(365) Multiple-sheet specimens versus duplicates: A small amendment to Article 8.3

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The last sentence of Art. 8.2 states “A specimen is usually mounted on a single herbarium sheet or in an equivalent preparation, such as a box, packet, jar, or microscope slide.” This is made more explicit by Art. 8.3, which adds “A specimen may be mounted as more than one preparation, as long as the parts are clearly labelled as being part of that same specimen. Multiple preparations from a single gathering that are not clearly labelled as being part of a single specimen are duplicates [...]”.

The herbaria at Geneva (G), i.e., the general collection and G-BOIS (but not G-DC), employ “specimen folders”, which are single preparations consisting of one to several sheets of a single specimen, generally with only one original label. Only one barcode is attached to the first sheet in the folder and the sheets are not individually labelled as being part of the same specimen, but they are physically grouped in the “specimen folder”.

A problem has arisen repeatedly when users of the herbaria, unaware of this unusual situation and applying Art. 8.3 in an excessively literal manner, cite a single sheet of a multi-sheet specimen for typification purposes and thus exclude the remaining parts of the specimen.

A small addition to Art. 8.3 is therefore suggested to enable it to apply to multiple-sheet specimens grouped together under a common label, e.g., in a specimen folder as at G. It will also be helpful when, as often occurs in old herbaria, the material is not yet mounted but is stored loose in a folder with a single associated label. When proposing conservation of the (otherwise illegitimate) name Bambusa vulgaris Schrad. ex J. C. Wendl. with a conserved type, Greuter & Rankin (in Taxon 64: 171–173. 2015) selected an original specimen in the historical Wendland herbarium at Göttingen (GOET), noting: “The Wendland material was kept unmounted in its original folder, distributed over three small-size sheets [...]. It has since been remounted on four sheets, to be considered as a single specimen.” Not always is a helpful curator at hand to take care of the correct mounting and labelling, as was the case here, and the single-label criterion may then be of value.

(365) Amend Art. 8.3 as follows (new text in bold):

“8.3 A specimen may be mounted as more than one preparation, as long as the parts are clearly labelled as being part of that same specimen, or bear a single original label in common. Multiple preparations from a single gathering that are not clearly labelled as being part of a single specimen are duplicates2, irrespective of whether the source was one organism or more than one (but see Art. 8.5).”

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