

TYPIFICATION OF LINNAEAN PLANT NAMES

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Abstract

The Linnaean Plant Name Typification Project, based at The Natural History Museum in London, is currently concentrating its efforts on typifying names in the families *Asteraceae*, *Fabaceae*, *Lamiaceae* and *Poaceae*. Many Linnaean names included within these families were described from southern Europe and the Mediterranean area. The Project is keen to collaborate with specialists worldwide in order to identify suitable choices of type for those names which remain as yet untypified.

The Linnaean Plant Name Typification Project, headed by the first author at The Natural History Museum in London, has for over ten years been collaborating closely with specialists worldwide in order to identify choices of type for Linnaean plant names where none has previously been made (CANNON & AL., 1983; JARVIS, 1992). We believe that at present approximately 62% of the nearly 9150 Linnaean plant names (species and varieties) have been satisfactorily typified, but there still remain many untypified or ineffectively typified names.

The Project recently published a comprehensive list of the 1313 Linnaean generic names, citing the type species of each genus and the type of each species (JARVIS & AL., 1993). We are extremely grateful to all those who assisted us and designated types in this list. The 109 Linnaean lichen names have also been dealt with (JØRGENSEN & AL. 1994), as have New World *Solanaceae* (KNAPP & JARVIS, 1991). We have also published typifications for floristic treatments, notably for the Linnaean names for the first volume of *Flora Nordica* (JONSELL & JARVIS, 1994). The second author has continued his interest in the flora of Crete in a paper (TURLAND, 1995) dealing with the pre-Linnaean work *De plantis exoticis* (ALPINO, 1627), which includes many early descriptions and illustrations of Cretan endemic plants.

We have now completed summaries of original material (i.e. specimens and illustrations used by Linnaeus in describing his names) for the larger plant families and have entered this information into our Project Database. Each database record contains information on place of publication, an accepted current name, Linnaeus's "habitat" statement (the provenance of the taxon), and whether or not a type has been selected. For typified names, full data concerning the typification are recorded. We are currently concentrating our efforts on four of the largest families of Linnaean plant names: *Asteraceae*, *Fabaceae*, *Lamiaceae* and *Poaceae*. These constitute very important subsets of the whole, altogether representing some 2600 names, and include a significant proportion described by Linnaeus from southern Europe and the Mediterranean area.

We are seeking the assistance of specialists in particular plant groups (from families, through genera to individual species) in trying to establish reliable identifications of the original elements so that appropriate choices of lectotype (or, in the absence of ori-

ginal material, neotype) can be made, with emphasis on preserving the current usage of names wherever possible. Sometimes the only available lectotype is an ambiguous illustration, in which case an epitype specimen may also be designated to permit its precise interpretation. Occasionally all original material obviously conflicts with current usage, when we have the option of proposing a name for conservation or rejection.

In general we prefer specialists to make the necessary typifications themselves. These may either be in monographic or floristic works of their own, or in the Project's publications (as for example in the generic names list). The Project's main publication will be a comprehensive guide to the types of Linnaean plant names, but there will also be further interim publications, such as forthcoming papers on the typification of names in the *Asteraceae*, *Fabaceae*, *Lamiaceae* and *Poaceae*. Naturally, all choices of type published by the Project will be duly acknowledged and credited to the specialists concerned.

We are glad to offer our help to scientists who have encountered problems in the typification of particular Linnaean names. We can, if necessary, provide photocopies or photographs of specimens not available on microfiche (e.g. those in the Clifford or Hermann Herbaria here at BM), or provide notes on specific morphological features which are unclear on microfiches or copies (e.g. specimens in the Linnaean Herbarium at LINN).

If you would like to assist in the typification of particular names, or if we can be of assistance with difficulties with any Linnaean names or collections, please contact one of us at the address below.

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