

**ERBULA STÅL, 1873 (INSECTA, HEMIPTERA): PROPOSED  
DESIGNATION OF A TYPE-SPECIES UNDER THE  
PLENARY POWERS. Z.N.(S.) 1613**

By Imtiaz Ahmad (*Department of Zoology, University of Karachi,  
Pakistan*)

The genus-group name *Erbula* (as a subgenus within the genus *Leptocoris* Latreille, 1829, in Cuvier, *Règne Anim.* 5 : 197) was first used by Stål in 1873 (*Enum. Hemipt.* 3 : 86) to contain *Leptocoris apicalis* Westwood, 1842 (in Hope Cat. (2) : 18) and thus this became the type by monotypy. The characters of the genus given by Stål were, "Segmento genitali marium haud transverso, fere aequae longo ac lato, apice obtusangulatur producto, integro; segmento ventrali sexto feminarum apice in medio obtuse rotundato-producto; spiraculis ad margines ventris subappropinquatis."

2. Blöte (1937, *Temminckia* 2 : 282) revised the group and described the genital characters of *apicalis*: claspers straight and short, not reaching the apex of the pygophore; sixth (seventh) ventral segment of the female with faintly protruding apical edge; seen from side the segment is somewhat impressed towards the apex, the protruding lamella very finely striate. He regarded *Erbula* as a subgenus of *Leptocoris* and included the new species *similis*, *elegans* and *distinguenda*.

3. A further revision of the African species of *Leptocoris* was made by Villiers (1955, *Bull. Inst. franç. Afr. noire* 17 : 1141-1144 and 1963, *ibid.* 25 : 229-234) who accepted Stål's and Blöte's concepts of *Erbula* which has thus been recognised as the subgenus containing the common Ethiopian rice bugs.

4. Neither Stål, Blöte nor Villiers claim to have seen the holotype of *apicalis* Westwood.

5. During a revision of the world species of LEPTOCORISINAE (Ahmad, 1963, Ph.D. Thesis, London University; 1965, *Bull. Brit. Mus. (nat. Hist.) Ent.*, Suppl. 5) the type of *apicalis* Westwood, which is present in the Hope collection, Oxford, was examined; it is a female and the posterior margin of the seventh abdominal sternum is indented. This is a character of the genus-group *Stenocoris* Burmeister (1839, *Handb. Ent.* 2(1) : 1010) which had also been treated as a subgenus within *Leptocoris* Latreille, 1829, by Stål (1873), Blöte (1937) and Villiers (1955 and 1963).

6. The Ethiopian Neotropical and Nearctic subgenera *Stenocoris* Burmeister, 1839, *Erbula* Stål, 1873, *Pseudoleptocoris* Ahmad, 1965 and *Oryzocoris* Ahmad, 1965, have been separated generically from the Oriento-Australian genus *Leptocoris* Latreille, 1829, and consequently the senior subgenus *Stenocoris* Burmeister, 1839, takes generic rank (Ahmad 1965).

7. A male and a female specimen labelled "Ituru områd Pr. w. exp. Gylt" and "Sierra Leone 'Afzel'" respectively have been examined in the Stål collection at the Riksmuseum, Stockholm. These are not specimens of *S. apicalis* Westwood and it is clear that Stål misidentified Westwood's species and therefore as *Erbula* Stål is based on a misidentified type-species, the case must



be referred to the Commission (Article 70a). However these specimens show the characters of *Erbula* as described by Stål (1873) and interpreted by Blöte (1937) and Villiers (1955 and 1963), and these specimens are indeed of the same species as two specimens (No. 1925-102 and 1912-422) in the British Museum (N.H.) collection from "Sierra Leone" and "S. Nigeria" bearing the label "*L. (Erbula) apicalis* Westwood det. H. C. Blöte."

8. This common African species *Stenocoris apicalis*: (Stål, 1873 nec Westwood, 1842) has been described as *Stenocoris southwoodi* (Ahmad, 1965, *ibid.*: 24).

9. Summarizing, *Erbula* Stål was based on the misidentified species *Stenocoris apicalis* Westwood. He actually had before him an undescribed species, *S. (Erbula) apicalis* Stål nec Westwood. The acceptance of *S. apicalis* Westwood as type-species of *Erbula* Stål would create much confusion in the nomenclature of this important group of rice-feeding insects. In the opinion of specialists in this complex, the confusion which would arise if the subgenus *Erbula* were to fall a synonym of *Stenocoris* sensu stricto would be very great, therefore in order to serve stability and cause the minimum nomenclatural change, the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is requested:

- (1) to use its plenary powers to set aside all designations of type-species for the nominal genus *Erbula* Stål, 1873, made prior to the Ruling now requested and, having done so, to designate *Stenocoris southwoodi* Ahmad, 1965, to be the type-species of that genus;
- (2) to place the generic name *Erbula* Stål, 1873 (gender: feminine), type-species, by designation under the plenary powers in (1) above, *Stenocoris southwoodi* Ahmad, 1965, on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology;
- (3) to place the specific name *southwoodi* Ahmad, 1965, as published in the binomen *Stenocoris southwoodi* (type-species of *Erbula* Stål, 1873) on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology.



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