. 9(3) of my application), has been delayed. I therefore now designate specimen no. P 52796, which is fully labelled and deposited in the Micropalaeontology Collections in the Natural History Museum, London, as the neotype. The specimen was collected by Dr D.D. Bayliss in 1964 (sample By 103), and is from the Pliocene clays of Cava Semplice, Coroncina, near Siena. The specimen is fully representative of *Fursenkoina squamosa*, which differs from *F. schreibersiana* (Czjzek, 1848) in possessing much higher chambers and much less twisted initial coils. The aperture in *F. schreibersiana* is also much more bulimine in appearance. *F. squamosa* differs from *F. oligocenica* (Hofker, 1951) in possessing much higher chambers and a more reduced apertural lip.

Comment on the proposed conservation of the specific name of *Xerophila geyeri* Soós, 1926 (Mollusca, Gastropoda)

(Case 2870; see BZN 51: 105–107, 336–338)

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On the basis of the facts presented in Gittenberger's application (BZN 51: 105–107), and in the comments raised by Bouchet and Gittenberger (BZN 51: 336–338), the conclusion appears to be inescapable that the five senior subjective synonyms of *Trochoidea geyeri* (Soós, 1926) should indeed be suppressed in accordance with the letter and spirit of Articles 23b and 79 of the Code. However, I sympathise with Bouchet's objections. My reasoning for this encompasses a much wider issue than the one application.

Amongst taxonomists working on Mollusca there is a widespread trend to recognise separate species which hitherto had been united as species complexes. Although such studies, which are now based on modern criteria of biological species recognition, may discover and define many new species, it is a frequent experience that only a few new specific names are required. Many may have been considered as distinct species in the past, albeit often on criteria which are today no longer regarded as sufficient on their own (shell characters, for example).

It follows that an essential part of any modern taxonomic study must be to establish the identity of taxa represented by names hitherto considered to be synonyms. Comments about the 'graveyard of synonymy' and the unscientific methods of some ancient authors in proposing new taxa are subjective and contribute nothing to the solution of the problem, and should not have any bearing on nomenclatural matters. Any taxonomist who does not review old nominal taxa will only create new synonyms or other nomenclatural problems.

It is easy to see that the opportunity offered by Article 79c to suppress senior synonyms if unused for more than 50 years could be misused as a safety net for sloppy work and easy glory: a researcher may discover a species not recognised in the modern literature, does not bother to check whether older names, presently regarded as synonyms, are available and describes the species in question as new. Later the researcher (or another, compelled by concern for the 'stability of nomenclature') may resort to the Commission when the synonymy is discovered. The potential number of such cases could easily inundate the Commission.

At the least the existence of Article 79c is a disincentive to those taxonomists who understand that it is their professional duty to revise old synonymies to ensure that they do not unnecessarily introduce new specific names. The discovery of unused senior synonyms of already recognised nominal species is always a possible outcome of such work, yet the Code suggests that such work should have no nomenclatural result if a researcher considers 'nomenclatural stability' to be endangered.

For these reasons I consider Article 79c in its present form fundamentally flawed; it invites authors to consider deviations from the Principle of Priority the rule rather than the exception and therefore undermines this Principle. Ultimately it may undermine the Code itself because it leads to nomenclatural decisions being made too frequently by applications to the Commission rather than by applying its rules. Of course the opportunity to suppress unused older synonyms should continue to exist but the admissibility of such applications should be considerably tightened.

The heart of the problem is ultimately the notion of 'Stability of Zoological Nomenclature'. Generally speaking, nomenclature is not truly stable (i.e. invariable) because of continuing taxonomic research. Only if research ceases will name changes also cease. The distinction between acceptable name changes due to new taxonomic results and less welcome name changes for nomenclatural reasons alone is blurred and, as outlined above, may lead to undesirable work practices. The Code should therefore not aim at absolute nomenclatural stability but it should provide the rules by which name changes are to be effected and thereby minimise nomenclatural confusion.

The more general considerations outlined above are my primary reason to object to Gittenberger's application. More specifically, even though Gittenberger found 25 citations of the specific name *geyeri* Soós, the species is still one of the less frequent of the European land snail fauna and is hardly known outside the circle of researchers and collectors of land snails. With the current high level of publishing activity it is easy to obtain such a number of citations even for less important species. I believe therefore that a name change for the species in question would only cause an initial inconvenience to an audience which should be inured to name changes anyway, and would serve to highlight the importance of priority and the necessity to establish the identity of all older nominal taxa.

I propose that the specific name of *Helix arceuthophila* Mabilie, 1881 should be validated for the species currently known as *Trochoidea geyeri* (Soós, 1926), and placed on the Official List. The simultaneously published *Helix ycaunica* Mabilie, 1881 is a shorter name but I feel it should not have precedence as a name based on a little known locality. In respect of the other specific names involved (*H. vicianica* Bourguignat in Locard, 1882, *H. deana* and *H. pleurestha*, both of Berthier (1884), and *Xerophila geyeri* Soós, 1926) no action is proposed. These names remain

available should at some time in the future a researcher find that the species represented is not conspecific with *arceuthophila* Mabille.

Comments on the proposed designation of *Scottia pseudobrowniana* Kempf, 1971 as the type species of *Scottia* Brady & Norman, 1889 (Crustacea, Ostracoda)

(Case 2896; see BZN 51: 304–305)

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There is not the slightest doubt about Prof Kempf's conclusion that *S. pseudobrowniana* was the original basis of the genus *Scottia*, and acceptance of his proposals by the Commission would be welcomed by ostracod workers.

(2) Support for the application has also been received from Drs Claude Meisch (*Musée d'Histoire Naturelle, Marché-aux-Poissons, L-2345 Luxembourg*) and I.G. Sohn (*National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560, U.S.A.*).

Comments on the proposed conservation of *Lironeca* Leach, 1818 (Crustacea, Isopoda) as the correct original spelling

(Case 2915; see BZN 51: 224–226; 52: 67–69)

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I wish to support the proposal by Williams & Bowman to conserve *Lironeca* as the correct original spelling of the name of a genus of parasitic isopods.

In addition to the arguments used in their application, with all of which I agree, I would like to stress that although zoological names can be arbitrary combinations of letters the vast majority do have a meaning. Workers have to remember hundreds of names, and they are greatly helped by this. The names may recall particular features of the taxa or their habitats, or be formed from geographical, personal or mythological names, or be evocative of vernacular names of the animals. The meaning of Leach's (1818) names for eight genera of isopods is quite clear: they are anagrams of the personal name Caroline or Carolina. *Livoneca*, on the contrary, has no meaning.

The intentions of Leach are evident, and the conservation of *Lironeca* is in perfect agreement with them. I maintain that whenever possible the original intention of the author of scientific names has to be respected.

(2) Robert Y. George

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I have researched on isopod crustacea for nearly three decades, describing several new genera and many new species. On the basis of this experience I wish to support



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