



**(585) Proposal to Conserve *Stemonitis* Roth against *Stemonitis* Gleditsch and *Stemonitis* Gleditsch sensu Wiggers (Myxomycetes, Stemonitaceae)**

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(585) Proposal to conserve **Stemonitis** Roth against *Stemonitis* Gleditsch and *Stemonitis* Gleditsch sensu Wiggers (Myxomycetes, Stemonitaceae).

**Stemonitis** Roth, Mag. Bot. Römer & Usteri 1(2): 25. 1787.

Type. *S. fusca* Roth, Mag. Bot. Römer & Usteri 1(2): 26. 1787.

*Stemonitis* Gleditsch, Methodus Fungorum pp. 140–142. 1753. *Nom. rej. propos.*

No type species named.

*Stemonitis* Gleditsch sensu Wiggers, Prim. Fl. Holsat. 110. 1780. *Nom. rej. propos.*

Type. *S. typhina* Wiggers, Prim. Fl. Holsat. 110. 1780 [= *Comatricha typhoides* (Bulliard) Rostafinski].

The case for conserving *Stemonitis* in Roth's sense has already been presented by Martin & Alexopoulos, 1969, who, however, did not legalize their usage.

The genus was described by Gleditsch (1753), but no species were named. Although Gleditsch's work is now known to be post-Linnaean (Stafleu & Cowan, 1976), *Stemonitis* as used by Gleditsch and his contemporaries represented a mixture of species belonging to various orders of Myxomycetes (this, of course, being inevitable in the absence of high-powered microscopes). The first named species of *Stemonitis* Gleditsch was *S. typhina* Wiggers (1780). Roth described *S. fusca* in 1787 and, a year later (Roth, 1788), listed *S. typhina* and *S. fusca* as two distinct species. Both species, however, were variously interpreted by early authors such as Wiggers (1780), Willdenow (1787), Bolton (1790), Gmelin (1791), and others.

It was Persoon who, in 1796, described the two species of *Stemonitis* in question and organized their earlier synonymies in such a way as to indicate clearly that *S. fusca* was a species of *Stemonitis* in the modern sense, whereas *S. typhina* almost certainly applied to a common and well-established species of what is now the genus *Comatricha* (*Comatricha typhoides* (Bull.) Rost.).

Martin & Alexopoulos' (1969) usage has proved useful and was accepted in subsequent monographs (Nannenga-Bremekamp, 1974; Farr, 1976). Without formal conservation of *Stemonitis* Roth, as typified by *S. fusca* Roth, however, *S. typhina* Wiggers would have to be considered the type species of *Stemonitis* according to the Code (Stafleu, 1978). This would necessitate transferring some thirty names in *Comatricha* to *Stemonitis* and renaming the approximately sixteen species now in *Stemonitis*. Because of modern genus concepts, such a procedure would create a great deal of confusion, compounded by the recent splitting of both *Stemonitis* and *Comatricha* into several additional genera (Nannenga-Bremekamp, 1967; Ing & Nannenga-Bremekamp, 1967). Conservation of *Stemonitis* Roth, typified by *S. fusca* Roth, on the other hand, would validate well-established usage in accordance with modern generic concepts and clearly fix the application of the genus and species involved.

This case is an example of the problems that arise from use of Linnaeus' Species Plantarum, ed. 1, as the starting point for Myxomycetes. Given the stability of *Stemonitis* Roth as a well-recognized generic concept, acceptance of an alternative would be unfortunate. We can think of no argument against this proposed conservation, as called for in Article 14.9 of the 1978 Code.

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(586) Proposal to conserve *Curcuma* Roxb. (1810) against *Curcuma* L. (1753).

I will start this note with a re-consideration of *Curcuma* (Zingiberaceae). A proposal to conserve this name as *Curcuma* Roxb. and to reject *Curcuma* L. was put forward because the species on which the generic description was based, *C. rotunda* L., is now placed in *Boesenbergia* (Burt & Smith 1972b, see also 1972a p. 184). However, the proposal was turned down by the Committee (1974); it was held that conservation was not necessary as *C. longa* L., the only other species of the genus in 1753, could be taken as the lectotype. The presentation of the proposal was admittedly at fault in introducing the possibility that *C. longa* L. might be *nomen dubium*, which is really irrelevant. However, the Committee was less than perceptive. The point is that *Curcuma* was originally established by Linnaeus (1736) for the one species that he afterwards named *C. rotunda* L. The generic description was not modified in any way when, in 1753, *C. longa* was added. It does not fit *C. longa*, and we cannot apply the type method in any other way than to select *C. rotunda* as the type species of *Curcuma* L. Indeed, if *C. longa* were to be retained as lectotype (as originally proposed by Britton & Wilson and supported by the Committee), the full citation of the genus could only be “*Curcuma* L. quoad lecto. excl. descr.” When the generic description is excluded there is nothing to validate the generic name! I therefore think the Committee were wrong to reject conservation.

The next question is, how can *Curcuma* be conserved? Burt & Smith (1972b) took the view that, as *Curcuma* L. (lecto. *C. rotunda* L.) was to be rejected, conservation was only possible under Art. 48, by taking up a later use of the name when the type had been excluded. Art. 48.1 says that an author using a name in a sense that excludes the type is deemed to have created an independent later homonym. Art. 48.2 says that “retention of a name in a sense that excludes the type can be effected only by conservation”. The word ‘name’ in the Code means a valid name (Art. 6.6). Clearly the homonym created under Art. 48.1 can be valid if the homonym is described, invalid if it is merely circumscribed by a listing of contents. Roxburgh (1810) was the earliest author we could trace who had excluded *C. rotunda* and established a valid later homonym. Therefore *Curcuma* Roxb. was proposed for conservation.

It now seems that we interpreted the Code rather more strictly than some of our predecessors. In the List of Nomina Conservanda No. 1302 *Ixia* L., Sp. Pl. ed. 2, 51 (1762), with type