

**OPINION 2120 (Case 3240)*****Vespertilio nanus* Peters, 1852 (currently *Pipistrellus nanus*; Mammalia, Chiroptera): specific name given precedence over *Vespertilio pipistrellus africanus* Rüppell, 1842**

**Abstract.** The Commission has ruled that the specific name of *Pipistrellus nanus* (Peters, 1852) for the African Banana bat (family VESPERTILIONIDAE) is conserved by giving it precedence over the senior subjective synonym *Pipistrellus africanus* (Rüppell, 1842).

**Keywords.** Nomenclature; taxonomy; Chiroptera; VESPERTILIONIDAE; *Pipistrellus nanus*; *Pipistrellus africanus*; Banana bat; Africa.

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**Ruling**

- (1) Under the plenary power it is hereby ruled that the name *nanus* Peters, 1852, as published in the binomen *Vespertilio nanus*, is given precedence over the name *africanus* Rüppell, 1842, as published in the trinomen *Vespertilio pipistrellus africanus*, whenever the two are considered to be synonyms.
- (2) The following names are hereby placed on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology:
  - (a) *nanus* Peters, 1852, as published in the binomen *Vespertilio nanus*, with the endorsement that it is to be given precedence over the name *africanus* Rüppell, 1842, as published in the trinomen *Vespertilio pipistrellus africanus*, whenever the two are considered to be synonyms;
  - (b) *africanus* Rüppell, 1842, as published in the trinomen *Vespertilio pipistrellus africanus*, with the endorsement that it is not to be given priority over the name *nanus* Peters, 1852, as published in the binomen *Vespertilio nanus*, whenever the two are considered to be synonyms.

**History of Case 3240**

An application to conserve the name *Vespertilio nanus* Peters, 1852 by suppression of the senior synonym *Vespertilio pipistrellus africanus* Rüppell, 1842 was received from Meredith Happold (*School of Botany and Zoology, Australian National University, Canberra, A.C.T. 0200, Australia*) on 11 March 2002. After correspondence the case was published in BZN 60: 42–44 (March 2003). The title, abstract and keywords of the case were published on the Commission's website. Two comments opposing the application were published in BZN 61: 48, 314–315. The second comment, by V. Van Cakenberghe, put forward an alternative proposal to give *V. nanus* precedence over *V. pipistrellus africanus* rather than to suppress the latter name. Dr Happold welcomed this proposal.

**Decision of the Commission**

On 1 December 2004 the members of the Commission were invited to vote on the alternative proposals published in BZN 61: 315. At the close of the voting period on

1 March 2005 the votes were as follows: 16 Commissioners voted FOR the proposals, 4 Commissioners voted AGAINST, 1 Commissioner ABSTAINED, Evenhuis, Kerzhner and Ng were on leave of absence; no vote was received from Böhme.

Voting against, Bouchet said that the problem was essentially a taxonomic one which should be left to taxonomists to solve and that priority should apply when the two names were considered to be synonyms.

### Original references

The following are the original references to the names placed on an Official List by the ruling given in the present Opinion:

*africanus*, *Vespertilio pipistrellus*, Rüppell, 1842, *Museum Senckenbergianum*, 3: 156.

*nanus*, *Vespertilio*, Peters, 1852, *Naturwissenschaftliche Reise nach Mozambique auf Befehl seiner Majestät des Königs Friedrich Wilhelm IV. in den Jahren 1842 bis 1848 ausgeführt. Zoologie, 1. Säugethiere*, p. 63.



International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature. 2005. "OPINION 2120 (Case 3240). *Vespertilio nanus* Peters, 1852 (currently *Pipistrellus nanus*; Mammalia, Chiroptera): specific name given precedence over *Vespertilio pipistrellus africanus* Rüppell, 1842." *The Bulletin of zoological nomenclature* 62, 120–121.

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