

ASTACILLA CORDINER, 1793 (CRUSTACEA, ISOPODA):
PROPOSED NOMENCLATURAL VALIDATION BY USE OF THE
PLENARY POWERS Z.N.(S.)2319

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The authorship of the well-known isopod generic name *Astacilla* is usually given as 'Cordiner', with a variety of dates, e.g. 1788, 1793, 1795, which differ because of the difficulty in dating Cordiner's work. Over 30 species have been assigned to this genus. The name has been accepted by such authorities as Sars, 1899; Koehler, 1911; Nordenstam, 1933; Barnard, 1940; Hale, 1946; Menzies & Glynn, 1968; and Naylor, 1972.

2. Cordiner's work carries the date 1788 on the title page and includes a plate (numbered 85 in manuscript in the copy I have examined) dated 1793, and accompanying comments on 'very lively species of little lobsters' which he referred to as 'Astacillae' (signature Ff). The quite accurate figure is undoubtedly of the species known as *Astacilla longicornis* (J. Sowerby, 1805, p. 31), but no specific name was introduced by Cordiner.

3. As the generic name *Astacilla* was published originally as a Latin plural in English text, it does not meet the requirements of Article 11f of the Code, which stipulates that genus-group names must be nouns in the nominative singular or treated as such. Therefore '*Astacillae* Cordiner, 1793' is unavailable and its usage as shown in the first paragraph is illegal.

4. Johnston, 1825, dealing with the same species, instituted the new genus *Leacia* for it and stated unequivocally 'This is a new genus' (p. 220). He proceeded to give a description of a new species, *Leacia lacertosa*, but this is the same as *Oniscus longicornis* J. Sowerby, 1805, p. 31. The name *Leacia* has not been used since and it has been relegated to the synonymy of *Astacilla* by various authors (see Sars, 1899, p. 88; Harger, 1880, p. 363) possibly because of its similarity to *Leachia* Lesueur, 1821, the cephalopod mollusc.

5. Fleming, 1830, discussed the confusion that had already arisen over the name *Astacilla*, quoting from both Johnston's and Sowerby's descriptions, and this constitutes the first available use of the generic name. Fleming, 1830, p. 108, redescribed Sowerby's *Oniscus longicornis* and assigned it, along with *Idotea baffini* Sabine, to the genus *Astacilla*. These are therefore the two species first referred to the genus. Fleming did not designate a type species, and no subsequent designation is known to me. I therefore now designate *Oniscus longicornus* J. Sowerby, 1805, as type species.

6. As more than 30 species have been described under the generic name *Astacilla*, much confusion would result from its replacement by the unused name *Leacia* Johnston, as would be required by strict application of the Code. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is therefore asked:

- (1) to use its plenary powers to rule that *Astacilla* is the correct original spelling of the name published as 'Astacillae' by Cordiner, 1793;
- (2) to place the generic name *Astacilla* Cordiner, 1793 (gender: feminine), type species, by designation herein, *Oniscus longicornis* J. Sowerby, 1805, as nomenclaturally validated by the use of the plenary powers in (1) above, on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology;
- (3) to place the specific name *longicornis* J. Sowerby, 1805, as published in the binomen *Oniscus longicornis* (specific name of type species of *Astacilla* Cordiner, 1793) on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere thanks are due to Drs F. M. Bayer, T. E. Bowman and L. B. Holthuis for their comments and advice in the preparation of this proposal.