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Comments on the proposed precedence of *Bolboceras* Kirby, 1819 (July) (Insecta, Coleoptera) over *Odonteus* Samouelle, 1819 (June)

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Comments on the proposed precedence of *Bolboceras* Kirby, 1819 (July) (Insecta, Coleoptera) over *Odonteus* Samouelle, 1819 (June)

(Case 3097; see **BZN 59**: 246-248, 280-281, **60**: 303-311, **61**: 43-45)

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[There are 2 pages of comments by these correspondents. Dr. Smith's comments follow.]

[. . .]

(2) Andrew B.T. Smith *W436 Nebraska Hall, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE 68588-0514, U.S.A.*

I support the application to give *Bolboceras* Kirby, 1819 (July) precedence over *Odonteus* Samouelle, 1819 (June). This action is necessary to preserve the prevailing usage of the former generic name for the North American species *Bolboceras alabamensis* (Wallis, 1929), *B. cornigerus* Melsheimer, 1846, *B. darlingtoni* (Walsh, 1928), *B. falli* (Wallis, 1928), *B. filicornis* (Say, 1823), *B. floridensis* (Walsh, 1928), *B. liebecki* (Wallis, 1928), *B. obesus* (LeConte, 1859), *B. simi* (Walsh, 1928), and *B. thoracicornis* (Wallis, 1928). These species have been universally placed in the genus *Bolboceras* for over 50 years. *B. armiger* (Scopoli, 1772), the one remaining species in the genus, has been placed in *Bolboceras*, *Odonteus*, and *Odontaeus* Dejean, 1821 by various authors during the same time period. I assert that the generic placement of *B. armiger* has been so contradictory that no prevailing usage can be discerned for any of these generic names with regard to this species. The Code promotes the stability and prevailing usage of names (for example, see Articles 23.2, 81.1, and Appendix B-1 of the Code). *B. armiger* is already a nomenclatural mess; the same problems should not be inflicted on the other ten species in the genus by invalidating a generic name with a 50-year tradition of use.

The following discrepancies regarding this case have caused confusion and inconsistencies in the use of generic names within the group. Explicit clarification of each of the following points should be made by the Commission in their ruling on this case to stabilize the use of names in this group:

1. Jameson & Howden (BZN 59: 247) stated that the gender of *Bolboceras* is masculine; however, Article 30.1.2 (and especially the example following this Article) clearly indicates that the gender should be neuter. The name ends in a Greek word transliterated into Latin without other changes (*-ceras* = *keras*). An explicit statement from the Commission regarding the gender of *Bolboceras* is required in their ruling on this case and possibly emendations of some of the species names is desirable to clear up this discrepancy.

2. Krell et al. (BZN 60: 304) discuss the use of *Odonteus* and *Odontaeus* and state that these names are 'in fact' the same and one is an incorrect subsequent spelling of the other. However, *Odonteus* Samouelle was originally attributed to Köppe (perhaps by Leach through letters or personal communication) and *Odontaeus* Dejean was originally attributed to Megerle. Samouelle and Dejean

apparently established the names independently of one another with different spellings and each attributed the names to different sources. There is no evidence that Dejean was using the name earlier established by Samouelle but with an incorrect subsequent spelling. In the absence of any internal evidence, I think that Jameson & Howden (BZN **59**: 246) are correct in exercising caution and considering *Odonteus* and *Odontaeus* as separate generic names. Clarification from the Commission on the nomenclatural status of *Odontaeus* Dejean is desirable.

Krell et al. (BZN **60**: 305) also discuss the type species of *Bolboceras*. I disagree with their interpretation of Kirby's statement 'my details of *Bolboceras* were taken from *B. quadridens*' as an explicit type species designation. This statement is vague and I suspect it just refers to the use of *B. quadridens* for the illustrations of the genus. It certainly fails to fulfil the requirements of Articles 67.5 and 68.2 for type species designations. Curtis's explicit type species designation of *Scarabaeus mobilicornis* Fabricius for *Bolboceras* should stand. However, this should be clarified by the Commission in its ruling on the case.