

Report of the Committee for Fossil Plants: 6

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The previous report of the *Committee for Fossil Plants* appeared in *Taxon* 54 (1):175–176. Four new conservation proposals and three proposals to amend the *ICBN* that only apply to fossil plants have been considered by the committee since the last report. Composition of the committee remains the same; 14 members responded with opinions and one did not respond directly and is recorded as an abstention. Nine for or against are necessary to decide on a proposal.

(1626–1628) Conserve names of extant fig trees against senior homonyms of fossils: *Ficus crassipes* F. M. Bailey against *F. crassipes* (Heer) Heer, *Ficus tiliifolia* Baker against *F. tiliifolia* (A. Braun) Heer and *Ficus tremula* Warb. against *F. tremula* Heer (Moraceae) Proposed by Ungricht et al. in [Taxon 53: 566–568](#). Votes 13:0:2 (recommended)

These three proposals were voted on simultaneously by the committee. The fossil plants are only leaf fragments and do not unequivocally belong to the modern genus *Ficus*. The extant figs are key species and are commonly cited in botanical, horticultural and conservation literature. Members of the committee supported the conservation proposals agreeing that the fossil material needs re-examination and most likely does not belong to the extant genus.

(1643) Conserve the fossil pollen morphogeneric name *Classopollis* against *Corollina* and *Circulina*. Proposed by Traverse in [Taxon 53: 847–848](#). Votes 12:0:3 (recommended)

The generic names apply to important Mesozoic fossil pollen forms from various conifers for which competing names have confused the literature. *Classopollis* was originally better illustrated than the earlier published *Corollina* and *Circulina*, but the three names have generally been considered to be synonymous. Although acknowledging this fact, many authors have been reluctant to use the two earlier generic names because of the inadequate illustrations in the protologue. Other authors have felt that the illustrations were sufficient to demonstrate synonymy and the earliest name should be applied to the pollen grains. In order to resolve the situation, the committee agrees with the proposal by Traverse to conserve the name *Classopollis*. The three abstainers on the committee expressed a lack of adequate knowledge of the issue.

The three proposals to amend the *Code* will be voted upon at the nomenclature sessions of the *International Botanical Congress* and the *Committee for Fossil Plants*

was simply asked to express its opinion on these proposals. (086) Proposes to delete Article 36.3 that would result in the requirement of a Latin diagnosis for names of fossil plants. The committee was unanimously against this proposal. Article 36.3 was introduced into the 1994 *Code*. Prior to this *Code*, any language was acceptable for valid publication of fossil plant taxa and this article restricted valid publication to only two languages, one of which is Latin, bringing fossil plants more into agreement with extant plants. Palaeobotanists have endorsed this action. (208–212) Proposes to allow illustrations as types of microfossils with no requirement for designation of a specimen as the holotype. The committee does not recommend this proposal (votes 3:9:3). There was much discussion about the proposal in the committee with a variety of opinions expressed. Those in favour agreed with Traverse & al. that many types were inadequate, lost or destroyed and an illustration was a more permanent record. Those against had concerns about separating microfossils as a special category; potential discouragement of the use of actual specimens as types where possible; and, because of the availability of neotypes, lectotypes and also epitypes that can be illustrations, this change was unnecessary. (213–214) Propose to add examples to Article 11.7 to clarify morphotaxon. There was no decision from the committee (votes 4:3:8). There were strong opposing opinions expressed, especially on proposal 213 that was seen as reflecting too restrictive a definition of the term. Committee members expressed no strong supporting opinions, and obviously most of the committee had not come to a definitive conclusion resulting in abstentions. It was generally agreed, however, that there needs to be some clarification of the term morphotaxon and the committee will continue discussion.