

OPINION 2268 (Case 3473)***Conops testaceus* Linnaeus, 1767 (currently *Myopa testacea*; Insecta, Diptera): specific name conserved by designation of a neotype**

Abstract. The Commission has conserved the established usage of the specific name *Myopa testacea* (Linnaeus, 1767) for a well-known and widespread species of thick-headed fly (Diptera, CONOPIDAE) by setting aside all previous type fixations and designating a neotype.

Keywords. Nomenclature; taxonomy; Diptera; CONOPIDAE; MYOPINAE; *Myopa*; *Myopa testacea*; thick-headed flies; Palaearctic region.

Ruling

- (1) Under the plenary power all previous type fixations for the nominal species *Conops testaceus* Linnaeus, 1767 are hereby set aside and the male specimen labelled 'NEOTYPE designated by D.K. Clements, J.-H. Stuke & P.J. Chandler' and deposited in the Natural History Museum, London, is hereby designated as the neotype.
- (2) The name *testaceus* Linnaeus, 1767, as published in the binomen *Conops testacea* (spelling emended to *testaceus* in this Opinion) and as defined by the neotype designated in (1) above is hereby placed on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology.

History of Case 3473

An application to conserve the established usage of the name *Conops testaceus* Linnaeus, 1767 (currently *Myopa testacea*) by setting aside all previous type fixations and designating a neotype was received from D.K. Clements (*Cardiff, U.K.*), J.-H. Stuke (*Leer, Germany*) and P.J. Chandler (*Melksham, Wiltshire, U.K.*) on 21 July 2008. After correspondence the case was published in BZN 65: 294–299 (December 2008). The title, abstract and keywords of the case were published on the Commission's website. No comments were received on this case.

Decision of the Commission

On 1 December 2009 the members of the Commission were invited to vote on the proposals published in BZN 65: 297. At the close of the voting period on 1 March 2010 the votes were as follows:

Affirmative votes – 21: Ballerio, Bogutskaya, Bouchet, Brothers, Fautin, Halliday, Harvey, Kottelat, Lamas, Lim, Minelli, Ng, Pape, Papp, Rosenberg, Štys, van Tol, Winston, Yanega, Zhang and Zhou.

Negative votes – 6: Alonso-Zarazaga, Grygier, Kojima, Krell, Kullander and Patterson.

Pyle was on leave of absence.

Although he voted FOR, Grygier said he can not accept the arguments in paragraph 15 on selection of a neotype from north-western Europe when Linnaeus described the species from 'Europa australis'. Grygier said the new type locality will be too far away from the old, and naming of a neotype from southern Europe should await the resolution of the taxonomic situation there. Harvey, voting FOR, pointed out that the specific epithet in this application should be corrected to *Conops testaceus*. Kottelat said he voted FOR because of the reported uncertainties as to whether or not the 'lectotype' was effectively part of the type series. Winston also voted FOR as she felt the proposals could be justified in terms of usage and stability, but expressed concern that the argument seemed very subjective.

Voting AGAINST, Alonso-Zarazaga said that this case had multiple flaws, starting with the name *Conops testacea*, which should have been spelled *Conops testaceus*. He went on to say that, having worked also on Linnaeus's collection, he understood that it might be difficult to accept that a supposed Linnaean type specimen did not match one's expectations but, in his opinion, the authors did not show enough evidence of the type specimen of *C. testaceus* being false. Usually these were the specimens Linnaeus studied. He observed that there was no alternative name available for the species with the wholly black thorax, even if there were synonymous names whose types should have been studied. Alonso-Zarazaga stated that the options were the authors' or none. He went on to add that since the systematics of the group is unclear according to the authors, a vote now on a name would result in unpredictable consequences at the very least. Voting AGAINST, Kojima felt that neither the 'exceptional need' required for designation of a neotype by Article 75.3 nor the 'lack of accord' between the existing name-bearing type and the prevailing usage of names required by Article 75.6 were demonstrated in this Case; he said that the concept of the species known as *Conops testaceus* had been well established and thus there was no exceptional need to designate a neotype and that though the authors were not certain whether Thompson's (1997) lectotype designation was valid, Thompson's interpretation had not been accepted by the dipterist community. He suggested that in order to stabilise the name *Conops testacea* it would be sufficient for the authors to ask the Commission to use its plenary power to rule that the sole specimen standing under the name *Conops testaceus* in the Linnaean collection was not a syntype. Krell, voting AGAINST, said the intent of the authors was certainly useful to maintain stability of usage of *Myopa testacea*. However, the designation of a neotype was not sufficiently justified. He felt it was clear from the original description that the specimen Linnaeus referred to came from Peder/Peter Ascanius. To designate a neotype, Krell would have liked to see a statement that no Ascanius material could be traced, or that Ascanius's collection was destroyed. Krell said that although he hadn't received Ascanius's (1921), biography (*Entomologiske Meddelelser*, 15(1): 35–37), Hylleberg (2009, *Steenstrupia*, 31 (1): 1–101) indicates that Ascanius was affiliated with a natural history collection, the Natural- og Husholdnings-Cabinettet (The Naturalia and Housekeeping Cabinet) at Charlottenborg. According to the Danish Natural History Museum (http://zoologi.snm.ku.dk/english/Om_Zoologisk_Museum/History/Museets_historie/), in 1772 the Cabinet was transferred to the university in Copenhagen. Krell thus concluded he would not accept the neotypification without having checked whether any of Ascanius's material was in Copenhagen and would like to see a statement that there

was no suitable specimen to select as a neotype in all of Linnaeus's collections (including Uppsala).

Original reference

The following is the original reference to the name placed on the Official List by the ruling given in the present Opinion:

testaceus, *Conops*, Linnaeus, 1767, *Systema Naturae*, Ed. 12, vol. 1, part 2. Salvii, Holmiae, p. 1006 [spelling emended from *Conops testacea*].