

Comment on the proposed stabilization of usage of the name *Ceratites nodosus* (Mollusca, Ammonoidea)

(Case 2732; see BZN 48: 31–35, 246; 49: 145–149, 290; 50: 54–56, 141–142, 229–231, 284–285)

Gerhard Hahn

Institut für Geologie und Paläontologie, Philipps-Universität, D-3550 Marburg, Germany

Dr N.J. Silberling (BZN 50: 141) has disputed my previous comment (BZN 48: 246) that Urlichs's application will conserve the name *Ceratites nodosus* as used today. My comment referred to the biostratigraphical use of the name *nodosus* in Central Europe. The name (in the sense recommended by Urlichs) has been used here for a long time to denote a special index-fossil of the Upper Muschelkalk, and the 'nodosus-Zone' is well known to geologists. To change the name of this index-fossil (as would result from Tozer's counter proposals on BZN 49: 148) would cause very much confusion amongst geologists, quite apart from the taxonomic and nomenclatural aspects which have been mentioned by the opponents of Urlichs's application. It is noteworthy that most of these opponents come from regions where the practical consequences of the application are of little concern because the lithology of the Triassic strata is different from that in Central Europe.

Comments on the proposed conservation of the specific name of *Notonecta obliqua* Thunberg, 1787 (Insecta, Heteroptera)

(Case 2829; see BZN 50: 118–120)

(1) I.M. Kerzhner

Zoological Institute, Academy of Sciences, St Petersburg 199034, Russia

1. The purpose of the application by Jansson & Polhemus is to suppress the name *Notonecta marginata* Müller, 1776 in order to conserve *Notonecta obliqua* Thunberg, 1787. The basis of the application was their acceptance of Kirkaldy's (1897) view that *N. marginata* is conspecific with *Notonecta furcata* Fabricius, 1794, which is itself a synonym of *N. obliqua*. However, I do not accept Kirkaldy's synonymy but rather Reuter's (1888) synonymy of *N. marginata* with the corixid *Cymatia coleoptrata* (Fabricius, [1777]). I base this on the following four lines of evidence:

- a. Müller (1776) included in the genus *Notonecta* five species in two dissimilar groups of waterbugs, the notonectids and the corixids. The first two species listed — *Notonecta glauca* Linnaeus and *Notonecta lutea* sp. nov. — are notonectids. Following their description is a note indicating their common features and differences. The third and fifth species are corixids, the third being *N. striata* Linnaeus, 1758 and the fifth *N. minutissima* Linnaeus, 1758. Placed between them was the fourth species — *N. marginata*. This would be an appropriate position for the corixid *C. coleoptrata*, which is similar in appearance to the preceding and following species and intermediate in size between them. In contrast, *N. obliqua* is very dissimilar to the third and fifth species and much larger than them and would fit much better with Müller's

first two species; it is most unlikely that Müller would have placed it in the position of the fourth species.

- b. The original description of *N. marginata* — 'elytris nigris: margine suturaque luteis' — agrees well with *C. coleoptrata*, accepting that 'niger' can be translated 'dark' as well as 'black', that 'margine suturaque luteis' should be translated as 'with the margin and suture yellow' and not 'sutural margin yellow', and that the suture refers to the line of contact of hemelytra rather than to their whole inner margin. It is clear from a number of dictionaries that in classical Latin 'piceus' is black, 'fuscus' is brown to black and 'niger' is dark, although in medieval Latin 'niger' is used for black. Fabricius used 'fuscus' in describing hemelytra of both *C. coleoptrata* and *N. furcata* (= *obliqua*). I do not consider that Müller's use of 'niger' in describing *N. marginata* implies any difference from *C. coleoptrata*.
- c. In *C. coleoptrata* the hemelytra are greyish to blackish brown with a wide yellowish lateral margin and very narrow yellow sutural margin. The yellowish longitudinal stripes on hemelytra mentioned by Jansson & Polhemus (para. 4) are often indistinct, especially if dark specimens are examined with only a hand lens; it is therefore not surprising that Fabricius did not mention them in his original description of *C. coleoptrata*. In contrast, the hemelytra in *N. obliqua* are black or blackish brown with two large obliquely longitudinal yellow spots or stripes at their base, the inner spot being towards the inner basal margin of the hemelytra and more or less touching it at the base, but not touching the sutural margin. The lateral and sutural margins have a narrow yellow area which is much less apparent than the basal spots. Fabricius's (1794, p. 58) description of *N. furcata* reads 'elytris nigricantibus, maculis duabus oblongis baseos flavescentibus' which can be translated 'hemelytra blackish, with two oblong yellowish spots at the base'. Fabricius did not say anything about the yellow outer and sutural margins. I do not think that this description of *N. obliqua* can be applied to *N. marginata*.
- d. *C. coleoptrata* is the only European corixid fitting Müller's description of *N. marginata*.

