

(122) Proposal to extend the restriction on nothogeneric name length to include bigeneric hybrids

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Article H.6 of Appendix 1 to the *Melbourne Code* (McNeill & al. in *Regnum Veg.* 154. 2012) provides clear instructions concerning the formation of nothogeneric names of intergeneric hybrids. Art. H.6.3, dealing with the names for intergeneric hybrids derived from four or more genera, and Art. H.6.4, dealing with the names of trigeneric hybrids, both explicitly limit the length of all such names to a maximum of eight syllables. Article H.6.2, which deals with the names of bigeneric hybrids, does not stipulate any length restriction, however, and by implication such names may therefore be of unrestricted length. Surely this could not have been the intention when Art. H.6 was originally drafted?

The proposer teaches plant nomenclature to horticulture students and has often experienced that this anomaly in the restriction placed on the length of generic names causes confusion, with students finding it difficult to understand why some names should be subjected to a length restriction and others not. Although it is rather unlikely that nothogeneric names formed according to the provisions of Art. H.6.2 will result in words exceeding eight syllables, the same argument could be applied to the names of hybrids resulting from four or more genera, where the name is simply composed from the name of a person to which the termination *-ara* is added, and for which an explicit length restriction applies.

For the sake of consistency and less ambiguity it is proposed that the eight-syllable restriction be extended to include also the names of bigeneric hybrids. This could be achieved either by removing the length restriction clauses from Art. H.6.3 and H.6.4 and adding a new Article prescribing the length of all intergeneric names, or simply by amending Art. H.6.2 to include a length restriction clause. The

second option is preferred since it would require a lesser change to the existing code.

(122) Amend Art. H.6.2 to include a length restriction (new text in bold):

“H.6.2. The nothogeneric name of a bigeneric hybrid is a condensed formula in which the names adopted for the parental genera are combined into a single word, **not exceeding eight syllables**, using the first part or the whole of the one, the last part or the whole of the other (but not the whole of both) and, optionally, a connecting vowel.”

The impact of this proposal on existing bigeneric hybrid names will be minimal. A search of names in International Plant Names Index (IPNI), <http://www.ipni.org/> brought to light only two valid bigeneric hybrid names longer than eight syllables: *×Aporoheliocereus* Airy Shaw (*Cactaceae*) from *Aporocactus* Lem. *×Heliocereus* Britton & Rose and *×Coeloglossogymnadenia* A. Camus (*Orchidaceae*) from *Coeloglossum* Hartm. *×Gymnadenia* R. Br.

Should the proposal by Zhu (in *Taxon* 63: 1385–1386. 2014) to move Appendix 1 into the main body of the *Code* succeed, the current Art. H.6 will require renumbering and this proposal will then also apply to the renumbered Art. H.6.2.

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