

**OPINION 2099 (Case 3254)*****Aphodius niger* Illiger, 1798 (Insecta, Coleoptera): specific name conserved**

**Abstract.** The Commission has ruled that the specific name of *Aphodius niger* Illiger, 1798 is conserved for a widely distributed and endangered species of European dung beetle by the suppression of the senior secondary homonym *Aphodius niger* (Panzer, 1797).

**Keywords.** Nomenclature; taxonomy; Coleoptera; SCARABAEIDAE; *Aphodius*; *Aphodius niger*; dung beetle; endangered species; British Red Data Book; U.K. Biodiversity Action Plan; Europe.

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**Ruling**

- (1) Under the plenary power it is ruled that the name *niger* Panzer, 1797, as published in the binomen *Scarabaeus niger*, is hereby suppressed for the purposes of both the Principle of Priority and the Principle of Homonymy.
- (2) The name *niger* Illiger, 1798, as published in the binomen *Aphodius niger* and as defined by the lectotype labelled 'Suec' and 'lectotype' in the Museum für Naturkunde, Berlin, is hereby placed on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology.
- (3) The name *niger* Panzer, 1797, as published in the binomen *Scarabaeus niger* and as suppressed in (1) above, is hereby placed on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology.

**History of Case 3254**

An application to conserve the specific name *Aphodius niger* Illiger, 1798 for a widely distributed and endangered species of European dung beetle was received from Frank-Thorsten Krell and Jason F. Maté (*Department of Entomology, Natural History Museum, London, U.K.*), Darren J. Mann (*Hope Entomological Collections, Oxford University Museum of Natural History, Oxford, U.K.*) and Robert B. Angus (*School of Biological Sciences, Royal Holloway, University of London, Egham, Surrey, U.K.*) on 20 August 2002. After correspondence the case was published in BZN 60: 127–131 (June 2003). The title, abstract and keywords of the case were published on the Commission's website. No comments on this case were received.

**Decision of the Commission**

On 1 September 2004 the members of the Commission were invited to vote on the proposals published in BZN 60: 129. At the close of the voting period on 1 December 2004 the votes were as follows: 20 Commissioners voted FOR the proposals, 3 Commissioners voted AGAINST, Martins de Souza abstained, Ng was on leave of absence.

Voting against, Bouchet commented: 'As Illiger did not describe a new species, but merely misapplied Panzer's name, there is no such thing as a nominal species



*Aphodius niger* Illiger, 1798. Consequently a non-existing nominal species cannot have 'type material', and the 'lectotype designation' has no purpose. I could have accepted one of the following courses of action:

(1) designate one of Illiger's specimens as neotype of *Scarabaeus niger* Panzer, 1797, and if necessary have the Commission rule that this name is not invalid despite being a secondary homonym of *Scarabaeus niger* Giorna, 1791;

(2) accept Adam's nomenclature and use *Aphodius muscorum* as the valid name.

The first alternative would stabilize current nomenclature and may even perhaps be done without action from the Commission as *S. niger* Panzer, 1797 may probably be preserved against *S. niger* Giorna, 1791 under Article 23.9'.

Lamas similarly commented that *Aphodius niger* Illiger, 1798 is a misidentification of Panzer's name and not a new name. Likewise, Patterson commented that, as *niger* (Panzer 1797) seems to be in current use, and as the proposal suggests that Illiger did not introduce a new name but merely misidentified material, he believed a better course of action to provide stability would be to retypefy Panzer's name.

### Original references

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

*niger*, *Aphodius*, Illiger, 1798, *Verzeichniss der Käfer Preussens. Entworfen von Johann Gottlieb Kugelann Apotheker in Osterode*, p. 24.

*niger*, *Scarabaeus*, Panzer, 1797, *Fauna Insectorum Germaniae initia oder Deutschlands Insecten*, Heft 37, p. 1.

The following is the reference for the designation of the lectotype of *Aphodius niger* Illiger, 1798:

Krell, F.-T., Mann, D.J., Angus, R.B. & Maté, J.F. 2003. *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature*, 60: 129.



International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature. 2005. "(Case 3254).  
Aphodius Niger Illiger, 1798 (Insecta, Coleoptera): Specific Name Conserved."  
*The Bulletin of zoological nomenclature* 62, 45–46.

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