

Scientific Note

New synonymy and combination in Buprestidae (Coleoptera)

Abstract. The subgenus *Dicerca* (*Neoargante*) Nelson 2006 is considered unnecessary and proposed as a new junior subjective synonym of *Dicerca* Eschscholtz 1829. *Polybothris lesnei* Théry 1926 is transferred to *Holynskirbus* Özdikmen 2008 (= *Sororcula* Holyński 1993) and *Sororcula gnomiphila* Holyński 1993 is proposed as a new junior subjective synonym of *H. lesnei*.

Key Words. Coleoptera, Buprestidae, *Dicerca*, *Dicerca* (*Neoargante*), *Holynskirbus*, *Polybothris*, *Sororcula*, new combination, new synonymy.

As it has been said often and in many contexts, “no good deed goes unpunished.” To anyone, including myself, who may have thought that the publication of a world catalogue (e.g., Bellamy 2008) would allow even the briefest respite in the tectonics of buprestid systematics, there will certainly always be things that need the formality of a technical nomenclatural act. Taxa based on lost or unavailable unique specimens, those described by authors apparently unfamiliar with the wider fauna or literature, other taxa remaining specious simply because everyone is entitled to his own opinion (but not his own facts!), the difficulty that some have in understanding the rules of the International Commission of Zoological Nomenclature (ICZN), or just plain old fashioned carelessness, yield two situations discussed below that need resolution.

For brevity, several abbreviations are used in the discussion and acknowledgments: MNHN = Museum National d’Histoire Naturelle, Paris, France and RBHC = R. B. Holyński collection, Graniczna, Poland and for some label data (h) = handwritten and (p) = printed.

Genus *Dicerca* Eschscholtz 1829

As most recently presented (Bellamy 2008), the genus *Dicerca* includes in three subgenera (*D. (Dicerca)*, *D. (Hemidicerca)* Richter 1952 and *D. (Neoargante)* Nelson 2006), 43 species and 8 subspecies distributed in the Nearctic, northern Neotropical, Oriental and Palaearctic regions. However, it appears that I overlooked the more streamlined opinions of Holyński (2006), Kubáň (2006) and Nelson (1975), none of whom used those subgenera nor two other genus-group names (*Argante* Gistel 1834, *Stenuris* Kirby 1837) long held in synonymy. An earlier attempt by Leraut (1983), to resurrect *Argante* and *Stenuris* and to void the justified spelling emendation of the originally misspelled *Dicerea*, was refuted by Nelson (1989) and later upheld by Opinion 1784 of the ICZN (1994). Thus I find no cogent argument for the establishment of the subgenus *D. (Neoargante)* by Nelson (2006), ostensibly a replacement name for *Argante*, which as far as I am aware is not otherwise preoccupied or in need of replacement. As *Argante* has been a junior synonym of *Dicerca* since Gemminger & Harold (1869), I propose the same status now for *Neoargante*. The current genus-group synonymy for *Dicerca* is summarized as follows with full details available in Bellamy (2008).

Genus *Dicerca* Eschscholtz 1829

Buprestis (Dicerea) Eschscholtz 1829:9 (incorrect original spelling); Lacordaire 1857:35, Leraut 1983:6 (valid spelling); Bellamy 2008:973.

Dicerca: Lacordaire in Boisduval & Lacordaire 1835:587 (justified emendation); Leraut 1983:6 (unjustified emendation); Holyński 2006:10, Kubáň 2006:347, Bellamy 2008:973.

Type Species. *Buprestis aenea* Linnaeus 1758 (fixed by subsequent designation: Westwood 1838:24).

Argante Gistel 1834:10, Gemminger & Harold 1869:1373 (synonym of *Dicerca*); Nelson 1975:91, Leraut 1983:5 (valid genus); Holyński 2006:10, Kubáň 2006:347, Bellamy 2008:974.

Type Species. *Buprestis moesta* Fabricius 1793 (fixed by subsequent designation: Richter 1952:108).

Buprestis (Stenuris) Kirby 1837:154, Lacordaire 1857:35 (synonym of *Dicerca*); Leraut 1983:7 (valid genus); Nelson 1975:91, 1989:393 (synonym of *Dicerca*); Holyński 2006:10, Kubáň 2006:347, Bellamy 2008:974.

Type Species. *Buprestis lurida* Fabricius 1775 (fixed by original designation).

Hemidicerca Richter 1952:132, Holyński 2006:10 (synonym of *Dicerca*); Kubáň 2006:347 (synonym of *Dicerca*); Bellamy 2008:975 (subgenus of *Dicerca*).

Type Species. *Dicerca fritillum* Ménétrés 1832 (fixed by original designation).

Dicerca (Neoargante) Nelson 2006:272 (nom. nov. *Argante* Gistel 1834); Nelson, *et al.* 2008:78, Bellamy 2008:975. **New Synonymy**

Type Species. *Buprestis moesta* Fabricius 1793 (fixed by original designation).

Genus *Holynskirbus* Özdikmen 2008

The genus group name *Holynskirbus* Özdikmen 2008 was proposed as a replacement name for *Sororcula* Holyński 1993 (preoccupied by *Sororcula* Haas 1953, a fossil gastropod). At the time of the original description, Holyński (1993) discussed his new genus in reference to the confusion of the Madagascan Psilopterina and advocated consideration of the genus-group taxa of Thomson (1878a, b), which were subsequently all treated as synonyms of *Polybothris* Spinola 1837 in Obenberger's catalogue (1926) and later as subgenera of *Polybothris* by Obenberger (1942). Kurosawa (1993) offered no opinion about rank but opined that *Polybothris* was clearly not monophyletic. Bellamy (2008) treated most of Thomson's genus-group taxa as subgenera following Obenberger (1942). The question here is not to debate the validity at the genus rank of *Holynskirbus*, as it clearly could be equal to any of Thomson's genera, e.g., *Amphibeta*, *Carcinias*, *Coccinellopsis*, *Erebodes*, *Phobetodes*, etc., which could easily be considered valid, because an effort to determine a modern classification is still needed. However, having now examined the types of *Polybothris lesnei* Théry 1926 and *Sororcula gnomiphila*, I propose the following new combination and synonymy.

Genus *Holynskirbus* Özdikmen 2008

Sororcula Holyński 1993:163 (preoccupied: *Sororcula* Haas 1953, Fossil Gastropoda); Bellamy 2003:48, 2006:152, 2008:891.

Type Species. *Sororcula gnomiphila* Holyński 1993 (fixed by original designation).
Holynskirbus Özdikmen 2008:159 (nom. nom.: *Sororcula* Holyński 1993).

***Holynskirbus lesnei* (Théry 1926), New Combination**

Polybothris lesnei Théry 1926:127, Bellamy 2006:123, 2008:872.

Sororcula gnomiphila Holyński 1993:163, Bellamy 2003:124, fig. 227; 2006:152, 2008:891. **New Synonymy**

Holynskirbus gnomiphila: Özdikmen 2008:159.

Specimens Examined. Holotype of *lesnei* (MNHN): MUSEUM PARIS (p) Madagascar S.-E., Befoutaka, Académie Malgache 1920(? illegible) (h); holotype of *gnomiphila* (RBHC): Madagascar: Tuléar Prov.: Lavanono, sea level, 8.IV.1968.

Comments. A quick survey of several popular web-based insect specimen dealers finds this beetle trading under the name of *Polybothris lesnei* as well as another name, *P. geayi*, a *nomen nudum*. This latter name is invalid, never published as far as I can tell (Bellamy 2006, 2008) and should not be used in any context.

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