

## (188–197) Ten proposals addressing problems associated with misplaced rank-denoting terms

Gerry Moore

Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 1000 Washington Avenue, Brooklyn, New York 11225, U.S.A. gerry.moore@bbg.org

Since the publication of my original paper on this topic (Taxon 50: 495–505. 2001), I have communicated with many other plant taxonomists who have encountered classifications with misplaced rank-denoting terms. From this research, it has become obvious that under the current wording of the *Code* it is often difficult to deal with these situations. These proposals seek to remedy many of the nomenclatural problems associated with misplaced rank-denoting terms.

Proposals 195 and 196 would significantly limit the number of classifications with misplaced rank-denoting terms by introducing into the *Code* the concept of “informal usage” of rank-denoting terms. This is defined as use of a rank-denoting term at more than one non-successive position in the taxonomic sequence. Names published with an informal rank-denoting term would be treated as unranked (see Art. 35.1).

Proposal 188 would modify Art. 16 Note 1 so that, in those rare cases where the rank-denoting terms “division” and “phylum” are used simultaneously to denote different ranks, names published with these terms would be treated as unranked (informal usage of the terms) as opposed to invalidly published under Art 33.7. Such a change is minor, since priority is not in force at these ranks. The change is needed to accommodate the concept of informal usage of rank-denoting terms introduced with proposals 195 and 196.

Proposals 192–194 would address bona fide cases of misplaced rank-denoting terms. When a work does not follow the proper sequence of rank-denoting terms (Arts. 3 and 4), the current wording of Art. 33.7 simply states that the “name given to a taxon of which the rank is ... denoted by a misplaced term is not validly published”. However, in many of these cases it is not always clear which rank-denoting terms should be deemed misplaced (and therefore which names are to be determined as not validly published). For example, the sequence family-genus-tribe does not follow the proper sequence. However, it is not clear here which rank-denoting term should be regarded as misplaced, since removing either the term “genus” or “tribe” would achieve a proper sequence (i.e., family-tribe or family-genus). These proposals address this issue by introducing a “minimal invalidity” concept into the *Code*.

Proposals 189 and 191 would restrict Art. 18.2 and

19.2 to prevent names published as (natural) orders or suborders from being treated as families or subfamilies if these terms are already used in a work or if this would result in a sequence with a misplaced rank-denoting term. Proposal 190 would add a Voted Example under Art 18.2 using a work by Berchtold and Presl that has generated considerable debate among members of the Special Committee on Suprageneric Names. Proposal 197 would place an added restriction on Art. 35.2 preventing a termination from being accepted as an indication of rank, if it would result in the same rank-denoting term occurring at more than one hierarchical position in the sequence.

### **(188) Replace the last sentence of Art. 16 Note 1 with the following:**

“When “divisio” and “phylum” are used simultaneously to denote different ranks, this is to be treated as informal usage of rank-denoting terms (see [Article of proposal 195]).”

### **(189) Add the following Note after Art. 18.2:**

“*Note 1.* Names published with their rank denoted as “order” (“ordo”) or “natural order” (“ordo naturalis”) should not be treated as having been published at the rank of family if this would result in a taxonomic sequence with a misplaced rank-denoting term or if the term family is simultaneously used to denote a different rank in the taxonomic sequence.”

### **(190) Add the following Voted Example to Art. 18 after the Note of proposal 189:**

“\**Ex. n.* Names published at the rank of order (“rad”) by Berchtold & Presl (*O p̄řirozenosti Rostlin [...]*. 1820) are not to be treated as having been published at the rank of family, since the term family (“čeled”) was sometimes used to denote a rank below the rank of order.”

### **(191) Add the following Note after Art. 19.2:**

“*Note n.* Names published with their rank denoted as suborder (subordo) should not be treated as having been published at the rank of subfamily if this would result in a taxonomic sequence with a misplaced rank-denoting term or if the term subfamily is simultaneously used to

denote a different rank in the taxonomic sequence.”

**(192) Add the following Note after Art. 33.7:**

“*Note 3.* Only those names published with the rank-denoting terms that must be removed so as to achieve a proper sequence are to be regarded as not validly published. In cases where terms are switched, e.g., family-order, and a proper sequence can be achieved by removing either or both of the rank-denoting terms, names at neither rank are validly published, unless one is a secondary rank (Art. 4.1) and one is a principal rank (Art. 3.1), e.g., family-genus-tribe, in which case only names published at the secondary rank are not validly published.”

**(193) Add the following Note after Art. 33 Ex. 14:**

“*Note 4.* Sequential use of the same rank-denoting term in a taxonomic sequence does not represent misplaced-rank denoting terms.”

**(194) Add the following Example to Art. 33 after the Note of proposal 006:**

“*Ex. n.* Danser (in *Recueil Trav. Bot. Néerl.* 18: 125–210. 1921) published ten new names of subspecies in a treatment of *Polygonum* in which he recognized subspecies (indicated by Roman numerals) within subspecies (indicated by Arabic numerals). These do not represent misplaced rank-denoting terms, so Art 33.7 does not apply and the new names are validly published.”

**(195) Add the following Article to Art. 33 after the Example of proposal 007:**

“33.7 *bis.* Situations where the same rank-denoting term is used at more than one non-successive position in the taxonomic sequence represent informal usage of rank-denoting terms. Names published with such rank-denoting terms are treated as unranked (see Art. 35.1).”

**(196) Add the following Example to Art. 33 after the Article of proposal 008:**

“*Ex. n.* Names published with the term “series” by Bentham & Hooker (*Gen. Pl.* 1–3. 1862–1883) are treated as unranked because this term was used at seven different hierarchical positions in the taxonomic sequence. Therefore, the sequence in *Rhynchospora* (l.c. 3: 1058–1060. 1883) of genus-“series”-section does not contain a misplaced rank-denoting term.”

**(197) Add the following clause to Art. 35.2:**

“or (c) would result in a rank sequence in which the same rank-denoting term occurs at more than one hierarchical position.”