

Case 3204

***Viverra maculata* Gray, 1830 (currently *Genetta maculata*; Mammalia, Carnivora): proposed conservation of the specific name**

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(Addresses on p. 47)

Abstract. The purpose of this application, under Article 23.9.5 of the Code, is to conserve the specific name of *Viverra maculata* Gray, 1830 (currently *Genetta maculata*; family VIVERRIDAE) for a species of African genet (a placental carnivore). The name is a junior primary homonym of *Viverra maculata* Kerr, 1792 (currently *Dasyurus maculatus*), which is used for a marsupial mammal commonly known as the Tiger quoll (family DASYURIDAE). However, the names apply to taxa that have not been considered congeneric since the early 19th century.

Keywords. Nomenclature; taxonomy; Carnivora; VIVERRIDAE; *Genetta maculata*; *Dasyurus maculatus*; Rusty-spotted genet; Africa.

1. Gray (1830; p. 9) described a new nominal species of African genet, which he named *Viverra maculata* (now *Genetta maculata*; family VIVERRIDAE). This species is commonly called the Rusty-spotted genet (see Crawford-Cabral, 1981).

2. *Viverra maculata* Gray, 1830 is a junior primary homonym of *Viverra maculata* Kerr, 1792 (p. 170), a name used for a marsupial (the Tiger quoll) that is now known scientifically as *Dasyurus maculatus* (family DASYURIDAE). This has led some authors to regard the junior name as invalid (see Crawford-Cabral, 1970, 1973, 1981; Rosevear, 1974; Coetsee, 1977; Ansell, 1978; Grubb et al., 1998). This was indeed the case until 2000, but the current edition of the Code (Article 23.9.5) prescribes that the case should be referred to the Commission to conserve the name *Genetta maculata* (Gray, 1830).

3. *Viverra maculata* Kerr, 1792 (marsupial mammal) and *Viverra maculata* Gray, 1830 (placental mammal) apply to taxa that have not been considered congeneric since the early 19th century. Indeed, Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire (1803, 1804) considered *Viverra maculata* Kerr, 1792 (the name of the marsupial mammal) to be a senior synonym of his own name *Dasyurus macrourus* Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, 1803. From that time onwards, the marsupial species was included in the genera *Dasyurops* or *Dasyurus* (see Haltenorth, 1958; Mahoney & Ride, 1988; Groves, 1993) rather than in the genus *Viverra*. *Viverra maculata* Gray, 1830 (the name of the placental mammal) was considered by Gray (1843) to be a junior synonym of *Genetta senegalensis* (Fischer, 1829), although it was incorrect. Since Gray (1843), the nominal species *Viverra maculata* Gray, 1830 has been placed in *Genetta*, and not in *Viverra* (see Matschie, 1902; Schwartz, 1930; Schlawe, 1981).

4. There has been long debate about which specific name should be attributed to the species that is known in the vernacular as the Rusty-spotted genet. The name

Genetta rubiginosa Pucheran, 1855, which was commonly in use, can no longer be used since the type specimen associated with this name has been found to belong to another species that is currently known as *Genetta thierryi* Matschie, 1902 (see Schlawe, 1981; Crawford-Cabral, 1981; Crawford-Cabral & Fernandes, 1999; Gaubert et al., 2001). The only available name that has also been used to denote this species, either by including other species (see Schlawe, 1981; Fuller et al., 1990; Wozencraft, 1993; Angelici et al., 1999; Angelici, 2000) or exclusively (see Gaubert et al., 2002; Gaubert, in press), is *G. maculata* (Gray, 1830).

5. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary power to rule that the specific name *maculata* Gray, 1830, as published in the binomen *Viverra maculata* (family VIVERRIDAE), is not invalid by reason of being a junior primary homonym of the specific name *maculata* Kerr, 1792, as published in the binomen *Viverra maculata* (family DASYURIDAE);
- (2) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name *maculata* Gray, 1830, as originally published in the binomen *Viverra maculata* (family VIVERRIDAE), ruled in (1) above to be not invalid by reason of being a junior primary homonym of the name *Viverra maculata* Kerr, 1792 (family DASYURIDAE).

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