2. I should like to refer to the authorship of the name *N. obliqua* which should be credited to Thunberg and not to Gallén. Thunberg's work consists of dissertations by his students. In Scandinavian countries in the 18th and first half of the 19th centuries, so-called 'academic dissertations' were prepared by university professors — referred to in the title as 'praeses' (presiding over the meeting). Students — referred to in the title as 'respondens' (respondent) — paid for the preparation and publication of the dissertations (see Broberg, 1978). These dissertations were defended to demonstrate the acumen of the students in public scientific debate in Latin rather than their scientific ability. This procedure was widely used by zoologists such as Linnaeus, Fallén, Thunberg and R.F. Sahlberg for the publication of their scientific works. It is virtually universal practice to credit the publications and hence any names therein to these zoologists and not to the students. Esaki was unaware of this when he credited the name *N. obliqua* to 'Gallén in Thunberg', and he was followed by later authors. This error should not be perpetuated. Since *N. obliqua* has been involved in confusing synonymy it would still be desirable to place it on the Official List.

Additional reference

Broberg, G. 1978. *Brown-eyed, nimble, hasty, did everything promptly. Carl Linnaeus 1707–1778.* 52 pp. Liber Tryck, Stockholm.

(2) Antti Jansson

Zoological Museum, P.O. Box 17, FIN-00014 University of Helsinki, Finland

I am most grateful to Dr I.M. Kerzhner for his comments (above) on this application. I accept his argument that *Notonecta marginata* is a senior subjective synonym not of *N. obliqua*, as Dr Polhemus and I believed when submitting our application, but of *Sigara coleoptrata* (now in *Cymatia*). Resurrecting the long-unused name *N. marginata* would cause considerable confusion since *C. coleoptrata* is well known in the recent literature (for example, Bernhardt, 1985, p. 6; Nieser, 1978, p. 282; Savage, 1989, six entries; a further 26 references by 28 authors over the last 35 years are held by the Commission Secretariat). It follows that the Commission should be asked to conserve the name *S. coleoptrata* and place it on the Official List. The lectotype of *C. coleoptrata* is a male specimen in the Copenhagen Museum (see Jansson, 1986, p. 21).

I agree with Dr Kerzhner that *N. obliqua* should still be placed on the Official List. As stated in para. 2 of my application with Dr Polhemus the original material seems no longer to exist. It is possible that a suitable neotype could be selected from the collections of the Swedish Museum of Natural History, but this seems unnecessary at this time since there is no dispute about the identity of the species. I agree with Dr Kerzhner that authorship of *N. obliqua* should be attributed to Thunberg and not to Gallén; indeed, our application to the Commission was originally so framed.

The three requests made to the Commission in para. 5 of my application with Dr Polhemus still stand, except that authorship of *Notonecta obliqua* should be attributed to Thunberg and not Gallén in Thunberg. The following request is now added:

- (4) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name *coleoptrata* Fabricius, [1777], as published in the binomen *Sigara coleoptrata*.

Additional reference

Jansson, A. 1986. The Corixidae (Heteroptera) of Europe and some adjacent regions. *Acta Entomologica Fennica*, **47**: 1–94.

Comments on the proposed conservation of usage of some generic names in the BUPRESTIDAE (Insecta, Coleoptera)

(Cases 2837/1 and 2837/2; see BZN **50**: 27–30, 31–34, 56, 232–233)

(1) Hans Mühle

Hofangerstrasse 22a, D-81735 München, Germany

The comment by Rick Westcott, published in BZN **50**: 232–233, does not cover the whole story of the usage of the names *Melanophila* Eschscholtz, 1829 and *Phaenops* Dejean, 1833.



Kerzhner, Izyaslav M. 1994. "Comments On The Proposed Conservation Of The Specific Name Of *Notonecta Obliqua* Thunberg, 1787 (Insecta, Heteroptera)." *The Bulletin of zoological nomenclature* 51, 41–43.

<https://doi.org/10.5962/bhl.part.7151>.

View This Item Online: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/44552>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5962/bhl.part.7151>

Permalink: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/7151>

Holding Institution

Natural History Museum Library, London

Sponsored by

Natural History Museum Library, London

Copyright & Reuse

Copyright Status: In copyright. Digitized with the permission of the rights holder.

Rights Holder: International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature

License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/>

Rights: <https://biodiversitylibrary.org/permissions>

This document was created from content at the **Biodiversity Heritage Library**, the world's largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org>.